



Cover photo source: Muscle Shoals Natural Heritage Area (MSNHA)

Project Letters of Support

**FY 23 Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Application:
Letters of Support**

Dr. Bill Sims Hike-Bike Way on the Singing River Trail:

Reconnecting Old Town to Decatur's Riverfront



Applicant:
City of Decatur



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133 2nd Avenue NE
 Decatur, Alabama 35601
 (256) 260-4293

**NORTH
 ALABAMA™**
**ALABAMA MOUNTAIN LAKES
 TOURIST ASSOCIATION**

www.northalabama.org

September 13, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
 U.S. Department of Transportation
 1200 New Jersey Ave SE
 Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am the President of Calhoun Community College and our Fine Arts Campus, the Alabama Center for the Arts (ACA), is located in downtown Decatur. I am writing on behalf of ACA to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Alabama Center for the Arts is centered around a cooperative agreement between Calhoun Community College and Athens State University, whereby each institution continues to offer their respective arts programs and degrees, but also work cooperatively to address the educational needs of students interested in the visual and performing arts, and to expand opportunities and experiences in the arts for students and members of the regional community.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Hodges, Ed.D.

President

September 11, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
 U.S. Department of Transportation
 1200 New Jersey Ave SE
 Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur, AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association (AMLA), I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant. For almost 60 years, AMLA has been the voice for the travel industry of North Alabama. The Association formed in 1964 with the express purpose of developing North Alabama's travel industry and marketing the region to the traveling public. With more than 500 members and more than 1500 supporters from across the region, we serve sixteen counties with an ever-expanding membership base representing travel-regulated businesses and organizations as well as various levels of government.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities, residents and visitors, that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact not only on Decatur, but the entire North Alabama region.

If additional information is required, I can be reached at (800) 648-5381.

Sincerely,

Tami Reist
 President & CEO



5514 US 31 S | Hartselle, AL 35640 | (256) 773-8495

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590
RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

My name is Jared Carter, and I am programs manager for Alabama's Mountains, Rivers, and Valleys Resource Conservation and Development Council (AMRV RC&D). I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

AMRV RC&D, through its North Alabama Trails and Recreation program, seeks to increase outdoor activity and foster recreation development throughout North Alabama. I have had the pleasure of working with the City of Decatur and Singing River Trail in order to improve outdoor recreation within and around Decatur.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me at (256) 773-8495 or jared.carter@amrvrcd.com

Sincerely,

Jared Carter
Programs Manager
AMRV RC&D



Kay Ivey
Governor

Alabama
Department of Transportation
Office of Region Engineer
North Region
1525 Perimeter Parkway, Suite 400
Huntsville, AL 35806
Telephone 256-505-4955
Fax: 256-213-7038



John R. Cooper
Transportation Director

September 11, 2023

The Honorable Tab Bowling
Mayor, City of Decatur
P.O. Box 488
Decatur, Alabama 35602

RE: Reconnecting Community Grant for Pedestrian and Bike Trail Enhancements
City of Decatur
Morgan County

Dear Mayor Bowling:

On behalf of the Alabama Department of Transportation, I am writing to express my support for the City of Decatur in pursuing the above referenced grant. Providing facilities for alternate forms of transportation provide many benefits to communities by reducing the traffic on existing highways and improving the overall health and well-being of it's citizens.

I hope this grant application is approved to assist the City of Decatur in improving the community.

Sincerely,

Curtis W. Vincent, P.E.
Region Engineer

CWV/ree



**ATHENS STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Catherine Wehlburg
Interim President

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur
AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As the Interim President of Athens State University, I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Alabama Center for the Arts, located in downtown Decatur, Alabama, is the region's premier art center and degree program. The project continues a long-standing collaborative academic effort between Athens State University and Calhoun Community College. The Art Center is a venue for college visual and performing arts instruction, community education, cultural events, and it serves as a catalyst for creative growth and expression in North Alabama, Southern Tennessee, and surrounding states. Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services for the individuals utilizing our facilities. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities. If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Catherine Wehlburg, PhD
Interim President

September 19, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Boys & Girls Clubs of North Alabama fully supports Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

Our clubs are community-based organizations that provide young people with a fun, safe, and positive environment. We offer programs and services designed to build character and strengthen life skills. The clubs also have a special focus on children and teens from challenging or disadvantaged circumstances and reach out to children in need, giving them support, guidance, and hope for the future.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Patrick Wynn,
President, CEO



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
Of North Alabama

Corporate Office
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cook museum
NATURAL SCIENCE

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am Dr. Jeanne Payne, Director of Development at the Cook Museum of Natural Science in Decatur, Alabama.

