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**News Release: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **GREAT PARKS COMPLETES FACILITY FOR BIOCHAR-ENHANCED COMPOST PRODUCTION PARTNERSHIP WITH CINCINNATI PARKS** *Celebrates with “First Dump” of Manure in New Facility*

Great Parks has completed construction of a manure composting facility at the Winton Woods Farm & Equestrian Center that will play an important role in a partnership with Cincinnati Parks to create biochar-enhanced compost. Biochar is a charcoal-like substance that stores carbon and has important environmental benefits. This partnership will become one of the first in the country working toward the large-scale production of biochar and biochar-enhanced compost.

Composting will be an efficient and sustainable method to dispose of tons of manure from the farm and will begin immediately. Full production will start when Cincinnati Parks completes construction on its new biochar production facility, with construction planned to break ground later this year.

“This is an important milestone in a partnership that establishes our region as a global conservation leader, while also helping us to improve planting and forestry projects throughout Great Parks and the City of Cincinnati,” said Todd Palmetter, Great Parks CEO.

The partnership will take advantage of plentiful resources to create an environmentally beneficial product that will help combat the impacts of climate change. The process will involve several steps. Cincinnati Parks will build a facility to superheat wood debris under low-oxygen conditions to become biochar. Great Parks, which incurs the expense of disposing of hundreds of tons of manure from horses and other animals at the farm, will divert some of that manure through its new composting facility to be mixed with the biochar from Cincinnati Parks.

Biochar helps combat climate change by sequestering carbon from the atmosphere. It also strengthens and improves soil and is ideal for tree plantings, landscaping, water filtration and stormwater management. When manure is mixed with biochar, it enhances water retention and adds nutrients to the soil, which will strengthen the tree canopy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A stronger tree canopy will counteract heat islands in this urban community.

The Great Parks-Cincinnati Parks partnership will produce enough biochar-enhanced compost to capture hundreds of tons of carbon dioxide every year. The collaboration aims to be the first in the U.S. to deliver biochar to the market, which will become a strategic advantage toward

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selling carbon credits and the biochar itself. Great Parks and Cincinnati Parks will also use the manure-fortified biochar in tree plantings and stormwater management throughout the region.

Great Parks contributed \$300,000 to support biochar production equipment and site improvements at the Cincinnati Parks Sinton East Operation Center in Eden Park. Great Parks will designate a representative to serve as project manager for its portion of the project. Cincinnati Parks received a competitive and prestigious \$400,000 Bloomberg Philanthropies grant to fund the start of the project. Great Parks has funded more than \$600,000 for the construction of the composting facility in Winton Woods, with funds coming from the 0.95-mill levy passed by Hamilton County voters in 2021 for critical infrastructure needs and park improvement projects.

This project is being co-managed by Great Parks, Cincinnati Parks, Carbon Harvest, Bloomberg Philanthropies and the City of Cincinnati's Office of Environmental Sustainability. Worldwide, Cincinnati is one of only seven other cities that received Bloomberg funding to start the process and create a global biochar market.

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