



City of Charlottesville Human Rights Commission

Commissioners

June 25, 2019

Shantell Bingham
Chair

MAPP2Health
Charlottesville, VA

Susan W. Lewis
Parliamentarian

Dear MAPP2Health proposal reviewers,

Jeanette Abi-Nader

The City of Charlottesville Human Rights Commission (HRC) would like to express our support for the Piedmont Environmental Council's (PEC) *Open Streets* proposal. As a commission charged with upholding justice and equal opportunity in the City of Charlottesville, we set out to "Collaborate with the public and private sectors for the purpose of providing awareness, education and guidance on methods to prevent and eliminate discrimination citywide." The *Open Streets* proposal presented by the Piedmont Environmental Council is an opportunity for the City of Charlottesville to advance equitable inclusion of all members of our community.

Idil Aktan

Elliot Brown

Pheobe Brown

On the surface, *Open Streets* enables people to use public space in new ways, introduce them to new forms of physical activity and have fun while meeting new people in a space that is physically and socially safe. While the concept seems simple, when implemented with equity in mind this intervention carries the power of breaking down the segregated conditions rampant in our city and forging more powerful community connections across race, class, and culture. Under the consultation of Charles Brown, a senior researcher from the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at the New Jersey Bicycle and Pedestrian Center, the *Open Streets* concept was presented as a means for our city to "ensure that everyone has safe and equitable access to the investments that have been made in the city."

Ernest Chambers

Kathryn Laughon

Andrew Orban

Catherine Spear

Piedmont Environmental Council seeks to accomplish more equitable and safe access to our streets, while encouraging activity across all neighborhoods. To do so, PEC will;

Matthew Tennant

Lyndele Von Schill

- 1) Ensure the Open Streets working group is diverse with balanced representatives from each neighborhood, including public and subsidized housing sites or residents traditionally excluded.
- 2) Utilize support from mentors, neighborhood champions, and organizations like the Human Rights Commission to assure that Open Streets planning occurs in an inclusive and equitable manner.
- 3) Actively support residents in working across differences in race/color, age, ability, gender and religion to create *Open Streets* program accessible to all.
- 4) Ensure comprehensive buy-in of every resident and business in the affected area when obtaining a permit to block streets.

Robert Woodside

Melvin Grady

Olivia Patton

Ann J. Smith

We believe *Open Streets* has the power to shift our city's social dynamics and equitably support the development of a more inclusive, safe, and active city for all residents.

Thank you for your consideration,

Shantell Bingham, Chair
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