I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Cook Museum of Natural Science has been thriving in Downtown Decatur since June 2019. The Cook Museum of Natural Science started in 1968 with Cook's Mini-Zoo & Museum. The original collection of insects was used to educate and train employees of Cook's Pest Control. The Cook's Natural Science Museum (5,000 square feet) was constructed & opened free to the public in 1980 to benefit and educate the community about the natural world around us. It included displays of insects, minerals, shells, animals, reptiles, birds, and wildlife. After John R. Cook, Sr. passed away, the Cook family sought to create something truly inspiring. So, in 2015, after welcoming over 750,000 visitors, they closed the doors to Cook's Museum and broke ground on the 62,000 sq.ft. Cook Museum of Natural Science. The Museum opened its doors June 7, 2019. Since that time, it has welcomed over 300,000 visitors! It is home to 11 exhibits that showcase different biomes, including Oceans, Caves, Forests, Arctic, Desert, and more!

The Museum has served over 12,000 students through the Cook Museum Education Sponsorship Fund that assists underserved students by subsidizing admission and STEAM education class costs. This sponsorship fund has raised over \$560,000 since its start in 2020.

THE COOK MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE IS A 501(c)(3), PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT OPERATING FOUNDATION

POST OFFICE BOX 2955 | DECATUR, ALABAMA 35602 | 256.351.4505/ph | 256.355.0113/fx | info@cookmuseum.org

GREAT FUTURES START HERE.



Town of Courtland

Post Office Box 160
Courtland, Alabama 35618
256-637-2707

Mayor
Linda Peebles
Councilmen
Billie Mason
Tim Watts
Stacy Hughes
Lee Hitt
Farrell Hutto
City Clerk & Magistrate
Vickie Jackson

We at the Cook Museum are thrilled about the Dr. Sims Hike-Bike Way connecting Old Town to the Cook Museum. This will provide many more people with easier access to educational opportunities at the Museum.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeanne Payne, Ph.D. | Director of Development

Phone: 256-351-4507

P.O. Box 2955 — Decatur, Alabama 35602

jpayne@cookmuseum.org

cookmuseum.org

September 14, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am Linda Peebles, Mayor of Courtland, Alabama. I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Town of Courtland and the Singing River Trail have worked together to identified the downtown route for Courtland, connecting the town park, public housing, historic neighborhoods, commercial district and the downtown square. We are looking forward to working with the City of Decatur connecting our Towns and Communities through The Singing River Trail and this grant.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Linda Peebles, Mayor
Town of Courtland



Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

September 6, 2023

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

My name is Kelly Thomas, and I am the Executive Director of the Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority in Decatur, Alabama. I am writing in support of the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority works with local partners, investors, and developers to ensure ongoing development in the downtown and riverfront areas. Established in 2004, the Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority was formed to provide consistent support and promotion of the city's redevelopment projects, and create easier avenues for private developers to build and remodel in the downtown and riverfront areas. The organization is governed by a board of directors and led by the full-time executive director. Funding for the organization is provided through the city, county, corporate partners, private members, and grants.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me. We greatly appreciate your support.

Respectfully,

Kelly Thomas
Executive Director

Housing Authority of the City of Decatur Alabama

P.O. Box 878 100 Wilson Street N. E. Decatur, Alabama 35602
Phone 256-353-4691 Fax 256-353-4962



Thursday, September 14, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL
Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am Taura L. Denmon, the Executive Director of the Decatur, Alabama Housing Authority. We serve roughly 1300 residents of the City of Decatur and its outlying area. I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2024 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

Since 1945, the Decatur Housing Authority has been invested in this community by providing affordable housing to those in need. We are fulfilling our mission of providing sustainable affordable housing opportunities to assist in improving the quality of life for those we serve. An additional way to improve the quality of life for residents, can be obtained by awarding Decatur, Alabama the FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Taura L. Denmon".

