

To: Members of Dublin City Council
From: Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager
Date: April 1, 2021
Initiated By: Jennifer M. Rauch, AICP, Director of Planning
Tammy Noble, Senior Planner
Re: MORPC Central Ohio Regional Housing Strategy - Next Steps

Summary

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) concluded their Regional Housing Strategy in fall 2020 and presented the finding to City Council in January 2021. City Council supported the efforts and outcomes outlined in the study, as well as staff's recommendation to further analyze the housing needs specific to the City of Dublin. City Council requested the topic be discussed in greater detail at a future Council work session. The following memo summarizes the background and proposed next steps needed to conduct additional analysis.

Background

The scope of the Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) was to develop a baseline of the regional housing needs, build Central Ohio's regional housing framework for implementation, develop local action, create a tracking system and report progress and develop a 10-year Strategic Plan. The Strategy built upon on the findings of the MORPC Insight 2050 Study, using previous studies and supplementing with additional data to provide a comprehensive view of today's housing market.

The results of the Housing Strategy highlighted a wide range of issues including:

- Increased competition for housing,
- Lending practices and discriminatory renting practices that limit access to housing,
- Limited supply of affordable housing,
- Demand for housing that serves a wider range of ages, disabilities and family structure,
- Housing instability causing homelessness,
- Increased eviction rates, and
- Low-maintenance and disrepair of existing housing.

RHS outcomes

The RHS was essential in pointing out how communities, including the City of Dublin, can address barriers that impede housing needs. This includes addressing complicated or lengthy review processes that can deter the development community, educate the public and local officials for the need for multi-family residential uses and address the "nimby" viewpoints that may discourage such development, promote local programs that assist homeownership and repair assistance to our community to ensure that the available housing is well maintained, as well as enact local legislative efforts that promote fair housing and ensure the renting

community has stronger protection against unfair housing practices. The RSH provides a holistic approach for communities to combat housing needs from regulatory reform, educational efforts that promote various housing needs, and financial programs that assist more vulnerable groups within our community.

Following the presentation of the final report, MORPC has committed to working with its regional partners including the City of Dublin to create action items that help address their individual needs as they move forward with their own housing strategies. This includes a presentation series that highlights what other communities are doing to promote affordable housing, providing data to support their individual housing studies, and provide education opportunities to local officials to help further the needs of their community. Planning will continue to work with MORPC for their support in the next steps for the City of Dublin.

Next Steps

During the discussion on January 19, 2021, City Council expressed interest in pursuing a more in-depth study to understand and address the housing needs of Dublin. In preparation for this discussion, Planning worked with MORPC and other municipalities to outline what a community specific housing study could consider and include, which are outlined below. Following Council's feedback, staff will develop a detailed project scope and conduct a selection process to identify a consultant to conduct the Dublin Housing Study.

The proposed Dublin Housing Study would include the following:

- Continue to work with MORPC to understand and utilize data gathered as part of the Regional Housing Strategy, as it relates the City of Dublin and how Dublin fits within the overall Central Ohio region;
- Conduct specific demographics analysis to understand how demographic changes impact Dublin's housing needs in the future;
- Complete an inventory and analysis of Dublin's housing supply to understand the City's housing needs, including saturation limits of housing types, considerations of specific infill development opportunities, identification of specific groups for which our housing needs should focus (seniors, workforce, etc.).
- Study the recommendations outlined by the Community Task Force related to housing and how those align with the data and analysis;
- Identify action items and recommendations to implement the study findings;
- Identify regulatory or zoning restrictions that could assist in meeting Dublin's housing needs.

Discussion Topics

Planning requests City Council's feedback on the following discussion topics:

1. Is the proposed scope of the study inclusive of all the needs envisioned by City Council?
Are there other focus areas that should be considered?
2. What other factors should the housing study include that helps our region stay economically viable and competitive to other suburban communities?

3. What should the boundaries of the study be (should it include unincorporated areas similar to the Community Plan)?
4. Other considerations that Dublin City Council feels necessary to address housing needs within our community.

REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY



FINAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 2020

Regional Housing Strategy

Acknowledgments

The Regional Housing Strategy was prepared by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), together with a consultant team led by Enterprise Community Partners.

CONSULTANT TEAM



Funding Partners

The following Project Sponsors provided funding support for the Regional Housing Strategy:

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|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| AEP | Columbus Partnership | Mount Carmel Health |
| Campus Partners | Columbus Realtors | Nationwide Children’s Hospital |
| City of Delaware | Franklin County | Nationwide Insurance |
| City of Columbus | City of Whitehall City of | New Albany |
| City of Dublin City | Upper Arlington Grove | OhioHealth |
| of Lancaster City of | City Huntington | OSU Wexner Medical Center |
| Marysville City of | L Brands | Rev1 Ventures |
| Westerville | Licking County | The Columbus Foundation |
| Columbus Chamber | | Union County Ohio |

Advisory Board

In addition to the Project Sponsors, the following organizations provided direction to the Regional Housing Strategy as members of its Advisory Board:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio | Lancaster Fairfield Community Action Agency |
| Affordable Housing Trust | Legal Aid Society |
| Age Friendly Communities | Licking County Coalition for Housing |
| Alliance for the American Dream at Ohio State | Licking County Job & Family Services |
| Village of Ashville | Licking County United Way |
| Building Industry Association of Central Ohio | Move to PROSPER |
| The BREAD Organization | National Church Residences |
| Central Ohio Transit Authority | Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing |
| Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority | Ohio Housing Finance Authority |
| Columbus Urban League | Ohio State Center for Real Estate |
| Community Development for All People | The Ohio State University |
| Community Shelter Board | Omni Title |
| Connect Realty | City of Reynoldsburg |
| Delaware County Transit | Star House |
| Del-Co Water | United Way of Central Ohio |
| Delaware County | United Way of Delaware County |
| DRK Realty | US Together |
| First Commonwealth Bank | Wagenbrenner Development |
| GROW Licking County | Woda Cooper |
| Healthy Homes | Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio |
| Homeport | YMCA |
| Homes on the Hill | YWCA |
| Kaufman Development | |

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Central Ohio is at a critical inflection point.

The past decade has been one of historic growth for Central Ohio, and that growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future – with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) projecting the region to have as many as 3 million residents by 2050. Not only is the region growing; it is changing. Increases in both the young adult and 65 and older populations are shifting housing preferences. Furthermore, the highly competitive real estate market and a persistently high poverty rate have led to more vulnerable groups struggling to find housing in neighborhoods of their choice.

The Central Ohio Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) sets forth a bold vision: A future where growth and recovery help realize more equity among Central Ohioans, not less. Housing—where it's built or maintained, who it's for, and how it's priced—can be a platform to achieve this vision.

How was the RHS developed?

The RHS is a collaborative effort by public and private partners across the Central Ohio Region, led by MORPC, the City of Columbus, and Franklin County. It was supported by the consultant team of Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., Ice Miller LLP, RAMA Consulting Group, and Vogt Strategic Insights. The RHS would not have been possible without the wide range of stakeholders who committed time and resources to this effort.

The process began with a thorough investigation of existing and projected housing needs in the region, grounded by both quantitative and qualitative assessments to understand housing supply and demand throughout the region, barriers to development, and the regional housing finance landscape.

From there, potential investment strategies and housing interventions were identified, based on national best practices. These strategies were vetted with regional stakeholders to better understand their regional relevance and viability, resulting in region-specific recommendations for future action. Each strategy was then aligned with the various housing submarket conditions throughout the region to help decisionmakers choose among the potential interventions for implementation.

Stakeholder engagement was the backbone of this process. Engagement activities included stakeholder convenings, regional strategy workshops, informant interviews and focus groups, and an on-line community survey. More information about this process may be found in the Stakeholder Engagement Summary.

The RHS engagement strategy focused on ground-truthing findings and recommendations while building the capacity of decisionmakers to implement regional housing solutions. Further engagement with a broader range of community members is necessary to advance the RHS vision and ensure implementation is grounded in the full range of Central Ohioans' lived experiences.



