



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Laura Mercer, Executive Director – Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Group
937-307-9496
laura.mercer@sinclair.edu

**Groundbreaking for the First Trotwood Tornado Survivors
Pathway to Homeownership Homes**

**Wednesday, April 14, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.
4646 and 4658 Marlin Avenue – Trotwood, Ohio**

Dayton, OH – April 12, 2021 – The Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Operations Group, in partnership with Montgomery County, City of Trotwood, Trotwood Community Improvement Corporation, County Corp, The HomeOwnership Center of Greater Dayton, Mennonite Disaster Services, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Presbytery of the Miami Valley, and numerous other partners will break ground Wednesday, April 14, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. on the first two Trotwood homes as part of the Tornado Survivors Pathway to Homeownership Project (Pathways Project). The two homes are adjacent on Marlin Avenue. One home will be new construction built by Mennonite Disaster Services and the second will be a rehab of an existing structure by Brethren Disaster Ministries and Presbytery of the Miami Valley. Attendees and members of the media will be expected to follow COVID-19 safety protocols including social distancing and masks.

The Pathways Project was developed to provide qualified tornado survivors, who are not currently homeowners, the opportunity to become homeowners. Interested applicants work with The HomeOwnership Center of Greater Dayton to become mortgage ready while skilled volunteer build teams construct or rehab homes on properties donated by the jurisdictions. This project is the result of collaborative efforts of the Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Operations Group, our local partners and national and local voluntary organizations active in disaster who are willing to serve as build teams.

Per Montgomery County Commission President Judy Dodge, “Investing in our people is a large part of Montgomery County’s mission. We are proud that our support, along with that of our partners, is helping tornado survivors recover and become homeowners.”

Mennonite Disaster Service is the lead build organization for the new construction at 4646 Marlin. “Following a natural disaster, Mennonite Disaster Service’s aim is to assist the most vulnerable community members, individuals, and families who would not otherwise have the means to recover. MDS volunteers provide the skills and labor needed to respond, rebuild, and restore in the wake of a disaster. The Pathways Project fits this vision perfectly,” said Lawrence Matthews, Chair, Mennonite Disaster Service Western Ohio.

Brethren Disaster Ministries and the Presbytery of the Miami Valley will be undertaking the rehab of the 4658 Marlin structure. “Brethren Disaster Ministries is proud to be part of this program that has developed as an incredible collaboration with so many local and national partners in Montgomery County. It provides a way to build back better from the tornadoes to help renters return to the neighborhoods they call home but also the improving the quality of the community housing overall. We are excited to serve this group of disaster survivors in ways they are not often served in other recoveries,” said Jenn Dorsch-Messler, Director, Brethren Disaster Ministries.

Per Reverend Terry Kukuk, Executive Presbyter, “The objectives of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley include connecting congregations in mission, addressing how systemic poverty and structural racism contribute to housing needs, and alleviating stress on families and communities while helping to build resilience. The Presbytery is thankful that we can support the Pathways program with both financial resources and local volunteers.” Reverend Jim Kirk, Executive Director, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, is thankful for the opportunity to partner with the Presbytery of Miami Valley in support of the Pathways Project and states that “At a time of limited resources and overwhelming need it is crucial to use resources in a way to address systemic issues such as providing a pathway for homeowners for those impacted by a disaster.”

According to Laura Mercer, Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Executive Director, “The Pathways Project leverages the talents of volunteer build teams and the expertise and resources of community organizations to transform vacant lots and structures into new homes that will enable qualified tornado survivors to become homeowners. These two homes are the first of many that will be built in Trotwood and we are excited to continue to help the community recover and thrive.”

Individuals, businesses, and organizations who are interested in supporting the Pathways Project can contribute financially to The Dayton Foundation’s Tornado Survivor Pathway to Homeownership fund (Fund #8561). Businesses and organizations that are interested in sponsoring a home or contributing materials or professional services should contact Laura Mercer at Laura.Mercer@Sinclair.edu.

Individuals who still need help recovering from the tornadoes can call Catholic Social Services directly to be connected to a disaster case manager at 937-223-7217 ext. 1137. Tornado survivors who want to become homeowners and are interested in the Pathways Program can go to HomeownershipDayton.org to apply.

###

We ask that groundbreaking attendees and members of the media please follow COVID safety protocols including wearing mask and practice social distancing.

About the Miami Valley Long Term Recovery Operations Group

The MVLTRG is comprised of non-profit and faith-based organizations in partnership with local, state, and federal agencies working together to assist survivors of the May 27, 2019 Memorial Day Tornadoes. Our Mission is to provide coordinated long-term recovery management for individuals affected by the tornadoes who do not have adequate personal resources for basic needs as a result of the disaster. The MVLTRG has assisted more than 2000 families in their recovery journey. You can visit us online at MVstrong.org.