Taura L. Denmon
Executive Director
Decatur Housing Authority



September 8, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Decatur-Morgan County Hospitality Association, I submit this letter in support of the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Decatur-Morgan County Hospitality Association is the local professional association of the hospitality and tourism industry, charged with supporting our members efforts to increase tourism within our community. Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

The Association fully supports the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant, and we believe this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities. If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Don B. Dukemineer, STS, CHSP
President/Treasurer
Decatur-Morgan County Hospitality Association



Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As President and CEO of Decatur Morgan County Tourism, I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

Decatur Morgan County Tourism is a nonprofit organization created exclusively to market Decatur and Morgan County to both groups and individuals, to enhance the economy and increase employment. D.M.C.T. serves as an economic driver, community marketer, industry coordinator, and builder of community pride.

Adding this segment of the Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were cleared and forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create a shared use path, separated bicycle facilities, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities. There will also be streetscape and park-like elements (lighting, local art, and improved landscaping) included on select blocks.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities. If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Danielle Gibson
President & CEO



DECATUR AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Decatur City Hall Annex | P.O. Box 488, Decatur, AL 35602 | Phone 256-341-4716
Fax 256-341-4727 | www.decaturalabamausa.com | Email dhellums@decatur-al.gov



Chairmen of the Board Emeriti
JOHN ANDREW CADDELL
BARRETT C. SHELTON

September 8, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue Southeast
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods – the City of Decatur, Alabama Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

As Director of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), please allow me to express my gratitude for your investment in local infrastructure projects. It is my intention with this letter to express the strongest support for the City of Decatur, Alabama as it seeks funding for the FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant for the City of Decatur, Alabama. I believe that the reconnection of Old Town Decatur to other parts of the city along major corridors would spur economic development, improve safety and enhance the cultural and historical significance in the City of Decatur as well as the State of Alabama. This application would be a sound investment that makes neighborhoods safer, walkable, bicycle friendly and environmentally friendly.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) fully supports this application and agrees to inclusion in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan as well as the Transportation Improvement Program when the grant is approved.

Again, I would like to reiterate my fullest support for the City of Decatur in the ongoing pursuit of this Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhood Grant.

I offer sincere thanks for your time and consideration of this project.

Best regards,

Dewayne Hellums
Dewayne Hellums
Director, Decatur Area MPO

September 14, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

We believe that quality of life and recreational amenities serve a vital role in the development of our local economy and the vibrant growth of our community.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Crystal Brown

Crystal Brown
President & Chief Executive Officer

515 6th AVENUE NE

P.O. BOX 2003

DECATUR, ALABAMA

35602-2003

telephone (256) 353-5312

fax (256) 353-2384

http://www.dcc.org

September 17 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg

Re:FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods-City of Decatur Alabama Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am Dr Bill Sims and have been championing multiuse trails in Decatur AL for the past 25+years. I am writing this in support of the City of Decatur's application for FY 2023 Reconnecting Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

I am a retired Orthopaedic Surgeon and very interested in improving alternate forms of transportation while also improving the quality of life and the air we breathe. This grant would help mitigate our city's traffic problems by taking some cars off the road and allowing safe, non polluting, alternative forms of transportation. Many workers could actually ride their bikes to work as the trails are propagated. The Dr Bill Sims trails (17 miles of paved) will be joined by the Singing River Trail (220 miles all across North Alabama) providing safe means of transportation to many towns and cities across North AL. This project will reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in an underserved and disadvantaged community that was changed by urban renewal efforts in the 70"s. This project will rejuvenate the economic development of Decatur's historic Black Community through place-based economic development. it will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. it will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improves intersections that are safe and comfortable or walking ,biking, or using mobility assistive devices. The result will be high quality beautification and trails for all ages and abilities that connect to destinations throughout Decatur while providing economic development opportunities.

I fully support the City's application for a RCN grant I am certain that this project will have a meaningful impact on Decatur's communities



Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

My name is John Joseph, and I am the Executive Director of The E-Center, a business incubator. I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

We work hard to maintain an environment which is attractive to entrepreneurs, whose efforts we view as vital to our community's current and future prosperity. Strengthening our walking and biking options will help bring our community closer together, create new opportunities for current and future businesses, and contribute a meaningful point of differentiation as we seek to attract and retain entrepreneurs who create jobs for our people. This project is one of those rare opportunities to "move the needle" which can position communities like ours to reach our potential – before redefining it.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable,



connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City’s application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur’s communities. If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

John Joseph IV, J.D.
Executive Director
The E-Center
256-686-2999
john@the-ecenter.org



GOBBLE-FITE
Lumber Company., Inc.