A NOTE ON THE EVENTS OF 2020

The Regional Housing Strategy was developed during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Although at the time of writing, it remains unclear what the true impacts of the pandemic will be on the region's housing market, COVID-19 and the civil unrest experienced across the country have changed the lens through which we view issues such as housing.

Anecdotal evidence suggests housing instability, including homelessness, may affect more people, including people who have never had concerns about affording their homes before. Moreover, we have all witnessed and felt the sadness, the outrage, and the frustration concerning senseless deaths and unnecessary trauma across the nation and closer to home. These tragedies impact us deeply and cast a brighter light on racism and its long legacy and impact on every community.

The Regional Housing Strategy seeks to be responsive to the uncertainty generated by COVID-19, to address disparities through action, and to reaffirm Central Ohio's commitment to inclusive and equitable housing. It creates a strong and agile toolkit that can address a wide range of housing issues in ways that use housing as a platform for equitable growth and recovery. Committing to and taking local action on housing issues positions the region to tackle housing instability and socioeconomic disparities, and promotes stability and resilience among Central Ohio households.

The core regional housing issues.

1

Increased competition for homes, driven by increased population growth, a low rate of housing production, and lasting impacts from the Great Recession.

2

Barriers limiting access to homes, including disparities in lending practices, creditworthiness, housing instability, and housing discrimination.

3

Limited supply of homes priced for low-income households, as more homes are built at higher price points, the region loses some of its existing affordable options (including single-family rentals and expiring subsidized housing), and demand for rental assistance continues to outweigh supply.

4

Demand for more homes that serve a wider range of ages, abilities, and household sizes, which is growing as a result of the region's changing demographics. This includes trends like the increasing racial and ethnic diversity in Central Ohio and the growing number of both older and younger adults in the region.

5

Housing instability among Central Ohioans, as reflected in the region's rates of cost-burden, evictions, homelessness, and homes in need of repair.



People and areas across Central Ohio do not universally experience these issues in the same way or to the same extent. Some people – including low- and moderate-income households, families with children, people of color, older adults, and people living with disabilities – are more acutely impacted by these housing issues. And these issues often look different in different areas of the region. Recognizing this, the RHS provides tailored data and solutions that speak to the range of submarket conditions across the region.

More information about regionwide and submarket-specific housing conditions in Central Ohio may be found in the RHS Existing Conditions summary.

What issues does the region face?

Housing issues are not new to the region. In fact, most are well-documented in previous reports – including the Columbus and Franklin County Affordable Housing Challenge and Joint Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, insight2050, and the Ohio Housing Finance Agency’s annual Housing Needs Assessment. The RHS set out not only to deepen the region’s understanding of these issues, but also to investigate the barriers that were holding the region back from addressing them.

The following barriers rose to the top:



Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) attitudes and negative perceptions about housing density and affordability, resulting in a lack of public and political support that affects development feasibility in Central Ohio.

Uncertainty associated with local land use processes and standards, driven by significant variations in local policies, processes and standards with little centralized information to help navigate the process. This increases the time and cost of development.

Increasing costs of residential development, including land costs, site selection, and regulatory costs. This can decrease production, particularly of housing at lower price points. The increased cost of construction materials and labor were identified as key drivers in the economics of residential development in Central Ohio.

Need for more assistance than available resources, across multiple fronts. From rental assistance to support for home repairs, demand dwarfs available programs. This need plays out in the region’s housing finance landscape as well, where limited gap financing has created an over-dependence on Low-Income Housing Tax Credits to produce affordable housing in the region.

Like the issues themselves, the barriers to addressing them vary significantly across the region. The housing finance landscape is a key example of this: there are many more resources for development financing and direct housing assistance within Columbus and Franklin County, compared to surrounding counties. To account for this variation, the RHS includes an Investment Allocation Portfolio that demonstrates what it will take, from a funding perspective, to address regional priorities and needs.

Where do we go from here?

