

**From:** 'Alexandra Lusak' via councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>  
**Sent:** 2/20/2022 3:44:02 PM  
**To:** AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Do Racial Equity! Support a Track at Memorial Stadium!

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: Asheville City Council,

Dear City Council and City Manager Campbell,

I want to ask you to help our City make good on our promises to East End/Valley Street neighbors and to make good on our commitment to racial equity by setting aside American Rescue Plan funds to build a track at Memorial Stadium.

For decades, Black neighbors have faced the trauma of racism in many ways in our City -- including the devastation wreaked by urban renewal. More than 10 years ago, these neighbors asked that a track be built at Memorial Stadium. It was envisioned as a place where neighbors could maintain and enhance their health together. We know walking, jogging, and running help to improve heart health, lower the risks of chronic diseases, support healthy blood sugars, lower blood pressure and reduce stress among many other health benefits. We also know that health disparities due to systemic racism in all areas of life negatively impact the lives of so many black Ashevilleians.

Amid ongoing discussions about reparations and racial equity, one concrete and immediate positive decision City leaders can make to build trust and promote racial equity is to keep Asheville's promises to the Black community regarding the track at Memorial Stadium.

I join my voice with the chorus of East End/Valley Street neighbors and call for the City to improve Memorial Stadium in ways that support neighborhood use and to set aside ARPA funds for the following purpose:

- \*Build a 6 lane track around the entire field for neighbors to use for regular exercise
- \*Reduce the field by 6 yards (this still being FIFA compliant)
- \*Remove bleachers from the far side and only have bleachers on the side closest to McCormick Field
- \*Create a parking plan for Memorial Stadium

As an interested, informed, communally engaged resident of Asheville, I stand in solidarity with my East End/Valley Street neighbors and strongly urge you to follow through on your promises to our African American community. I ask that you join me in committing to prioritize racial equity in all of your decisions. Thank you for your service to our community.

the Rev. Alexandra S. Lusak

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