302 Wilson St., NW
Decatur, Alabama
256-353-5713

September 8, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am Pat Fite, President of Gobble-Fite Lumber Co., Inc., in Decatur, Alabama. I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

We are an 89 year old, family owned business. We are fortunate to be located within sight of the Tennessee River and along the existing Dr. Bill Sims Trail. I often enjoy riding my bicycle from my home to the office via the Trail.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.



September 12, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing on behalf of the Land Trust of North Alabama to support the City of Decatur’s application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Land Trust was established in 1987, as Alabama’s first land trust. We are a member-supported, non-profit, whose mission is to conserve natural lands and provide outdoor recreation and conservation education in North Alabama. As part of our efforts, The Land Trust advocates for sustainable growth and a healthy environment. This project speaks directly to our mission of providing active transportation options and connecting people to people and people to nature.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur’s historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City’s goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City’s application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur’s communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Marie Bostick
Executive Director



The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Gobble-Fite Lumber Co., Inc.

D. Patterson Fite, President



MORGAN COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION



September 11, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As president and CEO of the Morgan County Economic Development Association (MCEDA), I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

MCEDA was created to stimulate, promote and assist in the development of new industry and the expansion and development of existing industry within Morgan County. We promote all aspects of our community, and work with our partners to enhance the quality of life, and create economic opportunities for our citizens.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Nails
President & CEO

Arthur Orr
State Senator

2128 6th Avenue SE
Suite 504
Decatur, Alabama 35601

Representative Terri Collins, D-8
Representative Scott Stadthagen, D-9
Representative Parker Moore, D-4
Representative Ernie Yarbrough, D-7

September 11, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As the Morgan County Legislative Delegation we are writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connect to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Senator Arthur Orr
House Majority Leader
Scott Stadthagen
Representative Terri Collins
Representative Parker Moore

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Greetings. My name is Carrie Barske Crawford and I serve as the director of the Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area, a National Park Service-funded program housed at the University of North Alabama. I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area covers the six counties of northwest Alabama. All of these counties are connected to (or were in the case of Franklin County) the stretch of the Tennessee River known as the Muscle Shoals. The shoals stretched roughly from Decatur, Alabama to Florence, Alabama, essentially splitting the river in two. We work on projects connected to the history, culture, and natural resources of the region. We also work to develop the recreation economy in north Alabama. We have partnered with the Singing River Trail to develop a master plan for the trail's path in the MSNHA. This project implements an important phase of the project.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at cbarske@una.edu or by phone at 256-765-5028.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Barske Crawford, Ph.D.

Director, Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area



September 12, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2024 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Application – Decatur, AL

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The North Central Alabama Council of Regional Governments (NARCOG) is pleased to provide you with this letter of support for the City of Decatur's application for an *FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant*. We are a three-county region that serves Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties (including the City of Decatur). Our mission is "Positively Impacting People and Communities", and the proposed project will do exactly this.


The proposed project will provide more than 9-miles of trails that builds upon the and enhances the existing Dr. Bill Sims Trail while introducing the Singing River Trail to Decatur. Also, it will create a safer means of walking and biking to place of recreation, worship, employment, and everyday services. Most importantly the proposed project will reconnect the historic, Black neighborhood of "Old Town" back into the fabric of Decatur and inspire place-based economic development opportunities in an underserved and disadvantaged community that was severed by the urban renewal efforts of the early 1970s. This will be accomplished through the mitigation of the Highway 20/72 corridor that serves as a physical barrier between the "Old Town" neighborhood and the rest of Decatur from the riverfront. A fate suffered by many cities and neighborhoods across our great Nation.

Also, proposed project will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered places rather than auto-centric design and development patterns. It will create an interconnected trail system of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and ADA compliant for walking, jogging, and biking. The

result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities. In closing, NARCOG fully supports the City's application for the *Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant*. This transformative project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on a Black underserved and disadvantaged neighborhood that is incredibly rich in history. Also, it aligns with the goals and objectives in our Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 256.355.4515.

