



North  
Hamilton Crossing  
**NHX**

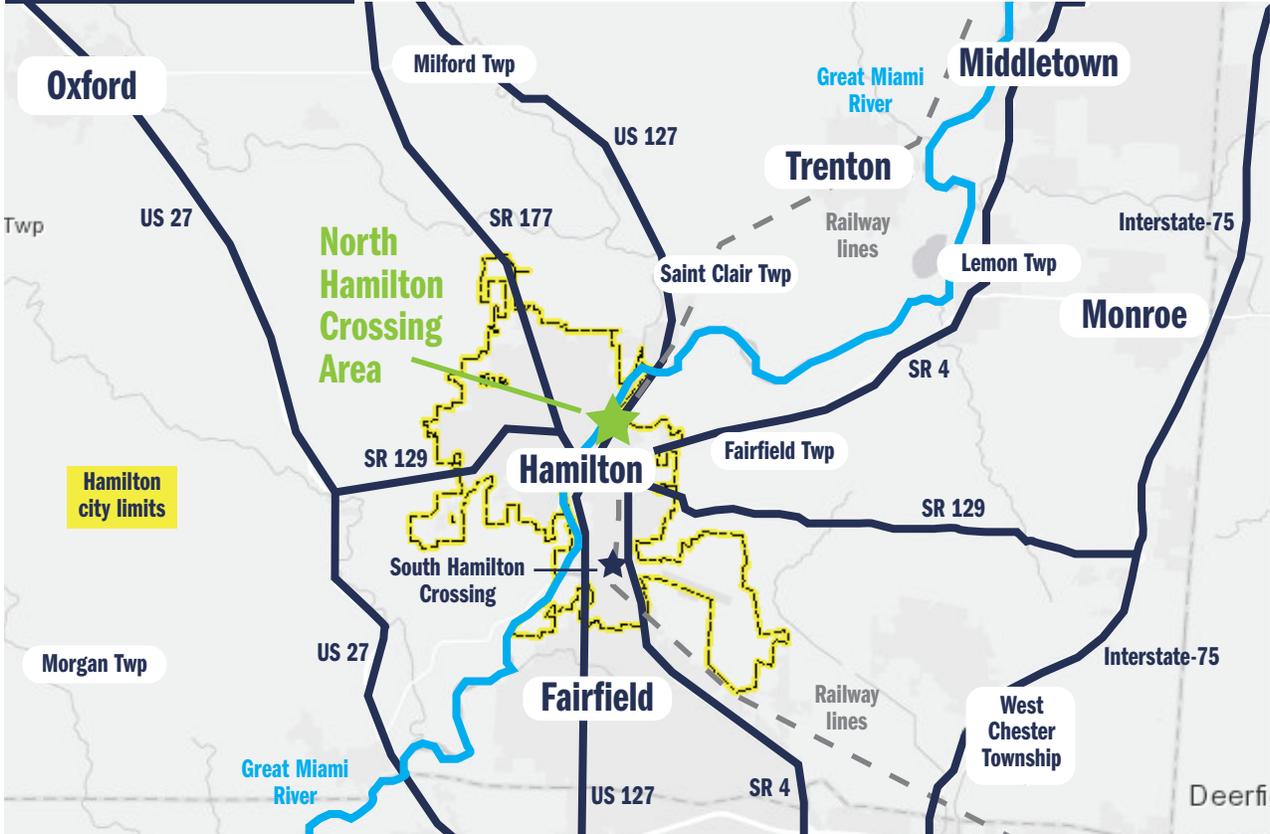
Hamilton, Ohio | 2020 BUILD Grant Application

# CONTENT

- 01** EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- 02** PROJECT DESCRIPTION
- 08** PROJECT LOCATION
- 10** FUND USE & SOURCES
- 12** MERIT CRITERIA
- 23** PROJECT READINESS



**Local Context Map**



# Executive Summary

The City of Hamilton lies in the heart of the Cincinnati-Dayton metroplex in southwest Ohio and is the seat of Butler County. While this region has seen tremendous economic growth over the past 40 years, the Rust Belt city of Hamilton has had a different story. The same factors that once allowed this city to become a major regional industrial power are now a hindrance to redeveloping for the modern era. The Great Miami River and CSX & Norfolk railways cut through the center of the city, creating mobility issues for those traveling east or west. At present, there is currently only one east-west route which is unimpeded by both the river and the railways. This lack of mobility and connectivity is the greatest weakness for both the City of Hamilton and Butler County to redevelop into prominence in the twenty-first century.

The economic stresses that these transportation issues have placed on the City can be illustrated by the fact that, despite major job growth in Butler County over the past ten years, the City of Hamilton still has a high rate of economic depression in many of our neighborhoods. For this reason, two Opportunity Zones were designated in the City in 2018. Because the nearest interstate is directly east of Hamilton, any major projects that take place within our community are heavily dependent upon our effective east-west mobility, which is currently lacking in capacity.

For the past 25 years, the City of Hamilton has been taking control of its future by addressing east-west connectivity. In the 1990s, we constructed State Route 129 (SR 129), an 11 mile four lane divided highway which gave the City efficient and direct access to Interstate 75. SR 129 runs through downtown Hamilton and includes the Jack Kirsch Underpass (under the rail lines) and the High-Main Bridge over the Great Miami River. This is our only unimpeded east-west route in the City at present.

East-west connectivity was addressed in the southern half of Hamilton by the creation of the South Hamilton Jim Blount Crossing Overpass. This project eliminated an at-grade railroad crossing and replaced it with a bridge to improve access to major amenities such as an office park, Miami University Hamilton, and 60+ acres of developable land at University Commerce Park.

Now that these projects have been completed, the City of Hamilton is on the verge of an economic renaissance. A redevelopment project is taking place at the former Champion Mill, a paper mill which operated in the heart of downtown Hamilton for over a century. Spooky Nook Sports is investing \$144 million to create a sports and event center which will draw an anticipated 1.1 million visitors annually. North Hamilton Crossing will provide direct access from SR 129 to the northern part of Hamilton, while crossing both the Great Miami River and the busy railways that run through our community.

A BUILD investment of \$2.8 million into initial planning activities for North Hamilton Crossing will complement the major investments which have already been made into the overall Butler County transportation grid, both increasing capacity in the region and creating greater economic development opportunities.



# Project Description

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## - History -

The City of Hamilton is the county seat of Butler County, Ohio, which sits in the heart of the Cincinnati-Dayton metroplex in southwest Ohio. Hamilton is a community of approximately 62,477 with a thriving downtown and urban arts scene. As a recovering Rust Belt community, Hamilton has relied heavily on manufacturing as a driving force of its development over the past hundred and fifty years. With the slow decline of manufacturing since the later half of the twentieth century, Hamilton also experienced a significant decline during this period. The community reached its economic nadir in 2012, when SMART Paper (formerly Champion Paper Mill) and Mohawk Paper officially closed. At its height during World War II, Champion employed 4,000 men and women, but when the mill closed in 2012, its 40+ acre site sat vacant and deteriorated into the worst of urban blight.

Today, this site represents hope for Hamilton's future as the location of the largest single redevelopment project in Hamilton's history. Through a \$144 million private-public partnership, the former paper mill is being transformed into Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill, a youth sports and events center which will draw 1.1 million visitors to the community every year. These visitors are expected to spend upwards of \$37 million off-site<sup>1</sup> while visiting Hamilton, contributing to local tourism economy and generating demand for more businesses to serve these visitors. (This data available in the attached "Tourism Economics Economic Impact Study.pdf".) Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill broke ground in fall 2018 and will be completed in 2022.

## - Challenges -

### **Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill**

Hamilton's largest redevelopment project is currently underway at the former Champion Paper Mill. This \$144 million project is creating a sports & events center in the heart of downtown Hamilton. The company owns a similar facility in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, an area with similar demographics, and in 2017 Tourism Economics completed an economic impact survey for the site (see attached document). It found that Hamilton can expect approximately 1.1 million visitors per year, or around 21,000 visitors every week, which for a community of just over 62,000 offers significant transportation challenges.