The RHS culminates in a robust Implementer’s Toolkit that includes more than 100 different actions, designed to equip leaders across Central Ohio with the information and tools to action on the region’s most pressing housing issues – whether they are a local or state government official, a member of the development community, an employer, a housing advocate, a financial institution or philanthropy, the administrator of a housing program, or an interested citizen.

From the toolkit, stakeholders involved in the RHS process adopted the following actions as top priorities for the near-term.

Priority actions elevated at the August 2020 stakeholder working session.

At this workshop, stakeholders prioritized among selected actions for each of the five core regional housing issues using live polling technology. In breakout sessions organized around the five core housing issues, participants focused on the action receiving the most votes, with facilitated questions of who, what, and where guiding the discussion. A few common themes emerged and each breakout session wrestled with how to balance local, regional, and statewide actions – as well as participation by public, private, and non-governmental sectors.

Participants agreed that regional tasks were more effective if they were shaped at the local level, and in partnership with staff from peer communities. That approach, in turn, should lead to broader support from communities throughout the region. Likewise, a diverse region speaking with one voice would effectively carry a message at the state level.

In most discussions, stakeholders also agreed that the government and policy voices would carry further if they also were backed by the private and non-governmental organization (NGO) sectors – stressing the idea that addressing housing issues is good for economic development, a stable workforce, public education, and many other economic and social benefits.

A summary of the five breakout discussions is below.

Core Regional Housing Issue: Increased competition for homes

Priority Action: Green tape development review

“Green tape” development review removes or lowers regulatory barriers, making it quicker or cheaper for developers to move ahead with their projects – in return for providing a public benefit, such as low/moderate-income homes in residential development. Stakeholders recommended initiating this action with a pilot project so communities throughout the region could see how the process works.

This – combined with a public awareness campaign – could address misperceptions about density, development, and affordable housing, and make housing a natural part of discussions about economic development. It could also open the door to zoning changes that balance the needs of economic development and housing. Stakeholders also suggested planning with, or an advisory role for, entities such as school districts and county engineers’ offices which have a stake in housing issues.

Core Regional Housing Issue: Housing instability among Central Ohioans
Priority Action: More tenant-based rental assistance to address housing instability

Housing advocates already know where the eviction hotspots are, what entities already provide assistance or models, and what interests have the knowledge and expertise to develop and expand an assistance program. Most of the data and programs, however, are focused on Columbus and Franklin County. Information and infrastructure are needed for the entire region.

One example elevated by the group is a three-year pilot program beginning at Columbus State Community College, which works with public and non-profit partners to provide rental assistance to students at-risk of having to leave school. Other local programs have focused on rental assistance and financial and life counseling for single mothers. Stakeholders suggested that these and other programs could be continued and expanded, especially if they are aligned with complementary actions, such as source of income protection policies and good landlord programming.

Core Regional Housing Issue: Barriers limiting access to homes
Priority Action: Enact source of income protection laws (or otherwise expand fair housing laws.

Stakeholders considering statewide source-of-income protection laws determined it would be easier to make those changes at the municipal level. They also agreed that initiatives to get people into much-needed housing should include funding for rehabilitation of housing and a regional risk mitigation fund. The carrot-and-stick approach could ease property managers’ opposition to such laws.

It also would require finding, or creating, an entity to manage the funds – and doing so at a multi-jurisdictional and regional scale. But they argued it is more important to build this model effectively than to build it too quickly and recommended bringing potential opponents to the table as the strategy is being developed.

Municipalities could quickly and easily draft an ordinance to make it harder for landlords to deny housing to people who use federal housing vouchers to help pay their rent. But enacting it would require addressing likely opposition. A risk mitigation fund could help soften the opposition, as could a regional approach. If a municipal ordinance is drafted with help from other local leaders, the regional solidarity would likely prompt real estate interests to help with a solution that considers the needs of all.

The Community Shelter Board and Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority came up as possible fund managers. A role for the Central Ohio Mayors and Managers Association (COMMA) could reinforce the regional nature of housing challenges. MORPC’s history of rehab assistance to low- and moderate-income homeowners could be expanded.