Sincerely,



Robby Cantrell, Executive Director



PEPSI COLA DECATUR LLC

62 IPSCO ROAD S.W.
RATLIFF INDUSTRIAL PARK

PHONE (256) 353-8334
FAX (256) 306-0905

P.O. BOX 2389
DECATUR, ALABAMA 35602



Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods – City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

My name is Ronnie Dukes and I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

I have the honor and pleasure to serve on the Decatur Morgan Tourism Board and the City of Decatur Park and Recreation Board. In addition, I am a member of the River City Runners Club and have been an active runner for the past 45 years. I have spent many hours and miles on our local trails. All of this gives me a great background and understanding of the need for this project and proposal that will support our quality of life and recreational opportunities.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's Communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Ronnie Dukes
Retired Marketing & PR Coordinator



September 8, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods – City of Decatur, AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am Tim Lovelace, Northwest Alabama Division President at Renasant Bank and the Morgan County Co-Chair for Launch, a Tennessee Valley Regional Partnership. I am writing to support the City of Decatur’s application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail, which is the centerpiece of Launch’s regional development efforts, within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in the underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur’s historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City’s goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provide economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City’s application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am confident this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur and the entire Tennessee Valley Region.

Sincerely,

Tim Lovelace
Northwest Alabama Division President
Renasant Bank and Morgan County Co-Chair
Launch



1009 Line St NE
Decatur, Al. 35601
256-350-4545
www.riversideal.com

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods-City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Greeting, my name is June S Hall, Owner of Riverside Senior Living, a premier senior living community in Decatur. I am writing to support the City of Decatur’s application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

My late husband, Steven Hall, and I have owned Riverside Senior Living since 2008. Riverside provides a safe and caring community for the seniors in our area. As we age the two most important aspects of life are good nutrition and socialization with our peers. We are able to accomplish both by serving three hot meals a day, weekly outings, stimulating activities, and a loving environment. Being right on the Tennessee River walking trails, seniors are able to have the best of both with the amazing views and wonderful outdoors.


Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970’s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur’s historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without vehicle. It will help to further

advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

Sincerely,



June S Hall
Owner
Riverside Senior Living

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

My name is Ronnie Dukes and I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

I have the honor and pleasure to serve on the Decatur Morgan Tourism Board and the City of Decatur Park and Recreation Board. In addition, I am a member of the River City Runners Club and have been an active runner for the past 45 years. I have spent many hours and miles on our local trails. All of this gives me a great background and understanding of the need for this project and proposal that will support our quality of life and recreational opportunities.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for

all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods - City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am President of the Rotary Club of Decatur, Alabama. We are a club of one hundred and fifty community leaders. On behalf of all them, I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

I grew up in Decatur and am old enough to remember what Decatur was like before the destruction of the 1970s. I remember the vibrant, pedestrian-oriented city center. I can remember riding my bike to the movies and shopping. This is what Decatur can be again with help of this grant. Connecting all parts of the city with paths providing safe and environmentally friendly transportation.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes,



and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

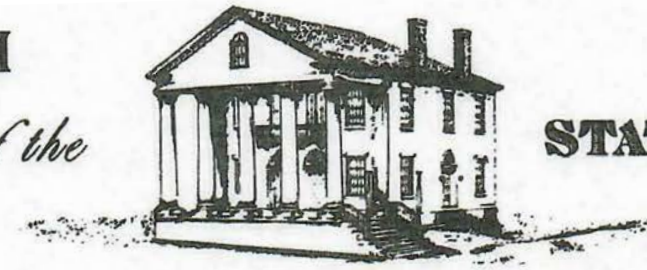
Sincerely,

Charles R. Johnson

President Rotary Club of Decatur

THE BRANCH

of the Bank of the



STATE OF ALABAMA

AT DECATUR

September 8, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg, US Department of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As the Manager of Historic Resources for the City of Decatur, Director of two museums in the city and President of the Morgan County Historical Society, I am pleased to lend my complete support to the City of Decatur's application for an FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant. Enhancement of the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and the Singing River Trail would provide safer walking and biking transportation opportunities in a number of places in our city including historically and culturally important areas, most notably Old Town, perhaps our oldest neighborhood (over 200 years old) and the center of life for our African-American community. An underserved area for many years, Old Town is experiencing a rebirth with a primary component being the construction of a Scottsboro Boys Trial/Civil Rights museum complex to interpret that set of nationally important trials in the 1930s. Safe and attractive transportation alternatives are crucial to the success of this complex as well as to the residents of this historic neighborhood. We would greatly appreciate your kind consideration to this application.