### **Great Miami River & Railways**

Hamilton is bisected by two barriers which run north-south through our community. The Great Miami River cuts through the center of Hamilton, and the city currently only has three bridges that cross it: the High-Main Bridge that connects to downtown Hamilton, the Columbia Avenue Bridge south of downtown, and Black Street Bridge just north of downtown. Currently, the High-Main Bridge is the busiest of the three, with annual average daily traffic (AADT) of 35,881 vehicles. Black Street Bridge, which is nearly 100 years old, has an AADT of 12,283, and is projected to last no more than another 20 years. With only two narrow lanes and narrow sidewalks, the bridge was not designed for the kind of traffic demands that Spooky Nook Sports will generate.

Railways are also a major barrier to east-west travel through Hamilton. According to a 2016 Public Utilities Commission Ohio (PUCO) report<sup>2</sup> (attached), Butler County has some of the most dangerous railroad crossings in Ohio. Nearly 70 trains pass through Hamilton daily, and many of these trains must travel very slowly due to the two 90 degree turns (S-curve) that are located downtown. This creates backups and potential crashes at 26 at-grade crossings in the community. In 2018, the City completed South Hamilton Crossing, a \$32 million overpass that drastically increased safety and reduced traffic congestion throughout the southern part of the community. However, there is not an east-west route with a grade separated crossing north of downtown Hamilton.

### **North Hamilton Crossing**

North Hamilton Crossing will add significant capacity to both the City of Hamilton and Butler County's traffic infrastructure, diverting traffic away from the most congested east-west thoroughfares. In addition to improving air quality and quality of life for those who live in Hamilton, it will also increase safety and the response times of public safety. Finally, it will open up access to undeserved and impoverished areas, increasing the economic potential of these regions and generating future redevelopment projects.

# Project Description

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## - North Hamilton Crossing -

North Hamilton Crossing is a full corridor project that will create a new, unobstructed east-west route through the northern part of Hamilton. Once completed, the route will move traffic from NW Washington Boulevard in the west, creating a new roundabout at the intersection of NW Washington Boulevard-North B Street-West Elkton Road. It will create a new bridge over the Great Miami River and a connection into the north-south US 127; an overpass over the rail lines; and an eventual connection to State Route 4 (SR 4) and SR 129 in the east. The project will address the aforementioned challenges by creating modern streets, bridges, and intersections to accommodate traffic to and from Spooky Nook Sports as well as divert traffic from the most heavily congested thoroughfares in Hamilton. This will facilitate more efficient travel through Butler County and allow for safer and faster movement of goods and people.

### **Project components:**

- Roundabout at the intersection of NW Washington Boulevard, North B Street, and West Elkton Road
- New bridge from North B Street over the Great Miami River to US 127
- Connection from US 127 to SR 4 via railroad overpass
- Connection from SR 4 to SR 129

**The City of Hamilton is requesting funds to implement the following phases of planning and design:**

### **Phase I: Purpose and Need - estimated cost \$350,000**

Define the existing deficiencies and system linkage needs that will be improved by North Hamilton Crossing. We will conduct an assessment of current and projected traffic conditions and evaluate the effectiveness of a new route from NW Washington Boulevard to SR 129.

### **Phase II: Preliminary Engineering - estimated cost \$1,950,000**

Complete a feasibility study to develop the preferred alternative for the river and railroad crossings, connecting North B Street to SR 4. This study will be used to determine the most cost effective route while maintaining environmental stewardship and completing needed environmental studies for this section.

### **Phase III: Design - estimated cost \$1,500,000**

Prepare detailed construction drawings and specifications for the section between North B Street and US 127. This includes a new bridge over the Great Miami River and conversion of the nearby two lane Black Street Bridge into a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle path.



# Project Description

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## - Recent Infrastructure & Amenities Investments -

The City of Hamilton has been aggressively investing in infrastructure improvements and downtown amenities throughout the community for years in anticipation of the Spooky Nook Sports redevelopment project. North Hamilton Crossing has been identified as one of the key next steps to increasing our infrastructure capacity, reducing traffic congestion, and creating safer streets in Hamilton. Other recent and upcoming investments include:

### **Great Miami River Recreational Trail: Completed 2009, \$4.25M**

This walk-bike trail sits on the eastern bank of the Great Miami River and runs along the 99-mile stretch of the Great Miami Riverway. It is accessible via the High-Main bridge, which is half a mile south of the North Hamilton Crossing area..

### **Third Street Plaza: Completed 2015, \$1.6M**

This outdoor event space was created in German Village, one of Hamilton's three historic districts, to allow for more outdoor activities.

### **Mercantile & Artspace Lofts, Completed March 2015, \$22.9M**

Prior to the Mercantile Loft redevelopment, High Street buildings had a 2% occupancy rate, but through the redevelopment of two key historic buildings, 70 new apartment units have been created in the Central Business District. The Mercantile and Artspace Lofts represent a \$11.1M and \$11.8M investment, respectively.

### **East High Street Corridor & Intersection Improvements: Completed 2017, \$11.5M**

This infrastructure project created a safer and more welcoming portal into Hamilton. More than \$11 million was invested into new traffic lights, wider turn lanes, and improved streetscape. The intersection between High Street and US 127 was expanded and improved.

### **RiversEdge at Marcum Park: Completed 2017, \$5.8M**

This amphitheater and greenspace on the east bank of the Great Miami River is visible from the project area. It has become the center of downtown activity, drawing tens

of thousands of visitors annually to events such as David Shaw's Big River Get Down. This space was chosen by the American Planning Association as one of the Best Public Spaces in America in 2018.

### **South Hamilton Crossing: Completed 2018, \$32M**

A \$32 million railroad overpass that facilitates more efficient east-west travel in Butler County and eliminated one of the most dangerous at-grade railroad track crossings in the community and state. This project was completed through a City of Hamilton partnership with the Butler County Transportation Improvement District (BCTID) and demonstrates our capacity to move forward large-scale catalytic infrastructure projects.

### **Main Street Streetscape Improvements: Completed 2019, \$3.7M**

The City has invested more than \$3.7 million into replacing a 100+ year old underground water main to accommodate the increased residential and commercial activity in the corridor. The City also made streetscape enhancements to match planned streetscape elements around Spooky Nook Sports.

### **Hamilton-Mason Road Roundabout: Completed 2019, \$1.76M**

This new roundabout was constructed at the main entrance to Hamilton Enterprise Park, where Hamilton-Mason Road meets Hamilton Enterprise Park Drive. The business park employs approximately 630 people and is one of two primary areas of industry in the community.

# Project Description

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## - Recent Infrastructure & Amenities Investments -



*Marcum Park & Marcum Apartments*

### **Marcum Apartments: Completed 2019, \$13M**

This complex has 102 luxury apartment units and five commercial spaces. The Marcum was the first new development in downtown Hamilton in more than two decades.

### **Main Street Intersection Improvement I: Completed 2019, \$3.7M**

The 3-point intersection of Main Street, Millville Avenue, and Eaton Avenue was reconstructed to align Millville and Eaton Avenues into a standard 4-way intersection with Main Street. This will facilitate the increased traffic coming to Spooky Nook Sports as well as increase safety.



*RiversEdge Amphitheater*

### **5-points Roundabout: Completion 2021, \$2.5M**

A new roundabout will be constructed to increase traffic flow and replace a confusing intersection where five streets (Grand Boulevard, Hancock Avenue, Hamilton-Mason Road, Tuley Road, and Tylersville Road) come together.

### **Main Street Intersection Improvement II: Completion 2021, \$2.7M**

This intersection has five streets (Main Street, Haldimand Avenue, Cereal Avenue, McKinley Avenue, and Western Avenue) coming together at a confusing and dangerous crossing on one of our most high-traffic streets. The intersection realignment project is beginning in summer 2020 and will be completed in summer 2021.



