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Organizations Endorse City Bonds

Asheville business and civic organizations have begun to declare support for the \$74 million bond package that the City of Asheville has placed on the November 8th ballot.

The Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, which has over 1,700 business members, has endorsed the bonds. “The projects included in the referendum will help build infrastructure and quality of life,” said chamber chair Tracy Buchanan, CEO of CarePartners. “We thoroughly studied the proposal and are convinced the projects have been well vetted through planning processes that had a lot of public involvement. Plus, interest rates are very low which makes general obligation bonds a smart way to finance the community’s future.”

United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County also declared their support. “Our board decided to endorse the bonds because they will strengthen our community. People who want to live in Asheville need places to live that are priced moderately enough to make that achievable. The \$25 million in housing bonds will help with that,” said physician Leon Elliston, chair of the United Way board. “We see the increase in parks and green space improving the quality of life for all members of our community, and also offering healthy outlets for exercise to our youngsters.”

Sporting groups like the Asheville Buncombe Adult Soccer Association (ABASA), the Asheville Ultimate Frisbee (AUF) league have also joined the list of those endorsing the effort. They cited the \$17 million in parks and recreation bonds, as well as the sidewalks, greenway connections and bike lanes that is proposed in the \$32 million in transportation infrastructure question. “Our city parks are

great community assets. These investments will maintain and improve our recreation facilities for all to enjoy,” said Jono Starr, president of ABASA.

River Arts District Artists, which will see the direct impact of RADTIP construction, sees the bonds as completing many projects that other capital investments from federal and city funds will not cover. “If you look at the map on the City’s website you can see how the projects in the bond will address needs that aren’t met by these other sources of funding,” said Shelley Schenker, president of the group.

Children First/Communities in Schools, Mountain True and the Land of the Sky Association of Realtors also endorsed all three bonds. Many other organizations will be taking up the issue of whether to formally support the bonds as election day approaches.

The GO AVL Bond Committee is comprised of a wide cross section of business and civic leaders. Information about the campaign can be found at www.avlbondsyes.com.

The City of Asheville’s website on the bonds can be found at www.ashevillenc.gov/2016BondReferendum and includes an interactive map, an overview of the three bond questions and the projects they would fund.

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