David J. Breland, Manager of Historic Resources, City of Decatur, AL

The Old Bank

CITY OF DECATUR, ALABAMA
925 BANK STREET, N.E.
P.O. BOX 582 DECATUR, AL 35602
205-350-5060

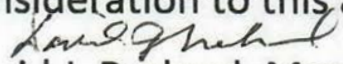
September 8, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg, US Department of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As the Manager of Historic Resources for the City of Decatur, Director of two museums in the city and President of the Morgan County Historical Society, I am pleased to lend my complete support to the City of Decatur's application for an FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant. Enhancement of the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and the Singing River Trail would provide safer walking and biking transportation opportunities in a number of places in our city including historically and culturally important areas, most notably Old Town, perhaps our oldest neighborhood (over 200 years old) and the center of life for our African-American community. An underserved area for many years, Old Town is experiencing a rebirth with a primary component being the construction of a Scottsboro Boys Trial/Civil Rights museum complex to interpret that set of nationally important trials in the 1930s. Safe and attractive transportation alternatives are crucial to the success of this complex as well as to the residents of this historic neighborhood. We would greatly appreciate your kind consideration to this application.


David J. Breland, Manager of Historic Resources, City of Decatur, AL



September 25, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As the Executive Director of the Singing River Trail, I highly recommend the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Singing River Trail (SRT) is a 225-mile proposed greenway system that is currently designing, engineering, and constructing pedestrian trails that connect the people and communities of North Alabama. SRT will link and promote North Alabama's natural resources, health and wellness, active transportation, entrepreneurial ecosystem, quality of life, civic engagement, and tourism assets. The Trail will strengthen regional bonds beyond Alabama and link to existing trails in Tennessee and Mississippi. The City of Decatur is an essential part of the SRT route as a trailhead and as a center of entrepreneurship, job creation, and new opportunities created by a growing outdoor recreation economy in Alabama.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a

high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Dr. John F. Kvach
Executive Director, Singing River Trail



1101 Market Street, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402

Danielle Gibson
President / CEO
Decatur Morgan County Tourism
350 Market Street NE
Decatur, AL 35621

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Ms. Gibson,

I am Lauren Pelto, Director of Government and Community Relations, South Region, with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). I am writing regarding the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

TVA is a corporate agency of the United States, receiving no taxpayer funding, deriving virtually all its revenues from sales of electricity. In addition to operating and investing its revenues in its electric system, TVA provides flood control, navigation, and land management for the Tennessee River system, and assists local power companies and state and local governments with economic and community development, job creation, and improving life in the Tennessee Valley.

The City of Decatur, Alabama is one of TVA's key stakeholders. By the City of Decatur augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur it has the potential to provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail has the potential to revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It has the potential to provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It also has the potential to help further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design.

The proposed project has the potential to create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result has the ability to create a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities, in furtherance of TVA's statutory mission.

The City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant has the potential to further TVA's statutory mission by providing economic development opportunities and has the potential to have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lauren Pelto

Lauren Pelto
Director, Government and Community Relations
Regional Relations - South Region
Tennessee Valley Authority
307 Clinton Avenue West, Suite 300
Huntsville, Alabama 35801



north america's next great regional trail system

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

My name is Brad Collett, and I am director of the Tennessee RiverLine initiative. I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The Tennessee RiverLine is a vision for a continuous system of paddling, hiking and biking experiences along the Tennessee River's 652-mile reach from Knoxville, TN, to Paducah, KY. It reframes the river, adjacent public lands and communities - including the City of Decatur - as a 1.2 million acre "River Park" that offers quality of life opportunities for residents and positions the river corridor as an international destination for outdoor recreation. While on its surface an initiative to accelerate growth in outdoor recreation and eco-tourism, the Tennessee RiverLine is equally a strategy to catalyze new economic development, entrepreneurship and infrastructure investments in Tennessee River communities that enhance equitable access to river spaces and experiences, promote healthy lifestyle opportunities for underserved communities, and cultivate a culture of resource stewardship among area residents and visitors. The Tennessee RiverLine's multi-disciplinary team of full-time professionals is supported by a consortium of local, regional, and national organizations, led by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture with principal partners UT Knoxville and Tennessee Valley Authority, who are invested in realizing this vision and the benefits it promises the 2.4 million people who call Tennessee River communities home.

