



DANIEL HORRIGAN, MAYOR

PRESS RELEASE

FROM THE OFFICE OF AKRON MAYOR DANIEL HORRIGAN

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City of Akron and Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition Reopen Towpath Trail from Mustill Store to Memorial Parkway

Akron, Ohio, Dec. 16, 2020— On Friday, December 11, 2020, Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan and Dan Rice, President and CEO of The Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, officially reopened the Towpath Trail from Mustill Store to Memorial Parkway. This section had been detoured for the past five years due to construction related to the Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel.

“Reopening this section of the Towpath Trail is a long-awaited milestone,” said Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan. “As an avid biker myself, I know how important the Towpath Trail is to our community and am so pleased that walkers, bikers, and hikers can once again enjoy this beautiful section for relaxation and exercise.”

The Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel (OCIT) broke ground on November 6, 2015. This was the largest project under the Akron Waterways Renewed! Program. The location of the tunnel construction site required closure of a section of the Towpath Trail. The City of Akron recognized the importance of the Towpath Trail through Akron for its residents and for the region and worked with local stakeholders to come up with a safe, easily identifiable and accessible detour. In early 2016, an alternate route was developed to detour around the tunnel construction site.

The detour used Hickory Street to the west of the Trail. The one-mile alternate route was between Memorial Parkway and Mustill Store Trailheads. This section of Hickory Street was closed to through-traffic to provide additional safety to the hikers, walkers and bikers. Along with the trail, that section of Hickory Street has now been reopened to vehicle traffic.

“We are very excited about the reopening of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail from Memorial Parkway to the Mustill Store,” said Dan Rice, President and CEO of The Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition. “This beautiful 1-mile section of trail is a critical connection for the 2,500,000 hikers and bicyclists traveling the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail from Cleveland to New Philadelphia, Ohio. We are grateful to the leadership of Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan for this tremendous support for the Ohio & Erie Canalway and Towpath Trail.”

In June of this year, the OCIT’s final sections were placed into service, providing for storage capacity of 26 million gallons of combined sewer overflow. In the second half of 2020, the contractor has been completing the site work in the area of the trail and installed the service bridge connecting the trail to Cuyahoga Street. In the spring of 2021, final work will be

completed, including site renewal, paving of the affected section of trail, landscaping, and Little Cuyahoga River restoration.

Akron has now completed 85% of the major consent decree projects with two projects currently under construction. The two remaining projects include the Northside Project and the remote treatment facility (EHRT), which are the subject of current negotiations with the EPA on a third amendment to the consent decree. If successful, this amendment will facilitate the removal of the Gorge Dam on the Cuyahoga River, one of the last major impediments on the river.

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