City Council Agenda Item Request
Submit to Clerk's Office
No later than 30 days before proposed Council meeting

1. **Date submitted to Clerk's Office:** 06/16/2025

2. **Primary contact person and Department requesting agenda item:** Pete Wall, Parks and Recreation, and Lucy Crown, Transportation

3. **Requested Council meeting date:** 07/29/2025

4. **Subject:** Natural Surface Trail Agreement with AVL Unpaved for two natural surface trails

5. **Action Requested:** Allow the City Manager to enter into an Agreement with the Asheville Unpaved Alliance, which will allow them to build, manage, and maintain two natural surface trails.

6. **Note if time-sensitive and why:** Yes, Construction timelines.

7. **Potential fiscal impact(s) - if known by staff at the time of request:** No fiscal impact to the City. The project is funded by AVL Unpaved.

8. **Identify all vendor outreach for Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE).** NA - AVL Unpaved will procure the trailbuilder.

9. **Identify all Boards, Commissions, and Council Committees with tentative dates - add in the vote and recommendation from each Board:**
    - Planning & Economic Development Committee, June 12, 2023 - informational item as part of an update on the GAP Plans.
    - Multimodal Transportation Commission, June 28, 2023 - informational item as part of an update on the GAP Plans.
    - Greenway Committee, June 1, 2023 - informational item as part of an update on the GAP Plans.
    - Planning and Zoning Commission, June 1, 2022 - presented as part of the adoption of the GAP Plans - voted unanimously in support of adopting the GAP Plans.

10. **Identify key issues:**
    - In October 2022, the Asheville City Council adopted the GAP Plan. The updated Greenway Master Plan identifies natural surface trails as a new greenway typology.
    - Typology assignment defines the experience, width, easement requirements, and other design characteristics.
    - The Asheville Unpaved Guidebook, part of the GAP, provides a framework for partnerships, construction guidelines, and accessibility requirements for this typology that will connect users to their natural environment, as well as to other neighborhoods, transportation hubs, and commercial districts, for a fraction of the cost of traditional greenway design and construction.
    - The AVL Unpaved Alliance ("Alliance") is a consortium of community partners: Asheville on Bikes, Connect Buncombe, and Pisgah Area SORBA.
    - The Alliance has raised the necessary funds for these projects, including a TPDF grant of $188,355 awarded by the Tourism Development Authority in 2022.
    - The two trails are:
        i. French Broad River West Trail, located near the French Broad River Greenway, and
        ii. Azalea Park Trail, located in Azalea Park.

- The Alliance will hire a professional trail builder through an external Request for Proposal (RFP) process to construct the trails, under the project management of the Alliance, with oversight from City staff.
- Once built, the Alliance will provide three years of trail maintenance. If both parties agree, the agreement can be renewed for an additional three years.
- When this agreement expires, the City will maintain the trails.
- The trails will be natural surface (dirt) and built to the highest professional trail-building standards, providing sustainable trails with minimal environmental impact.
- The trail construction will also include trailhead kiosks.
- This pilot project initiative will utilize property controlled by lease or ownership by the City of Asheville and will activate City-controlled properties that are currently not managed.
- During the planning stage for these trails, the City conducted public outreach to adjacent property owners and neighborhood groups where the trails will be located.
- The top concerns of attendees of these meetings were encampments in the woods and impacts on wildlife.
- Both trail projects were viewed favorably by attendees of the sessions.

- Maps
  - Azalea Park Trail
  - French Broad River West Trail