July XX, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg

Office of the Secretary

U.S. Department of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Ave., SE

Washington, DC 20590

**Subject: Connect GREENE (Growth, Recreation, Employment, Education and Networks Equitably)**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

With this letter, I express my support for the Connect GREENE initiative, which entails a federal RAISE Grant application being submitted by multiple Greene County, Ohio jurisdictions. The projects to be funded by this grant are multi-use trails that are part of the 2021 Greene County Master Trails Plan – the REACH Xenia trail project, Yellow Springs-Clifton Connector and Bellbrook-Spring Valley Connector.

These three trails will connect the nation’s largest paved trail network (currently over 360 miles of connected multi-use trails) with multiple state parks, businesses, community facilities, and neighborhoods. This promotes access to outdoor recreation, healthy activity, safety, low-impact transportation alternatives, and more equitable access to jobs, education and community services and amenities. It also expands economic activity through the promotion of tourism and job access. The three projects work together to accomplish these goals as follows:

REACH Xenia

* Links two segments of Xenia divided by an expressway, connecting the Progress Drive bike path with Colorado Drive via a new roadside path, and to the heavily used regional Little Miami Scenic Trail
* Connects racially and economically diverse Xenia neighborhoods to the REACH (Recreation, Education and Community Health) facility and a growing business corridor, promoting affordable (non-automobile) and equitable access to regional recreation, job training, health and employment

Yellow Springs-Clifton Connector

* Links the Villages of Yellow Springs and Clifton and connects the Little Miami Scenic Trail to John Bryan State Park, the Clifton Gorge and Glen Helen Nature Preserves, and other popular venues, expanding access to regional recreational amenities to a broader spectrum of the population
* Increases safety for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages & abilities who already use these amenities

Bellbrook-Spring Valley Connector

* Connects Sugarcreek Township and the Village of Bellbrook to the Little Miami Scenic Trail and the Village of Spring Valley, promoting active transportation to mitigate climate change and inequity
* Extends trail system connectivity to a rural area, substantially increasing access to economic and recreational opportunities as well as essential services, sparking job & business growth

I strongly urge you to fund the transformative Connect GREENE initiative, which brings significant health, economic, equity, environmental, safety and other quality of life benefits to the region, state and nation.

Sincerely,

INSERT SUPPORTER NAME/TITLE/SIGNATURE