



For Immediate Release

Representatives from the Front Royal-Warren County EDA presented to the Warren County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, January 10, 2023. The Avtex Ad Hoc Committee members, Jorie Martin and Scott Jenkins, along the County Director of Economic Development were in attendance discuss the Former Avtex Fibers Conservancy Parcel. It is the FR-WC EDA's recommendation to convey the Conservancy Parcel, consisting of 240 acres, from the EDA to the County.

Shortly after the final work shift concluded at the Avtex Fibers Plant in 1989, the community began to wonder about the future of the Avtex Property. In 1993, the Parks and Recreation Department released the document, *Front Royal's Plan for Parks, Trails, Bikepaths and Greenways*; and while the plan addressed the entire community, it was one of the first local plans that stated, "The Avtex property on the West side of Front Royal may be amenable to eventual Park use, following the resolution of issues concerning the EPA project to modify the land and ponds...retention of the area as an openspace/wildlife preserve is the most desirable use of this land following the completion of its cleanup in the following 10-20 years." Another document published in 2000, *The Avtex Fibers Conservancy Park Master Plan Report*, was the culmination of work by stakeholders and the community that focused specifically on the Avtex Property and stated, "The Master Plan recommends restoration of the basin area into a conservancy park that combines ecological restoration and conservation of native habitats with passive recreation opportunities for local residents and visitors."

Remediation of the Superfund site began in 2000 and continues today, though the EPA and FMC are consistently monitoring the property to ensure it is currently safe and in the future. The FR-WC EDA recognizes that now is the time to fulfill the community's vision by implementing the 2000 Master Plan. Nationally there is an increase in the public's interest for accessible green space and passive recreation, additionally the Avtex Trail would provide more opportunities to experience Front Royal's location along the Shenandoah River.

"Moving forward with the implementation of the Conservancy Master Plan is just the beginning of a process to revitalize the site," said Ad Hoc Committee Member Jorie Martin. "Avtex Fibers was once an economic engine of Front Royal, and the new trail will begin to change the perception of the property and create a fresh outlook for redevelopment on the remaining parcels."

The FR-WC EDA will continue to work with Warren County, Town of Front Royal, EPA, and FMC to ensure that the development of conservancy property and ultimately the redevelopment of the entire Avtex Property is a top priority for our community.

For more information regarding the FR-WC EDA's vision for the Former Avtex Fibers Conservancy Parcel, contact the Avtex Ad Hoc Committee Members Jorie Martin at mmartin@wceda.com and Scott Jenkins at sjenkins@wceda.com, and the presentation can be found at wceda.com. Information regarding the EPA's clean-up efforts and reports can be found at www.epa.gov.

About the Front Royal-Warren County Economic Development Authority

The mission of the Front Royal-Warren County Economic Development Authority (FR-WC EDA) is to strengthen the economic growth of our community, by fostering a friendly business environment and providing services to create and retain quality jobs in Warren County. The Authority also supports tourism, recreational, and arts & cultural initiatives within the community to provide a better quality of life for the County's residents, workers, and visitors. Coordination with the Board of Supervisors, County staff, the Town of Front Royal, and State agencies are integral to promoting economic development and tourism throughout Warren County.

For more information contact Jeffrey Browne, FR-WC EDA Board of Directors Chair at 540-635-2182, jbrowne@wceda.com.