

**CITY OF MORGANTON  
NORTH CAROLINA**

**Resolution of Support  
Foothills Conservancy  
Oak Hill Community Park & Forest Project**

WHEREAS, in December, 2018, Foothills Conservancy entered into a purchase option with Caldwell Timber Partners, LLC to acquire 651 acres in Oak Hill for conservation as a future community park and forest for public recreation, education, community agriculture and other public uses for the citizens of Morganton and Burke County, with a total project cost of \$3.1 million; and,

WHEREAS, the citizens of the City of Morganton and Burke County have expressed strong support for the protection of the property for a future public park and forest, and for its multiple public benefits for future generations; and,

WHEREAS, in February 2019 Foothills submitted a Clean Water Management Trust Fund grant application requesting \$1.2 million of State funds toward purchase and acquisition of the property; and,

WHEREAS, by June 2019 Foothills received private fund pledges of \$585,000 +/- as a portion of privately sourced matching funds; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina Highway 126 along Freedom Park/High School is the National Park Service's OVNHT commemorative auto route and beginning point west of the historic colonial era "Yellow Mountain Road"; and,

WHEREAS, the project will protect at least three miles of surface waters, including one mile of Canoe Creek - an impaired stream on the NC Division of Water Quality's 303d list, and riparian buffer conservation is an important strategy to protect the Canoe Creek and Catawba River watershed from further degradation; and,

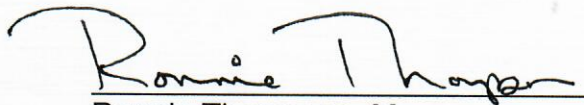
WHEREAS, the City of Morganton has a long history of exceptional recreation programs and fully endorses the preservation of natural recreational space; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Morganton recognizes the benefits of enhanced tourism opportunities throughout Burke County; and,

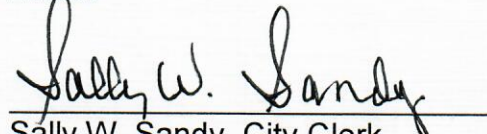
WHEREAS, the City of Morganton supports the future development of the property as a community park and forest.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Ronnie Thompson, Mayor of the City of Morganton resolve that the City of Morganton strongly supports any and all Foothills Conservancy grant applications for State, Federal and private funding for the Oak Hill Community Park & Forest project, and recommends CWMTF grant funding to Foothills by the State's Clean Water Board of Trustees and recognizes the Oak Hill Community Park & Forest effort as a benefit to the citizens of Morganton and Burke County, and tourists and visitors to the area in conjunction with the City of Morganton's Nature's Playground branding, as a potential future connection opportunity and complement to the City's parks and greenway system.

Adopted this the 5<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2019.

  
Ronnie Thompson, Mayor

Attest:

  
Sally W. Sandy, City Clerk