Core Regional Housing Issue: Limited supply of homes priced for low-income households
Priority Action: Create a State housing tax credit to support priority housing development

Stakeholders in this group, as with those looking at source-of-income protections, saw great value in localized programs and Central Ohio advocacy to create state support through housing tax credits to serve as additional gap funding for affordable and mixed-income housing. This local and regional support would aid existing efforts by groups such as the Ohio Housing Council. A coalition in Central Ohio could be a model for similar efforts in other metropolitan areas – especially if it includes groups such as private developers.

Existing programs are limited in their use, but a broad statewide program could go into Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) and Opportunity Zones and provide single-family and multifamily homes and a variety of tenures, depending on the type of structure.

A statewide effort should emphasize benefits that go beyond those who live in new affordable housing – such as a more stable workforce. Stakeholders suggested a study of potential sources and uses for a state housing tax credit and an overview of housing tax credit legislation in other states. They also identified many organizations and interests whose support would be valuable, including the Ohio Municipal League, County Commissioners Association of Ohio, Ohio Economic Development Association, Ohio Housing Council, One Columbus, and others.

Core Regional Housing Issue: Demand for more homes serving a wider range of ages, abilities, and households
Priority Action: Create a pilot that supports the development of diverse, lower-cost housing products, leveraging innovative design and construction techniques

This group had few specific proposals for pilot projects, other than an overlay zoning pilot in Delaware County townships to create new development options and expedite the zoning process.

But the stakeholders had many thoughts about the characteristics of sites for pilots, such as areas with access to transit and other mobility alternatives; concentrations of economic activity with little affordable housing (downtown Columbus and Bridge Street in Dublin); and parcels that could accommodate such housing types as microunits, accessory dwelling units, etc.

They also recommended partnering with developers, school districts, economic development interests, and financial interests; and identified zoning density waivers and tax abatements among tools to spur pilot projects.

MORPC will work with its members to create Local Housing Action Agendas that translate Central Ohio’s regional housing vision and strategy framework into meaningful local action on housing issues, accounting for unique local priorities and context. Each agenda will include a jurisdiction-specific overview of housing needs and top priorities for local action, with a specific eye towards advancing equitable growth and building community resilience. The process of developing each agenda will offer opportunities to engage a broader range of community stakeholders in crafting local housing solutions across the region.

To further hold the region accountable for action, MORPC has created a dashboard to track progress on key housing indicators related to each of the core regional housing issues. This progress can only be achieved if all partners work together and apply the strategies of the Implementer’s Toolkit.

Realizing a future of equitable growth and inclusive prosperity in Central Ohio requires a coordinated, regional approach that hinges on committed and bold leadership at all levels of governance and among developers, financial institutions, nonprofits, foundations, and community members. Everyone has a role to play in creating a robust housing market in Central Ohio where every resident, no matter their race, age, or ability, can find safe and decent housing without being discriminated against or cost-burdened.
Find out how you can be a part of the solution in the Central Ohio Regional Housing Strategy.

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development. Lot 1 is 1.370 acres and is south of Lot 2. This site does have access frontage to the east along the proposed Neighborhood Street. Lot 2 is 1.632 acres and is north of Lot 1. This lot has frontage on W. Dublin-Granville Road to the north and the Neighborhood Street to the east. The plat also memorializes an existing 100-foot electrical easement along the western portion of this site. There is a condition of approval proposed regarding the name of the Neighborhood Street, that the applicant should continue to work with staff to provide a street name prior to the final plat submittal. Planning staff has reviewed this application in terms of all applicable preliminary plat criteria and recommended approval to PZC on November 5, 2020. PZC is recommending approval with one revised condition that the applicant shall provide a street name for the proposed Neighborhood Street prior to the submission of a final plat application. He offered to respond to any questions. The applicant is also present for any questions.

The Clerk and Ms. Weisenauer noted that no comments have been received regarding this matter.

