

Appalachian Mountain Community Health Centers

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To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Appalachian Mountain Community Health Centers, I write to express our support and endorsement of the proposal to develop deeply affordable housing at 339 W. Haywood Street as envisioned by Haywood Street Community Development.

Appalachian Mountain Community Health Centers (AMCHC), a Community Health Center (CHC) and Health Care for the Homeless project (HCH), was funded in May 2015 through HRSA's Section 330 and 330H New Access Point (NAP). AMCHC works to increase access to comprehensive, culturally competent, quality primary, behavioral health and women health care services to a wide swath of Western North Carolina (WNC), focusing on the most disadvantaged communities and our region's most vulnerable residents. As a safety net for North Carolina's most vulnerable population, we support efforts of community partners working to decrease barriers and improve the socioeconomic status of those from disadvantaged populations.

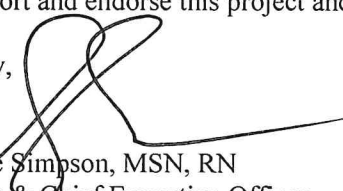
We are aware of the urgent need for all forms of affordable housing in our community. We are familiar with the plans of HSCD to fill some of the particularly critical unmet need for deeply affordable housing by constructing 45 units on the lot at 339 W. Haywood.

This location provides excellent access to residents who need to live near the city center to access essential services. We also note the following specific reasons:

- Housing like that envisioned on this site is essential to address the unmet needs of those living in poverty in our community. In particular, we endorse the vision of HSCD to provide housing "designed with dignity, built for belonging, and created to frustrate poverty."
- The plan allows for activity space for relationship and community building for residents, the neighborhood, and the greater Asheville area.
- The project will be primarily voucher-based. The federal housing voucher program provides a type of payment that low-income individuals can use to pay for rent in the private market. Currently, the number of landlords in Buncombe County who will accept vouchers is extremely limited and many low-income residents are unable to use vouchers that they hold. Experts suggest that 55% of vouchers are unused because of the lack of places willing to accept vouchers.

We support and endorse this project and look forward to it addressing this critical need for housing in our community.

Sincerely,



Shantelle Simpson, MSN, RN
President & Chief Executive Officer
Appalachian Mountain Community Health Centers