*Third Street Plaza*

### **Infrastructure Investment at Spooky Nook site, Completion 2021, \$14.4M**

The City is in the process of completely overhauling the infrastructure, both utility pipes and streets, in the area around Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill. One street is being rerouted while another is being completely reconstructed to allow greater flow of traffic through the area.



*South Hamilton Crossing*

### **Beltline Recreational Trail, Ongoing, \$7M**

The Beltline Recreational Trail is a 3-mile bike path that is being constructed on the west side of Hamilton. The path will connect more than 25,000 residents to the Great Miami River, downtown Hamilton amenities, and the regional Great Miami River Recreational Trail. Phase I of this project is under construction and will be completed by fall 2020, and Phase II is actively being planned with a target construction year of 2022.

# Investment & District Map

## Beltline Recreational Trail

## North Hamilton Crossing: Preliminary Route

Fort Hamilton Hospital

North Hamilton Opportunity Zone

Main Street Business District

Rossville Historic District

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German Village Historic District

Dayton Lane Historic District

North End Neighborhood

BCRTA Hamilton Hub

Central Business District

- 1 Main Street Intersection Improvement Project II (\$2.7M)
- 2 Main Street Intersection Improvement Project I (\$3.7M)
- 3 Main Street Infrastructure Improvements (\$3.7M)
- 4 Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill (\$144M)
- 5 Third Street Plaza (\$1.6M); Mercantile & Artspace Lofts (\$22.9M); RiversEdge at Marcum Park (\$5.8M); Marcum Apartments (\$13M)
- 6 East High Street Corridor Project (\$11M)
- 7 South Hamilton Crossing (\$32M)

Great Miami River Recreational Trail (\$4.25M)  
Beltline Recreational Trail (\$7M est.)

Not on map: Hamilton-Mason Road Roundabout (\$1.76M); 5-points Roundabout (\$2.5M)

-  Hamilton City Boundaries
-  Proposed North Hamilton Crossing Route
-  Great Miami River
-  Railway Lines



# Streets & Thoroughfares Map



- Hamilton City Boundaries
- Proposed North Hamilton Crossing Route
- Great Miami River
- Bike & Pedestrian Trails
- Railway Lines
- 1 Jack Kirsch Underpass
- 2 South Hamilton Crossing

# Project Location

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## - Important Streets -

### **SR 129**

This project was completed in the 1990s and provided access from Hamilton to I-75. SR 129 is an 11 mile four lane divided highway which is used by thousands of people every day to travel to and from the western parts of Hamilton and Butler County.

### **Jack Kirsch Underpass**

The Jack Kirsch Underpass is the grade separated railway crossing on SR 129. This underpass allows traffic to flow east-west on SR 129 without being stopped by the nearly 70 trains that pass through Hamilton (traveling north-south) daily. Until recently, this was the only grade separated railway crossing in Hamilton.

### **High Street / SR 129 (east)**

High Street is Hamilton's primary east-west corridor of entry. The street is contiguous with SR 129, which connects Hamilton to Interstate 75 (I-75) to the east. This street is on the east side of the Great Miami River.

### **Main Street / SR 129 (west)**

Main Street is contiguous with High Street on the west side of the Great Miami River, connected via the High-Main Bridge, one of three bridges crossing the river. The street connects into SR 129 to the west.

### **High-Main Bridge**

High-Main Bridge connects High Street and Main Streets on either side of the Great Miami River. This is currently Hamilton's most heavily travelled bridge over the Great Miami River, with an average of 35,881 cars daily, and congestion on this bridge will go up once Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill opens.

### **South Hamilton Crossing**

This \$32 million railroad overpass facilitates more efficient east-west travel through Hamilton in the south part of the city. The project eliminated one of the most dangerous at-grade railroad track crossings in the community and state and was completed through a City of Hamilton partnership with the BCTID. The project began in 2016 and was completed in 2018 under-budget. This project, along with the creation of SR 129, has greatly impacted the regional transportation infrastructure, and demonstrates the City's capacity to move forward large-scale catalytic infrastructure projects.

### **Columbia Bridge**

This is the City of Hamilton's southernmost bridge over the Great Miami River. It connects to Neilan Boulevard in the east and SR 128 in the west. The bridge has an average of 26,069 cars daily.

### **Black Street Bridge**

Black Street Bridge is the existing bridge that crosses the Great Miami River north of downtown Hamilton. It is a vintage bridge, built in 1922, that connects from North B Street on the west to US 127 on the east. At present, the bridge has an average daily traffic count of 12,283, but it is expected to have nearly double that in 2050, or about 22,265. Once North Hamilton Crossing has been constructed to replace Black Street Bridge, plans are to turn into a pedestrian bridge over the river.

### **North B Street / SR 128**

North B Street / SR 128 is on the west side of the Great Miami River and runs north-south parallel to the river. The North Hamilton Crossing river bridge will connect into this street on the west.

### **NW Washington Boulevard**

NW Washington Boulevard connects to North B Street and moves traffic to the west. The street will be part of the entire corridor assessment.

### **SR 4**

SR 4 is part of the national highway system and a critical north-south thoroughfare through Hamilton and Butler County. SR 4 will provide an important connection between SR 129 and North Hamilton Crossing.

### **Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard / US 127**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard / US 127 is a north-south thoroughfare that runs between the train tracks and the east bank of the Great Miami River. The North Hamilton Crossing bridge over the river will connect into this street on the east.

### **Joe Nuxhall Boulevard**

This street runs through the North End neighborhood and will likely provide the connection from US 127 to SR 4.

\* Geospatial data for the North Hamilton Crossing area is provided in the attachment "North Hamilton Crossing Proposed Route Geospatial Data.pdf"

# Project Location

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## - Impacted Districts and Organizations -

### **Spooky Nook Sports Redevelopment Project**

Spooky Nook Sports is redeveloping the former Champion Paper Mill site, a brownfield in the heart of downtown Hamilton, into Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill. Currently, the buildings that make up this site have been officially designated by the City of Hamilton as a blighted area as defined by the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 725 and a Brownfield Site as defined under 42 U.S.C. 9601(3). The site is approximately 45 acres along the Great Miami River and consists of Mill 1 on the west side and Mill 2 on the east side closest to the river. Once completed, the sports and events center will feature 160,000 square feet of indoor court space, a 220,000 square foot events and conference center, a 60,000 square foot Fitness Center, medical and early-childhood facilities, and more. According to a 2017 economic impact report (attached), the facility will bring approximately 1.1 million visitors to downtown Hamilton every year.

### **Prospect Hill & North Hamilton Opportunity Zone**

North Hamilton Crossing will connect directly into the neighborhood known as Prospect Hill on the west side of the Great Miami River. This area, Butler County Census Tract 147, is also called North Hamilton Opportunity Zone after it was officially designated an Opportunity Zone by the State of Ohio in 2018. According to 2019 statistics, this neighborhood has an unemployment rate of 6.5%, nearly double the rate in Butler County; a poverty rate of 12.9%; and a median household income of \$42,292. Median household income in Census Tract 147 falls substantially below the ALICE sustainability level of \$65,424, below the state median household income of \$52,407, and far below the Butler County median of \$62,188. 26.5% of families in Census Tract 147 receive Food Stamp and/or SNAP benefits.

### **North End Neighborhoods**

This neighborhood is in the northeast part of Hamilton and is the area through which North Hamilton Crossing will connect to SR 4. The area has a high rate of poverty and lacks east-west connectivity due to the Great Miami River and busy railways. Residents in this neighborhood will benefit greatly from this transportation project.

