

April 8, 2016

Mayor Jim Gray
Lexington Fayette Urban County Government
Office of the Mayor
200 E. Main Street
Lexington, KY 40507

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Bud Watson

Lisa Ashner Adkins, J.D.
President and CEO

Dear Mayor Gray,

Blue Grass Community Foundation was created as a permanent endowment in 1967 by a visionary Lexington couple, Irene and C.W. Sulier. They loved the Bluegrass Region that surrounds and envelopes their hometown and wanted to ensure that their charitably minded friends and neighbors have a trusted “go-to” place for giving and engagement.

As a public charity overseen by a volunteer board of community leaders, and run by professionals who are experts in all aspects of local philanthropy, we have awarded tens of millions of dollars in grants. We have an intimate understanding both of the needs of the region – and of the shared vision the people of this area have for a healthier, more vibrant future.

We support the Town Branch Commons Corridor as an important regional development. This focused investment – just a few blocks through the heart of Lexington – can have broad impacts on livability and quality-of-life for our entire area.

- Connecting a growing trailway system to the amenities of downtown Lexington, this project supports bicycle tourism for the entire state and connects urban and rural interests in a way that supports the well-being of both type of communities.
- Providing key opportunities for active recreation, commuting, and adventure-seeking – this project meets the expectations of a modern workforce by helping retain and attract the skilled young people who are the innovators and employers of the 21st century.
- Encouraging and enabling more active lifestyles, this project creates a valuable tool for a region that struggles with obesity, diabetes and other conditions related to inactivity.

This is why the Blue Grass Community Foundation is the lead agency, partnering with the city, to make Town Branch Commons Corridor a reality. BGCF has the responsibility to incubate the Town Branch Commons Conservancy, which will ultimately be a stand-alone, 501c3, with an independent board of directors, who’s mission will be the construction and maintenance of a new a new park and the accompanying multimodal path through the park as part of Town Branch Commons Corridor.

We are currently in year one of a \$50 million capital campaign for this project and are in the early stages of identifying and cultivating qualified prospects. To date, we have received grants from national foundations in the amount of \$472,400 for projects directly related to the Town Branch Commons Corridor. In addition, Lexington is one of five city finalist from across the country competing for one of two, \$5 million, national grant awards, as part of a new and prestigious funding partnership between the Knight, Kresge and Rockefeller Foundations to specifically enhance existing public assets along the Town Branch Commons Corridor.

The region has grown and developed in so many ways since the Blue Grass Community Foundation was formed in 1967. But what makes this region special is the unwavering commitment to stay connected to our sense of place and community. The Town Branch Commons Corridor feeds the heart of that community connection and is very much deserving of support.

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Sincerely,



Lisa Adkins
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