FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bicycle and Community Campaigns Defying Despair in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Prescott, Arizona – October 25, 2018 – The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) ended more than twenty years ago and with it the world’s interest in this battered country of 3.5 million and dwindling. In that shadow, corruption and despair have thrived. Leaders of bicycle and community campaigns are fighting back by causing positive change.

The Center for Environment (CfE) in Banja Luka, BiH teamed up with One Street to train activists around their country in campaign planning in order to reunite their communities. While the emphasis was on urban design, especially bicycle infrastructure, a variety of campaigns were chosen.

The project began in the spring of 2018 with support from the Trust for Mutual Understanding (TMU). Following One Street’s campaign planning process, CfE sought the best activists to take part. After assessing all applications, six NGOs with strong campaigns were chosen. Four are working for improved cycling infrastructure, one is combatting illegal dumping, and another is focusing on rebuilding social cohesion.

In early October, Sue Knaup of One Street traveled to BiH to conduct a three-day workshop for all the participants, then traveled with her colleagues from CfE to meet with the campaign leaders in their communities where they are launching their campaigns.

“These community activists are some of the toughest I have ever worked with,” said Ms. Knaup. “As their friends and neighbors despair or leave the country, they are standing their ground, determined to reignite the community pride that is at the heart of their country’s vibrant history.”

The project continues with guidance for all the campaigns as they move forward with their initial actions. One Street, CfE, and TMU are discussing next steps, including outreach to other community activists around BiH, perhaps the Balkan region, and engaging leaders of the first campaigns as experts and mentors.

This project was inspired by One Street’s campaign planning project in eastern Ukraine in 2016. One Street hopes to inspire other countries fed up with the ravages of war to take on similar projects. Learn more at www.OneStreet.org.

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