Ms. Fox commented that PZC reviewed several iterations on the layout. The applicant considered all of the layout suggestions made. Aesthetically and functionally, what is proposed for the layout provides what the Bridge Street District desires -- the ability to have street frontage on the north and the applicant is building the small Neighborhood Street that will front the Primrose School. The result is two facing buildings on streets that give a sense of urban design. The site is already burdened by the electric power lines on the west side. It was a difficult property in terms of layout. PZC was very thoughtful about how one would use open space in this lot. She believes it was memorialized that the open space area this parcel was required to give would be added to the parcel to the north in order to have interest along 161. She asked Mr. Hounshell to confirm that the open space is memorialized on the northern lot. Mr. Hounshell responded that is an item that staff will continue to discuss with the applicant as they move forward.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated this was one of the few lots along SR161 that has not been developed and was due to the complexity of the site with the power lines, etc. Bridge Street zoning made this particular parcel easier to develop with more density. Thanks to all of the PZC members for their hard work on this.

Vote on the Resolution: Mr. Peterson, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Ms. Alutto, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes.

OTHER

- Delaware County Regional Planning Commission Appointment

Ms. Rauch stated that staff recommends the appointment of Mr. Rayburn as primary representative, with Ms. Noble as alternate.

The Clerk and Ms. Weisenauer noted that no comments have been received regarding this matter.

Mayor Amorose Groomes moved the appointment of Mr. Rayburn as Delaware County Regional Planning Commission primary representative, with Ms. Noble as the alternate representative.

Mr. Reiner seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Alutto, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes.

- Central Ohio Regional Housing Study - Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Ms. Noble stated that the City has worked with MORPC for 1-1/2 years on this study that is paramount to issues within our community and nationwide dealing with housing and housing strategies as we move forward in our communities and the need grows greater. Jennifer Noll, Principal Planner and Project Manager and Kerstin Carr, Director of Planning and Sustainability will present the final recommendations to City Council. The City has partnered with the group and will continue to work with MORPC as this conversation continues with the City of Dublin.

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Kerstin Carr, Director of Planning & Sustainability, MORPC thanked the City for their active participation in this project. She noted that the focus has been to create a coordinated housing strategy for Central Ohio that provides investment and policy recommendations to support our communities and our growing population. COVID-19 has greatly impacted their work and presented an opportunity for additional housing strategies. She shared the vision statement: “A future where growth and recovery help realize more equity among Central Ohioans, not less. Housing – where it’s built or maintained, who it’s for, and how it’s priced – can be a platform to achieve this vision.” She shared a slide with the various stakeholders, community partners and consulting team involved in the project. The regional housing strategy was guided by nearly 100 regional leaders, representing over 50 organizations across the public/private/non-profit and for-profit sectors. Additionally, they worked with many others throughout the process, working virtually due to the pandemic.

The study area was the seven-county region, but they also relied on data from the Columbus MSA that is slightly larger.

They focused on submarket analysis, including physical characteristics, housing stock and housing market; displacement risk analysis, identifying areas most vulnerable to housing market gentrification and displacement; and opportunity mapping, evaluating 15 indicators of opportunity across transportation, housing, education, health and employment. The very low opportunity areas that persist across the region today line up with the redlining from decades ago. Over these decades, the needle has not been moved in terms of bringing people out of poverty.

From the research and analysis done, they have identified five core regional housing issues:

1. Increased competition for homes driven by the high population growth and low rate of housing production;
2. Barriers limiting access to homes that include disparity in lending practices, credit worthiness and housing instability;
3. Limited supply of homes priced for low-income households as more homes are built for higher price points. The region is losing affordable single-family rentals and the demand for rental assistance outweighs supply. Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority indicated they have a wait list of about 28,000 people for housing vouchers. There is a serious pent-up demand for rental assistance.
4. Demand for more diverse housing stock -- homes that can serve a wider range of ages, disabilities and household sizes.
5. Housing instability among Central Ohioans that is reflected by evictions, homelessness and homes in need of repair.

