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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## COMMUNITIES COLLABORATE TO COMPLETE MIAMI 2 MIAMI CONNECTION

*Cincinnati, OH* – Fifteen organizations in Butler and Warren Counties have partnered to reenergize a 2002 vision to connect Greater Cincinnati's two longest trails, the Little Miami Scenic Trail and Great Miami River Trail. Spearheaded by Green Umbrella's Tri-State Trails initiative, the goal of the *Miami 2 Miami Action Plan* is to outline a path forward to complete the multi-use trail network that will connect Hamilton to Mason.

The Miami 2 Miami Connection Feasibility Study was originally conducted fifteen years ago, led by OKI Regional Council of Governments. The study recommended a 125-mile network of multi-use trails, bike lanes, and shared roads, of which 84 miles were identified as priority corridors. Since 2002, 36 miles of the network have been constructed, and an additional 37 miles outside of the original project scope now exist.

"Liberty Township and neighboring communities have experienced significant growth over the past fifteen years, and our residents are demanding more facilities for walking and biking," said Liberty Township Trustee Christine Maticic, who helped organize and lead the 2002 plan. "Communities and developers around Butler County are building trails to improve quality of life, increase property values, and spur economic development. If we all collaborate to complete the Miami 2 Miami Connection, the benefits will increase exponentially for our region."

Seven communities that the network plans to traverse through—Hamilton, Fairfield, Mason, Fairfield Township, West Chester Township, Liberty Township, and Deerfield Township—have passed a memorandum of understanding solidifying their commitment to collaborate to plan, construct, and maintain the trail system. Five additional stakeholders (Monroe, MetroParks of Butler County, Butler County Transportation Improvement District, Butler County Visitors Bureau, and Butler Tech) and three community foundations (Community Foundation of West Chester-Liberty, Hamilton Community Foundation, and Fairfield Community Foundation) have also contributed to advance the Miami 2 Miami Action Plan. Led by Tri-State Trails, the project design team includes Human Nature and AECOM.

"Hamilton's investment in the Great Miami River Trail is increasing economic activity and improving the vibrancy of our downtown," said Hamilton Councilmember Rob Wile, an avid cyclist. "The Miami 2 Miami Connection presents a tremendous opportunity to connect to other destinations and the Little Miami Scenic Trail."

"Mason has been steadily investing in trail connectivity in the City for more than a decade. With nearly 30 miles of existing trails, we look forward to completing our eastern segment of the Miami 2 Miami Connection by 2022, linking the Little Miami Scenic Trail to our network," said Mason Mayor Victor Kidd. "Our business community values the trail network as an amenity to attract and retain a talented workforce."

For context, the Little Miami Scenic Trail is the longest connected trail in Tri-State Trails' 10-county service area, spanning over 75 miles from Cincinnati to Springfield, Ohio. It is also the southern leg of the 320-mile Ohio to Erie Trail, connecting Cincinnati to Cleveland, Ohio. The Great Miami River Trail is the second-longest trail, with plans to span over 95 miles to connect Fairfield to Piqua, Ohio, of which, eighty-three miles are existing and twelve miles are currently being planned.

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### About Tri-State Trails

An initiative of Green Umbrella with funding from Interact for Health, Tri-State Trails is an alliance of trail advocates advancing a vision to connect and expand our region's trail network. Our mission is to connect people and places with a regional trails network that enhances vibrancy and equity in our community. For more information, visit [www.tristatetrails.org](http://www.tristatetrails.org).

