

From: 'Melody Pajak' via councilgroup <AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov>
Sent: 2/14/2022 3:48:18 PM
To: AshevilleNCCouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Cc:
Subject: Do Racial Equity! Support a Track at Memorial Stadium!

: 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 years now you have promised to address reparations toward the Black community of the great city of Asheville. For too long your economic emphasis has been on making more money regardless of who has to make the sacrifices. It's time for you to make effective decisions that will benefit our people not our pocket books.

For decades, neighbors who have faced racism in many ways for decades in our City including the devastation of urban renewal. More than 10 years ago, these neighbors asked for a track to be built at Memorial Stadium. It was dreamed as a place where neighbors could support 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 more 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 Ashevilleans.

As we talk of reparations and racial equity, one thing the City could do to build trust and do racial equity is to keep its promises to the Black community regarding the track at Memorial Stadium. For once please do the right thing.

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

Thank you for hearing the concerns of the East End/Valley Street neighbors and for following through on your promises to our African American community. I ask that you commit to racial equity in all of your decisions. And finally, thank you for your service to our community.

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