### **Kettering Health Network Fort Hamilton Hospital**

Less than a mile from the North Hamilton Crossing area is Kettering Health Network's Fort Hamilton Hospital, the largest hospital in Hamilton. Fort Hamilton Hospital employs nearly 1,000 people, including 346 medical providers via Kettering Physician Network. In 2018 alone, the company invested upwards of \$14 million into creating new medical offices at two different sites.

### **Butler County Regional Transit Authority**

The Butler County Regional Transit Authority's (BCRTA) Hamilton hub of transit, located on Market Street between Second and Third Streets, is less than a mile from North Hamilton Crossing. Bus lines that travel both east and west throughout the county pass within walking distance of this project.

### **Central Business District**

Hamilton's Central Business District (CBD) is just across the Great Miami River from the project site and has seen more than a dozen new businesses open in the past five years. Like the Main Street Business District, the Central Business District will benefit from a decrease in vehicular traffic, particularly benefiting the several restaurants with outdoor seating in this corridor.



# Project Location

## - Impacted Districts and Organizations -

### Historic Neighborhoods

Hamilton has three historic districts: Rossville (southwest of project area), German Village, and Dayton Lane (both southeast of project area). These neighborhoods combined have nearly 2,000 residents make up the core of Hamilton's urban living identity, and all have strong neighborhood groups which have expressed enthusiastic support for North Hamilton Crossing.

### Oxford & Neighboring Communities

Hamilton is the seat of Butler County and has important thoroughfares that connect to other neighboring communities, including Fairfield to the south, Middletown to the north and east, and Oxford to the north and west. Oxford in particular will benefit from North Hamilton Crossing. This city has Miami University, which is a major employer, a driver of economic investment and innovation, a large and highly respected public education institution.

### Main Street Business District

This residential and commercial area has seen immense reinvestment in recent years. It is half a mile south of the project area, and with more than 30 new small businesses opened in the past three years, many small business owners are looking forward to increased traffic and sales from the Spooky Nook redevelopment. With less traffic on Main Street, the Main Street Business District will become more walkable and more easily accessible for those who want to shop or dine.

Over \$14 million has been invested in this neighborhood since 2013. Between retail shops, food and drink options, and the dozen new upper floor residential units that opened in 2019 alone, this area is quickly becoming a popular choice for young professionals.

See attached letters of support from these and other organizations.

## Opportunity Zones Map



# Funds, Sources, & Uses

<b>Project Funding Sources</b>		
<b>Funding Category</b>	<b>Funding Amount</b>	<b>% Total Project</b>
Committed Federal Funds	-	0%
Non-Federal Match	\$1,000,000.00	26%
BUILD Request	\$2,800,000.00	74%
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$3,800,000.00</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Project Funding Sources by Component*</b>				
<b>Description</b>	<b>Non-Federal Match</b>	<b>BUILD Request</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>% Total Project</b>
Purpose and Need	\$100,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$350,000.00	9.2%
Preliminary Engineering	\$510,000.00	\$1,440,000.00	\$1,950,000.00	51.3%
Design	\$390,000.00	\$1,110,000.00	\$1,500,000.00	39.5%
Funding Totals	\$1,000,000.00	\$2,800,000.00	\$3,800,000.00	100.0%

<b>Non-Federal (Local) Match Summary</b>	
<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Local Match</b>
City of Hamilton 2020 Funding	\$375,000.00
City of Hamilton 2021 Funding	\$375,000.00
Butler County Transportation Improvement District	\$250,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,000,000.00</b>

<b>Project Cost Breakdown</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>% Total Project</b>
Purpose and Need	\$350,000.00	9.2%
Preliminary Engineering	\$1,950,000.00	51.3%
Design	\$1,500,000.00	39.5%
<b>Total Project Development Cost</b>	<b>\$3,800,000.00</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*No Federal Funds have been committed to North Hamilton Crossing, so this column was omitted

# MERIT CRITERIA



# Safety

Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill is anticipated to bring 1.1 million visitors to downtown Hamilton annually. This is an average of about 21,000 people coming into a community of around 62,000 every week. The City of Hamilton and its partners have been working to prepare the community for such a dramatic increase in tourism with the recent completion of infrastructure projects intended to improve traffic flow and safety including, among others, the South Hamilton Crossing Grade Separation Project, East High Street corridor improvements, and Main Street infrastructure and intersection improvements. North Hamilton Crossing will complement and expand upon these investments by adding additional capacity to an already strained infrastructure system.

### Crash Reduction

Black Street Bridge will experience increased traffic demand once Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill opens. The intersection of Black Street and North B Street already has a C-rated level of service and has had 25 crashes in the past three years<sup>3</sup>. The intersection of Black Street with US 127 has had 30 crashes in the past three years. With the AADT of the bridge projected to increase from 12,300 to 22,265 vehicles per day by the year 2050, we expect that the number of crashes in this area will double.

North Hamilton Crossing will also decrease the traffic congestion on SR 129, which will decrease crashes in this corridor. At present, SR 129 is identified as a priority corridor by the Ohio Department of Transportation, due to the high number of crashes along the route. It has several intersections with some of the highest crash rates in Ohio<sup>4</sup> (see chart), including an intersection for which Hamilton is applying

for an Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) safety grant of \$4.475 million. Once completed, North Hamilton Crossing will provide a continuous connection from NW Washington Boulevard to SR 4 and eventually to SR 129, diverting traffic away from these dangerous intersections and decreasing the number of potential crashes. A BUILD planning grant will allow us to determine the exact impact North Hamilton Crossing will have on the number and rate of crashes and fatalities.

## Ohio Crash Data 2020

Intersection	# crashes in last 3 years	Crash rate rank in Ohio
SR 129 & US 127	142	40th
SR 129 & North B Street	77	57th
SR 129 & SR 4	130	67th

### Did you know?

South Hamilton Crossing was a project first proposed over 100 years ago as a grade separation at one of Hamilton's most dangerous railroad crossings. The crossing was a non-standard, sharp-angle, and multi-track intersection which caused many fatalities over the years (during its most deadly year in 1910, 12 people died at the crossing). South Hamilton Crossing was officially closed in 2016 when work on the overpass began. Today, the completed overpass provides safer and more efficient east-west travel and is a testament to the collaboration between the City of Hamilton and the BCTID.

# Safety

## Rail Safety

Butler County currently has some of the most dangerous rail crossings in the State of Ohio<sup>5</sup>. In 2016, there were seven crashes and three deaths, making Butler County the deadliest in the state. Many of the county's most dangerous crossings are in Hamilton, passing through downtown neighborhoods and other highly populated areas, backing up traffic and causing drivers and pedestrians to take undue risks out of impatience or inattention. With nearly 70 trains traveling through Hamilton each day, this creates a serious concern for safety for both pedestrians and drivers.

At present, Hamilton lacks an east-west grade separated railroad crossing on the north side of the City. This creates heavy congestion at the nearest underpass (SR 129). North Hamilton Crossing includes plans to create an overpass, which will relieve congestion on SR 129; and divert traffic away from more dangerous at grade crossings throughout the community.

## Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing & Bicycle Infrastructure

Hamilton does not currently have a dedicated bicycle route connecting riders on the east and west sides of Hamilton. This will become a bigger problem going forward as the Beltline Recreational Trail is completed on the west side of the city, and cyclists will expect to use it to get to the Great Miami River Recreational Trail on the east. The Beltline Trail, currently under construction, will additionally offer an easier connection for pedestrians to access downtown amenities. North Hamilton Crossing is meant to replace Black Street Bridge, which will then be converted into a pedestrian bridge. This would decrease the potential points of conflict between pedestrians or cyclists and vehicle traffic by as much as 90%<sup>6</sup>. Additionally, North Hamilton Crossing will include multi-use lanes going in each direction, which is currently lacking on all three bridges in Hamilton.