Consistent with our own initiative's mission and guiding principles, as well as Decatur's articulated aspirations as a Tennessee RiverTowns community, augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities. If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Brad Collett
Director, Tennessee RiverLine
Professor, UT Department of Plant Sciences
Faculty, UT School of Landscape Architecture
(865) 974-7176 bcollett@utk.edu

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL Application

Dear Secretary, Buttigieg:

I am Peggy Allen Towns, historian, and author. I grew up in the historic Old Town Community in Decatur, Alabama and I am writing to express my support for the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant.

This project could be an important means to connect Old Town with other areas of the city while providing good jobs that would economically impact the community. My goal as a historian, has been to preserve the African American history in the city. This project will also highlight the historically forgotten contributions of a once thriving African American neighborhood, and the once booming Vine Street Business district; that like most Black areas became victims of Urban Renewal. As well, with the coming Scottsboro Boys Civil Rights Museum, the Judge James E. Horton house, and historic churches, located in the Old Town Community, I believe the project will promote tourism and provide an economic boost.

The trail will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development. The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device.

I fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kindest Regards,

Peggy Allen Towns

1671 County Road 439, Hillsboro, AL 35643 - Email: Peggytowns@gmail.com

for all who seek to experience the Tennessee River for generations to come



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge
2700 Refuge HQ Road
Decatur, Alabama 35603

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL
Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am the Project Leader for Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and have been an active member of the Singing River Trail partnership since its beginning. I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

Wheeler NWR is an approximate 35,000 acre refuge that borders the City of Decatur on our Western Boundary and provides environmental education, outdoor recreational opportunities, and access to over 600,000 local residents and visitors from across the country per year. Wheeler NWR is just completing a Spur Route of the Singing River Trail along an approximate 5 mile section of Rockhouse Road on the refuge along the Tennessee River that will open to the public next week.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The Grant project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The proposed trail will help revive the economy of Decatur's historic Black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ricky Ingram
Project Leader
Wheeler NWR
256-353-7243 ext 46142



Office of the Mayor
Tab Bowling, Mayor

September 21, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods- City of Decatur AL
Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

May I introduce myself? I am the Mayor of the City of Decatur, Alabama. I am writing to support the City of Decatur's application for an FY2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Implementation Grant.

The City of Decatur has a long history of outdoor recreation when, in 1970, the City of Decatur opened Point Mallard Park. Point Mallard Park is a 700+ acre Family outdoor recreation facility with almost 10 miles of walking and hiking trails, 25 acre wooded campground with 217 full hookup sites and 6 primitive sites. America's first wave pool is also located in Point Mallard Water Park. Point Mallard is home to a beautiful 18-hole golf course and Jimmy Johns Tennis Center with 12 championship hard courts and 4 championship clay courts. The Spirit of America Field, which is a 10 acre laser graded sodded and lighted field, is a multi-purpose field that can be used for soccer fields or can be used for outdoor festivals, all located along the banks of the beautiful Tennessee River.

Augmenting and enhancing the Dr. Bill Sims Trail and Singing River Trail within Decatur will provide a safer means of walking and biking to recreation, places of worship, employment, and everyday services. The project would reconnect Old Town Decatur and spur economic development in underserved and disadvantaged communities that were forever changed after urban renewal efforts of the 1970s. The trail will revive the economy of Decatur's historic black community through place-based economic development. It will provide reliable transportation options for the over 450 households without a vehicle. It will help to further advance the City's goal of becoming an equitable, connected, and multimodal city with people-centered facilities rather than car-centered design and development.

The proposed project will create an interconnected walkway/bikeway composed of shared use paths, separated bicycle facilities, streetscapes, and improved intersections that are safe and comfortable for walking, biking, and using a mobility assistive device. The result will be a high-quality trail for all ages and abilities that connects to destinations throughout Decatur and provides economic redevelopment opportunities.

We fully support the City's application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant. I am certain this project will have a meaningful and sustainable impact on Decatur's communities.

If additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Tab Bowling

Mayor