# State of Good Repair

## Regional Transportation Network

North Hamilton Crossing has been identified in the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) 2050 Plan, the Butler County Thoroughfare Plan, and in the City of Hamilton's comprehensive plan, Plan Hamilton, as a key to maintain the existing regional infrastructure in a state of good repair. Black Street Bridge was designed and built at a time when the state of Ohio had only 760,000 vehicles on the road; in 2019, Ohio had a total of 12,844,679 vehicles registered, of which 408,599 were in Butler County. North Hamilton Crossing will have five lanes, compared to two on Black Street Bridge, and it will also include bicycle infrastructure to accommodate many forms of transportation.

This project exemplifies the need for investment in order to maintain a state of good repair, as Butler County faces a serious threat to the efficiency and mobility of its transportation network without the creation of North Hamilton Crossing. Already, traffic congestion is a major issue in the county seat, due to the Great Miami River and the many railroad crossings that are frequently blocked. With the completion of Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill and the future growth of the tourism industry in Hamilton in particular and southwest Ohio in general, these issues will become unmanageable unless serious investment in increased capacity is made. As a route that will bridge both the railroad tracks and the river, North Hamilton Crossing will divert traffic away from the major intersections downtown and the other bridges.

Finally, accessibility and mobility will be improved, as North Hamilton Crossing will serve as a multimodal link between the east and west sides of the Great Miami River. North Hamilton Crossing will provide a crossing for pedestrians and cyclists and connect directly into the Great Miami River Recreational Trail and other regional amenities.

## Life Cycle Costs and Asset Maintenance

This planning grant will allow the City of Hamilton to determine the long-term cost structure of North Hamilton Crossing as well as the overall life cycle costs. It will also allow us to create the most optimized plan for long-term asset management and maintenance. At present, the City of Hamilton plans to create a long-term maintenance fund, which we anticipate will be partially funded by the City of Hamilton's State of Ohio gas tax.

## Black Street Bridge

One of the primary goals of North Hamilton Crossing is to bring current infrastructure into a state of good repair by addressing deficiencies of the current Black Street Bridge. This nearly century-old bridge is not designed to handle the upcoming traffic demands of Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill. Built in 1922, it is a narrow two-lane bridge (12,283 AADT with 7% truck traffic) and is projected to become obsolete within 20 years. At present, it lacks accessibility and regional connectivity, and this problem will only get worse when Spooky Nook Sports opens. North Hamilton Crossing will replace this bridge while expanding overall access to the northwestern part of Butler County.



# Economic Competitiveness

## Efficiency of Movement and Connection

North Hamilton Crossing will address a critical gap in Butler County's transportation infrastructure. At present, our community has only one continuous east-west route that is not obstructed by trains, and this route is often highly congested. A new street that goes over both the busy railways and the river will make the movement of goods and services through our community more efficient. Additionally, the project will be located north of downtown Hamilton, an area that is currently only served by one narrow two-lane bridge. North Hamilton Crossing will not only provide quicker connections to areas north and west of Hamilton, it will also accommodate more freight transportation as it will have 5 wide lanes. Those living on the west side of the river in particular will benefit, as residents and companies north and west of Hamilton will have greater access to regional and national routes such as SR 4, SR 129, US 127, and I-75. These routes are major job center connectors, and decreasing congestion on them will benefit workers and consumers alike.

## Reduction in Commuting Times

Many Butler County residents face heavy traffic congestion at peak hours before and after work. With 20,392 workers commuting from Hamilton daily, and 13,526 coming into Hamilton for work every day<sup>7</sup>, this is a concern for the continued growth of our local economy. Hamilton's residents living north and west of downtown commute an average of 27.74 minutes to work daily, while Hamilton residents living east of the Great Miami River only commute approximately 23.87 minutes<sup>8</sup>. With an average per capita hourly income of \$13.49, this extra 3.87 minutes of commute time accounts for 32.25 hours of lost productivity per commuter, per year (assuming 250 commuting days, or five days a week for 50 weeks of the year), or a total of around \$4.35 million assuming a conservative 10,000 commuters are traveling from west of the Great Miami River every day.

## Access to Developable Land

Situated between Cincinnati and Dayton, Butler County is a growing employment hub. Interstate-75 runs through the eastern portion of Butler County, which has driven a lot of development in this area. However, because of poor connectivity, growth in the part of the county west of the Great Miami River has been significantly limited due to having only one unobstructed east-west route through Hamilton across both the train tracks and the Great Miami River. The western portion of Butler County has high economic development potential, but at present is difficult to access. North Hamilton Crossing will provide much easier and quicker access to these areas, which will increase the possibility for future industrial and commercial development projects. According to GIS data, there are 2,199 acres of undeveloped, brownfield, and agricultural land within two miles of the proposed North Hamilton Crossing corridor, and up to 20,565 acres within five miles. These potential future projects would create much-needed jobs for populations living on the north and west side of Hamilton as well as in the townships north and west of Hamilton, which are largely rural.

## Opportunity Zones

Hamilton has two designated Opportunity Zones, and the new North Hamilton Crossing corridor will be partially in one of them, called the North Hamilton Opportunity Zone. The future creation of North Hamilton Crossing will greatly incentivize investment into this area of Hamilton.

### *Did you know?*

Hamilton has seen a huge resurgence in its local small business communities over the past several years. Entrepreneurs in both the Main Street and Central Business Districts are preparing for increased traffic and sales due to tourism driven by Spooky Nook Sports. There have been over 80 new small businesses opened in our community since 2013 alone.

# Economic Competitiveness

## Amplifying Ongoing Redevelopment Efforts

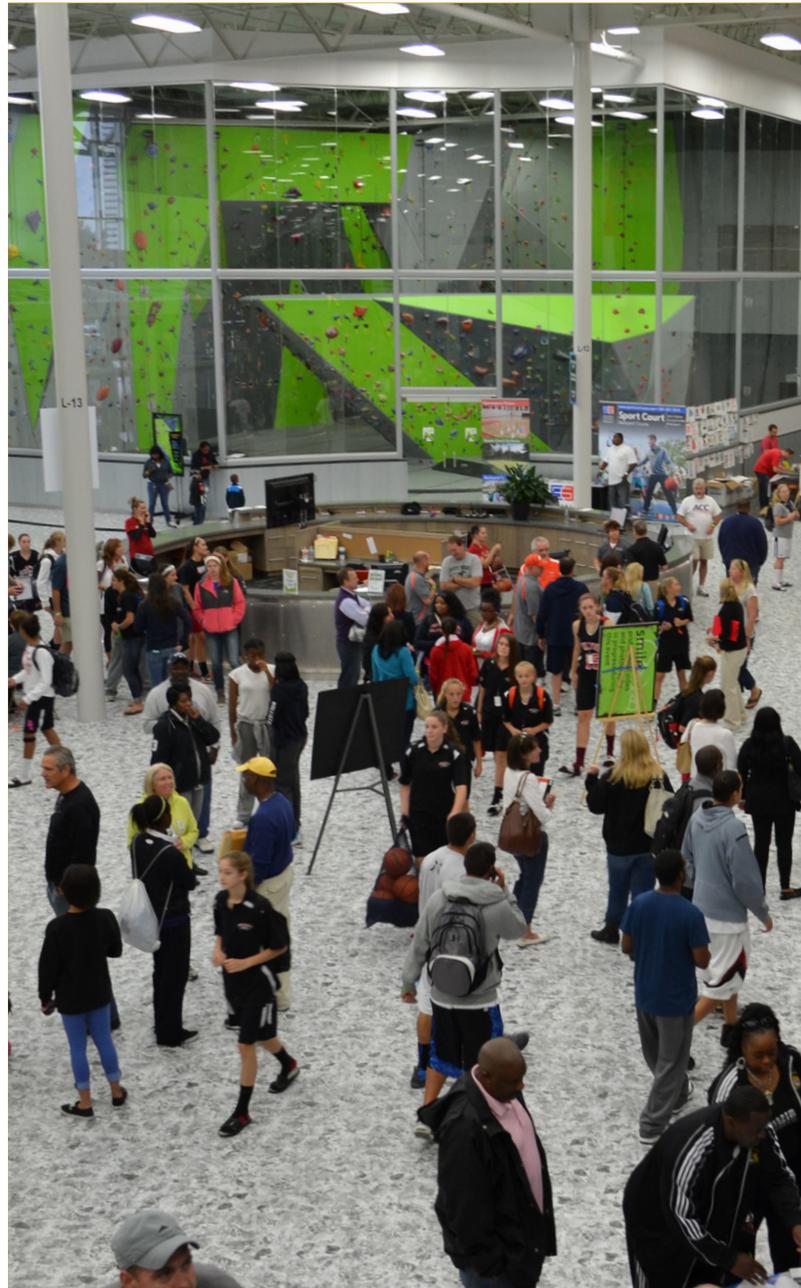
As a former Rustbelt community, Hamilton has completely transformed in recent years. Less than a decade ago, our economy was struggling to recover from the recession, our downtown vacancy rate was well over 90%, and the local economy was losing companies and jobs that had sustained this community for decades. The new City Administration worked with existing civic leadership to discuss how to restore Hamilton to its former glory. More than \$188 million has been invested into downtown redevelopment projects since 2013, while private companies have made capital investments of over \$247 million across the community. Over 1.25 million square feet has been redeveloped in the urban core, leading to 76 new small businesses and 188 new downtown residential units. Because of our existing redevelopment momentum, a private entity is now investing \$144 million into a former brownfield in downtown Hamilton to turn it into Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill.

With the increased tourism in the community that will result from Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill, we anticipate seeing an even greater level of reinvestment in our community in the coming years. Already, developers are approaching the City of Hamilton about taking on brownfield, greenfield, and urban redevelopment projects in the community. In 2018 and 2019, the City of Hamilton Economic Development Department met with nearly two dozen different developers to give them tours and information on available buildings and land.

North Hamilton Crossing will amplify these ongoing efforts by facilitating quicker and more efficient travel to our community, for both residents and visitors. Despite the number of new amenities and residential units in Hamilton, we commonly hear that traffic congestion often prevents people from going downtown to shop, dine, or attend events. By diverting through traffic away from our main thoroughfares, and by creating new

bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, North Hamilton Crossing will reduce the traffic burden on our major thoroughfares and provide transportation alternatives for those who live in the area.

Finally, a 2008 study of major US cities found a statistically significant relationship between an increase in congestion and a decrease in long-run employment growth<sup>9</sup>. North Hamilton Crossing will mitigate this issue by decreasing overall congestion thus allowing for further job growth in our community once Spooky Nook Sports opens.



# Economic Competitiveness

## Impacts from Tourism

More than a million visitors will come to Spooky Nook Sports in Hamilton once it opens in 2022<sup>10</sup>. This dramatic increase in regional tourism will generate at least \$37 million in off-site spending, according to a 2017 economic impact survey by Tourism Economics (attached). These visitors will spend money at local retail establishments, at restaurants and bars, on transportation, on recreational activities, and more. North Hamilton Crossing will extend the benefits of this increased tourism to nearby shopping districts by providing quick and easy access to these districts. Once North Hamilton Crossing has been created, the City plans to turn Black Street Bridge, which is across the street from the entrance to Spooky Nook Sports, into a pedestrian bridge that connects directly into German Village and the Central Business District.

## Property Value Increases

Residents that live in the northern areas of Hamilton often face heavy traffic congestion and blocked railroad crossings if they want to travel east-west through Hamilton. There are 6,285 households that live within proximity of North Hamilton Crossing. A 2018 study of the Great Lakes mega-region found that in urban communities such as Hamilton, traffic has a negative impact on housing prices<sup>11</sup>. If the reduction in congestion creates a conservative 1% increase in housing values, this would result in an approximate \$9.3 million increase in housing values. With greater access to these areas, we expect to see a modest increase in property values, as well as future redevelopment that is likely to raise property values, both residential and commercial, even more.



# Environmental Sustainability

The City of Hamilton owns and operates its own utilities, including water, wastewater, gas, storm, and electric, and has a long track record of incorporating sustainability into our projects. In 2016, we completed construction on Meldahl Hydroelectric Facility, the largest such facility on the Ohio River. As a result of our investments into sustainable generation, half of our energy comes from renewable non-carbon emitting sources. The construction of North Hamilton Crossing will be powered by this sustainable energy, and the project overall will provide a number of other environmental benefits.

## **Walkability & Bikeability**

By reducing traffic congestion in the urban core, North Hamilton Crossing will enhance walkability in Hamilton. Heavy traffic and the associated noise disincentivizes residents and visitors to walk downtown, and the lack of pedestrian infrastructure means that many residents choose to make even short trips by car rather than walking or cycling. North Hamilton Crossing will include creating a multi use trail along the new route, which will provide a valuable connection from the Beltline Recreational Trail on the west side of the river to the Great Miami River Recreational Trail on the east. Finally, once North Hamilton Crossing has been completed, the City plans to turn Black Street Bridge into a pedestrian bridge to serve residents and visitors going between Spooky Nook Sports, the Central Business District, and other amenities developed in the area.

## **Brownfield Redevelopment**

The City of Hamilton has had success redeveloping brownfields into newly functioning sites, and North Hamilton Crossing is a critical project to help us continue these efforts. Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill is the most recent and largest brownfield redevelopment project in our community, and will have a catalytic impact on redevelopment and economic growth throughout the region. North Hamilton Crossing will not only serve this project, but it will also open up access to and drive interest in other nearby brownfields, including the former Beckett Paper Mill.

Additionally, this project is likely to make use of the former Chemdyne site, a superfund site that began remediation in 1980 with the EPA's emergency removal of 17 potentially explosive waste drums. With over 30,000 drums of chemical waste, this site was responsible for at least five fish kills and two chemical fires. Today, the site is still under environmental remediation with an active pump and treat station. An EPA status review of the site is expected to take place in 2020<sup>12</sup>. The history of this site dramatically limits its future utility as a brownfield development site, and current plans are to include this site as part of route construction for North Hamilton Crossing by placing embankment to facilitate the railroad overpass.

## **Mitigating Traffic Congestion**

As mentioned above, east-west travel through Hamilton is highly impacted by the combination of limited river crossings and the busy rail lines that cut through Hamilton. The two grade separated crossings in the city, SR 129 and South Hamilton Crossing, are heavily trafficked given the fact that nearly 70 trains pass through Hamilton daily, often blocking the 26 at-grade crossings. North Hamilton Crossing will provide an additional unobstructed east-west route, greatly reducing congestion and travel time for residents, commuters, and public transportation services, particularly during rush hour. A reduction in congestion will result in declining emissions and improving air quality; this planning grant will allow the City to determine the exact level and value of environmental benefits from North Hamilton Crossing.

## **Planning for Environmental Concerns**

The planning process will include determining whether the creation of North Hamilton Crossing will have an adverse impact on local air quality, water quality, wetlands, and/or endangered species. Potential impacts identified will be avoided to the fullest extent possible and unavoidable impacts will be mitigated.

# Quality of Life

## Increasing Transportation Choices

The City of Hamilton's east-west connectivity is severely limited by the Great Miami River and multiple rail lines that bring more than 70 trains through Hamilton every day. Currently, there is only one east-west route through Hamilton that is not restricted by the river or rail lines, SR 129. The greater Hamilton area and adjacent communities, which are significant job hubs, are not well-served by the highway system. In 2019, it was found that around 74,233 vehicles travel directly through Hamilton every day<sup>13</sup>.

These existing conditions create significant traffic congestion and delays. Employers and residents frequently vocalize concerns about the current level of congestion, which is expected to increase when Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill opens in 2022, drawing over one million visitors to downtown Hamilton every year. During the creation of Plan Hamilton, the City's comprehensive plan, which was approved in March 2019, the Mobility Committee identified North Hamilton Crossing as the top priority to accomplish in the next 15 years, citing east-west traffic congestion as a primary reason for businesses and residents choosing to live elsewhere.

North Hamilton Crossing will create a much-needed second direct east-west route through Hamilton, reducing congestion and associated time delays on SR 129. Broadly speaking, residents living on the west side of the River travel approximately 4 more minutes to work than those living on the east side. The 2020 BUILD planning grant would allow the City of Hamilton to gain a better understanding of the time savings gained and how many projected motorists would benefit from North Hamilton Crossing.

## Access to Services

Fort Hamilton Hospital, the largest hospital in Hamilton, is less than a mile west of the Great Miami River. Unfortunately, the best and most unobstructed route to the hospital requires public safety to use the often-congested SR 129 to avoid being blocked by trains, and then to use the busy High-Main Bridge or the narrow Black Street Bridge. North Hamilton Crossing would create a more direct route for public safety to travel east-west across the northern part of the community, thus increasing their response times and decreasing travel times. In addition to medical care, residents in the northern part of Butler County would also have greatly increased access to grocery stores, childcare, Hamilton City School District buildings, and more.



# Quality of Life

## Bicycle Connectivity

Currently, Hamilton has limited bicycle connectivity across the Great Miami River and over the railroad lines that bisect Hamilton. This project will add two new safe bicycle crossings that will connect other bicycle infrastructure in the community, such as the Beltline Recreational Trail and the Great Miami River Recreational Trail.

North Hamilton Crossing will create the first safe cross-town bicycle route by adding a bicycle lane along the route. This will connect the east side of the community to the Beltline Recreational Trail, and might eventually be utilized by the planned Miami 2 Miami regional connection trail. This bike route that will be part of North Hamilton Crossing would serve 38,000 residents who live along the route, many of which live in economically depressed neighborhoods and would benefit from a safe bicycle/pedestrian option to access employment opportunities.

Once North Hamilton Crossing is completed, the City of Hamilton intends to convert Black Street Bridge into a pedestrian-bicycle-bus only bridge, encouraging visitors from the Spooky Nook Sports Complex and Hamilton residents alike to bike, walk, and use transit to access our downtown commercial districts. We anticipate that this multimodal bridge will save tens of thousands of short vehicular trips annually.

Cycling has many quality of life benefits, including improved health outcomes, reduction in air pollution, and increases in real estate values. A Danish study conducted over 14 years with 30,000 people aged 20 to 93 years found that regular cycling protected people from heart disease<sup>14</sup>. Between 2014 and 2016, Butler County reported 258 cases of lung cancer, 24,180 cases of COPD, 34,397 cases of asthma, pediatric and adult cases combined, and received an “F” rating in ozone pollution from the American Lung Association. Creating safe cycling pathways will help to encourage more people to utilize their bicycles instead of vehicles, thus reducing local pollution levels. A study of Indianapolis’s Cultural Trail found that property values within one block of the trail rose 148 percent between 2008 and 2014—far more than in the city as a whole. Studies of the Minuteman Bikeway in Massachusetts and the Katy Trail in Dallas found that homes near the trails sold faster and for more money than homes farther away<sup>15</sup>.



### Did you know?

Hamilton’s Beltline Recreational Trail will connect approximately 25,000 residents to the Great Miami River Recreational Trail (future US Bike Route 25), which is part of the largest paved trail network in the United States. This network connects residents to other major cities like Dayton, Ohio and spans 340 miles. Future plans are to continue to grow the network’s connectivity through regional initiatives such as the Miami 2 Miami connector.

# Innovation

## **Innovative Technologies**

The City of Hamilton has a history of embracing and employing new technologies throughout our community and is committed to building a transportation infrastructure that supports and enhances future technology. A citywide Central Based Traffic Signal System, Centracs, is currently scheduled for construction in 2021. This technology will allow for real-time analysis of traffic flow patterns and adjust the timing of traffic signals to optimize flow and decrease congestion, as well as to prioritize the movement of approaching emergency and public transit vehicles. All future signalled intersections created as part of North Hamilton Crossing will include this technology.

Through the planning process for North Hamilton Crossing, many other options will be explored to add innovative technologies to our transportation infrastructure. In particular, the City of Hamilton will explore technology that can be implemented to enable future autonomous vehicle traffic on our streets. With the large influx of visitors expected as a result of Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill, we are particularly interested in enabling and supporting autonomous shuttles carrying visitors from remote parking to the sports and events center. The City has engaged in discussions with the BCRTA and Spooky Nook Sports about the possibility of purchasing self-driving shuttles, and this technology will be considered as we develop plans for North Hamilton Crossing plans. Another possibility we will explore is installing an acoustic train detection system that will alert drivers to approaching trains and divert them onto North Hamilton Crossing to prevent backups.

### ***Did you know?***

Hamilton owns and operates all of its primary utilities. Hamilton Utilities has invested hundreds of millions into sustainable energy, meaning that more than 50% of our electricity comes from fully renewable resources. Local ownership also allows for greater flexibility in service delivery, which allows us to test new technologies using a City as a lab concept.

## **Innovative Project Delivery**

Through the planning process, the City of Hamilton will investigate the use of an alternative pavement section bidding system under SEP-14. The life cycle and life cycle costs of a new thoroughfare and bridge network are of great importance to the City, and we will utilize the bidding process as a way for consultants to present the City with multiple pavement options and cost estimates for construction. We will explore a variety of materials or construction methods and how they will impact construction estimates or increase the useful life of the infrastructure. While the use of alternative bidding often comes with higher planning costs, the City will be evaluating the costs of undertaking this method and hopes to make use of it. We will also consider the use of alternative pavement, pavement markings for traffic, pavement sensors, and bridge decking materials for the project through the planning process.

## **Innovative Financing**

The City of Hamilton will consider a variety of financing options as part of our planning process. One partnership to explore is working with the Miami Conservancy District (MCD), which oversees and manages the Great Miami River and its banks. Currently, there are several low-level dams in the river near the proposed North Hamilton Crossing route, which inhibit the recreational options on the river. As the City will have to work with MCD to create the bridge over the Great Miami River, there is a possibility of partnering with them to remove the dams as part of construction. Additionally, the City intends to pursue railroad funding as part of the project. North Hamilton Crossing railway overpass will shut down some at-grade crossings, and we will explore the possibility of partnering with CSX and Norfolk Southern to fund part of the overpass. Other potential funding partners include telecommunications companies, such as Cincinnati Bell or Spectrum, to install additional underground cabling as part of the underground work. Finally, because the City of Hamilton owns its own utilities, we will explore the possibility of using the North Hamilton Crossing bridges as a utility crossing.

# Partnership

## Regional

The City of Hamilton and the Butler County Transportation Improvement District (BCTID) have both committed funds to move the North Hamilton Crossing project forward. The City has committed \$750,000 and the BCTID has committed at least \$250,000, a total of \$1 million, to funding this three-phase planning project for North Hamilton Crossing. The City and BCTID have a track record of delivering critical infrastructure improvements such as the completion of the \$32 million South Hamilton Crossing project in 2019.

## Community Organizations

This project shows a clear demonstration of collaboration and trust between the City of Hamilton, the private sector, and local residents. In summer 2017, the City undertook a comprehensive planning process called Plan Hamilton ([planhamilton.com](http://planhamilton.com)), which invited members of the community - residents, business owners, community leaders, non-profit organizations, and more - to attend public meetings and join focus-groups to voice their opinions on the future of Hamilton. Over 4,500 pieces of input were gathered and 127 community stakeholders participated in a variety of focus groups. Once completed, Plan Hamilton revealed that what was most important to the community was improving Hamilton's local

and regional connectivity, growing business and jobs, and particularly encouraging development and redevelopment.

Riverfront development has become another primary area of concern for Hamilton. As a result, Hamilton also created a River Plan, which prioritized river accessibility, recreational amenities and business attractions along the river, and creating more activity on the Great Miami River itself. To this end, the City has begun to collaborate with the Great Miami Rowing Center (GMRC) to provide free kayaking during the weekly free summer concerts at RiversEdge Amphitheater, and has been working with the Miami Conservancy District to improve river safety signage.

## Public-Private

As a critical component of riverfront development, and a potential catalyst for future redevelopment, the private investment by Spooky Nook Sports is a huge win. North Hamilton Crossing seeks to leverage and build on this massive investment in our community and turn it into an economic boost for the entire Hamilton community. The new route will facilitate greater travel to and from the site, as well as provide transportation alternatives for those visiting to come enjoy and shop at our downtown commercial districts.



# Partnership

## - Implementing a Regional Vision -

North Hamilton Crossing aligns with the plans and recommendations of several prior community planning initiatives:

### **City of Hamilton Comprehensive Plan - Plan Hamilton, 2019**

Plan Hamilton is a community-driven comprehensive plan to guide the development of the City of Hamilton for the next 15 years. North Hamilton Crossing is one of the projects identified as a priority in Plan Hamilton. It also bolsters the other priorities identified, including: encouraging development and redevelopment, increasing intergovernmental and regional cooperation, connecting Hamilton to the region, growing businesses and jobs, and enhancing the well-being of our residents & neighborhoods. View the entire plan at: [planhamilton.com](http://planhamilton.com)

### **City of Hamilton Bikeway Master Plan, 2019**

The City of Hamilton's Bikeway Master Plan is being developed to review the current system of bike infrastructure and determine where there is a need for more complete infrastructure. The plan prioritizes collaboration and connection with other localities. The City's goal through this living plan is to provide a safe cycling alternative on all roads with heavy vehicular traffic. This will help to keep Hamilton's neighborhoods from being isolated by busy streets or intersections, and will encourage alternate forms of transportation throughout the community. Finally, it will facilitate our work with regional neighbors to connect our current and future cycling infrastructure, including the planned Tri-State Trails sponsored Miami 2 Miami Coalition.

### **City of Hamilton's Riverfront Master Plan, 2018**

The Hamilton River Plan was developed as a guide to increasing investment in our river corridor. The document seeks to coordinate disparate projects such as Spooky Nook Sports, the Miami Conservancy District's Hamilton Ponds project, the Beltline Recreational Trail, Combs Park redevelopment, the Great Miami Rowing Center, developments on Main Street, and more. The River Plan also explores potential redevelopment projects that

will complement the above developments, such as new river access points, and considers multimodal transportation needs to allow for greater cohesiveness and ease of travel along the riverfront. You can view the entire plan at: [tinyurl.com/y5ny3j6x](http://tinyurl.com/y5ny3j6x)

### **Butler County Thoroughfare Plan, 2007**

The Butler County Thoroughfare Plan, originally adopted in 2007, was last updated in April 2017 and includes North Hamilton Crossing as a high priority project. This document identifies the project as "Washington Boulevard Extension."

This proposal exemplifies all facets of efficient investments of public funds, and will promote economic competitiveness, efficient mobility, a cleaner environment, enhanced quality of life, greater regional cooperation, and improved safety.

### **OKI (Ohio Kentucky Indiana) 2050 Plan, 2020**

The 2050 OKI Regional Transportation Plan was developed by the Regional Council of Governments to address public interests and travel demands and serves as the metropolitan transportation plan for the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI). As such, the Plan works to define the policies, programs and projects to be implemented over the next 30 years to create a multimodal and coordinated regional roadmap for guiding transportation improvements through the year 2050. This plan is in compliance with statewide and metropolitan transportation planning regulations requiring and governing the development of transportation plans and programs for urbanized areas which have been issued by the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). North Hamilton Crossing is a priority identified in this plan for the region.

# Project Readiness

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## **- Project Schedule -**

North Hamilton Crossing Planning activities are expected to begin immediately upon execution of a grant agreement (late 2020), and should be completed by the third quarter of 2024. See the attachment “North Hamilton Crossing Planning Timeline” for more details.

## **- Required Approvals -**

### *Environmental permits & reviews*

No environmental permits or reviews are required for the planning activities to commence. This planning grant will allow the City of Hamilton to obtain all required environmental approvals and permits necessary for the eventual project to proceed to construction.

### *State & local approvals*

No state and local approvals are required to complete the planning activities for North Hamilton Crossing. Hamilton’s City Council passed a resolution supporting the use of City funds for this project.

### *Federal transportation requirements affecting state and local planning*

This grant will allow the City to determine whether there are any federal transportation requirements to proceed with North Hamilton Crossing.

## **- Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies -**

This grant will allow the City to make an accurate assessment of any project risks as well as to identify the mitigation strategies for any identified delays.

## **- Technical Feasibility -**

The planning activities for North Hamilton Crossing will determine the technical feasibility of construction.

## **- Federal Wage Rate Certification -**

North Hamilton Crossing planning activities will comply with all Federal wage rate requirements included in subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, U.S.C. Please see the signed federal wage rate certifications included with the supplemental materials.

## **- Ready & Worth of BUILD Investments -**

A BUILD investment of \$2,800,000 to North Hamilton Crossing planning activities will continue the economic resurgence taking place in the City of Hamilton and across southwestern Ohio by adding critical capacity to Butler County’s transportation infrastructure, reducing congestion on main thoroughfares, increasing safety, and opening up development opportunities. Our community and local partners have invested tens of millions of dollars in adjacent infrastructure projects, as well as committing \$1,000,000 to North Hamilton Crossing. Join us in supporting this catalytic investment in Butler County and advancing the economic development potential of southwest Ohio.

## Endnotes

- 1 "The Economic Impact of Nook Sports", Tourism Economics, December 2017. See attachments.
- 2 Ohio Public Utilities Commission Rail Statistics Report 2016. [tinyurl.com/yywpexf2](http://tinyurl.com/yywpexf2)
- 3 Ohio Department of Transportation Highway Safety Improvement Program Priority Lists. <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/ProgramManagement/HighwaySafety/HSIP/Pages/Priority-Lists-Initiatives.aspx>
- 4 Ohio Department of Transportation Highway Safety Improvement Program Priority Lists. <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/ProgramManagement/HighwaySafety/HSIP/Pages/Priority-Lists-Initiatives.aspx>
- 5 Ohio Public Utilities Commission Rail Statistics Report 2016. [tinyurl.com/yywpexf2](http://tinyurl.com/yywpexf2)
- 6 "Pedestrian and bicycle bridges as examples of safe collision-free road crossings", 2016. [https://www.matec-conferences.org/articles/matecconf/pdf/2017/36/matecconf\\_gambit2017\\_01005.pdf](https://www.matec-conferences.org/articles/matecconf/pdf/2017/36/matecconf_gambit2017_01005.pdf)
- 7 Attachment: Census On the Map Inflow Outflow Report. <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>
- 8 <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US39017-butler-county-oh/>
- 9 "Does traffic congestion reduce employment growth?" Hymel. Journal of Urban Economics. 2009. <https://uh.edu/~bsorensen/HymelTrafficCongestion2009.pdf>
- 10 "The Economic Impact of Nook Sports", Tourism Economics, December 2017. See attachments.
- 11 "Externalities of auto traffic congestion growth: Evidence from the residential property values in the US Great Lakes megaregion." Journal of Transport Geography. 2018. Jin and Rafferty. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0966692317302430>
- 12 CHEM-DYNE Cleanup Activities, [epa.gov](http://epa.gov). <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.Cleanup&id=0504440#bkgground>
- 13 Ohio Department of Transportation. <https://gis.dot.state.oh.us/tims>
- 14 Victoria State Government. "Cycling - Health Benefits." <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthy-living/cycling-health-benefits>
- 15 "Bicycling Infrastructure Means Business, Spurs Property Values." Urban Land Institute. 2017. <https://urbanland.uli.org/economy-markets-trends/bicycling-means-business/>