It is worth noting that these issues were all identified pre-COVID-19, but in the new reality, COVID and the racial, health and economic disparities have added urgency to these issues.

She highlighted the factors contributing to the region’s housing cost burden: over 213,000 households spend over 30 percent of their income on housing; 43 percent of renters versus 20 percent of homeowners; 64 percent of households earning under \$50,000 per year versus 7 percent of households earning above \$50,000 per year. In terms of evictions, nationwide there are 2.34 evictions per 100 renters, but in Central Ohio there are 4.10 evictions per 100 renters. As conditions worsen with COVID and more people are unemployed, these numbers will be higher. The eviction rate is particularly high in high poverty areas and the majority Africa-American areas. Housing production in the 2000s was one housing unit built for every two new residents. In the 2010s, there was one housing unit built for every three new residents. The average household size is 2.5 people. For the first time in history, there is actually a deficit in the production of housing, which also creates housing unaffordability and other issues.

Ms. Noll stated that more housing is clearly part of the solution to the housing crisis. However, they want to dispel the myth that we can build our way out of the housing crisis; there is more nuance to that. There is a need for more housing as well as more diversity among housing choices.

They spoke with a number of residential developers around the region regarding why more housing is not being produced in Central Ohio. They learned that the barriers to development, from the developer perspective are:

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1. The uncertainty associated with local land use processes and standards, which vary from community to community. They appreciate clear expectations from the community. It helps to streamline the process and save money for developers and the community.
2. Higher costs of residential development, including materials and labor. This is a big driver of the economics of residential development in Central Ohio and throughout the U.S. This is a factor over which we have the least control. Because of this, it makes the other barriers even more important.
3. The lack of public and political support affects development feasibility in the region. Essentially, the negative perceptions about denser or subsidized homes result in people voicing their disapproval locally and ultimately can make the decision as to whether or not a project moves forward.
4. Money is needed upfront to finance new construction. Often, a developer's initial loan installment does not cover all of those costs. There is a need for additional funds to bridge the gap between the initial loan installment and the final amount of their permanent financing. There is a limit to the amount of available gap financing in the region. That can be another deciding factor in whether a project is successful.

In terms of regional financial resources, there are over 50 financial resources in Central Ohio that exist to develop housing. Many of these can be leveraged by local government. Better coordination among these resources is also needed. Oftentimes, those who administer the programs do not have connections to those in need of the resources. Flexible tools are needed such as gap-financing tools, tax increment financing, property tax abatements, New Community Authorities, and bond proceeds. The need for direct assistance is greater than what is available in terms of rental assistance and home repair. Resources are not collectively housed in a one-stop source.

Ms. Noll summarized that the Regional Housing Strategy does lay out a road map to guide our region together toward solutions. There are over 100 potential actions that can be scaled or started in Central Ohio. The Advisory Board has prioritized these five for the first year:

1. Adopt a "green tape" development review process. This addresses increased competition for homes by removing or lowering regulatory barriers. It can save time and money for both the developer and the community.
2. Enacting source of income protection laws or otherwise expanding Fair Housing Laws to address barriers limiting access to homes. Without these protections, some households can face barriers to utilizing housing assistance programs to secure their housing. Several communities in the region, including Bexley, Columbus and Westerville have taken an interest in source of income protections for their communities.
3. Creation of a state housing tax credit to support priority housing development. This addresses a limited supply of homes for low-income households. This could be a much needed way to expand the amount of gap financing that is available for affordable, mixed-income housing. A state level tax credit will require much more than just the Central Ohio region's interest in moving that forward. It will require coordination among our peer regions across the state.
4. Prioritize the creation of a pilot program that would support the development of diverse, lower-cost housing products in order to serve a wider range of ages, abilities and households. As Central Ohio continues to grow and our region becomes more and more diverse, we simply need a wider range of housing options to meet that growth demand. It is also important to have more housing within COTA service areas, closer to job centers and within areas of opportunity.
5. More tenant-based rental assistance is needed. This is one of the top concerns expressed at the outset of the Regional Housing Strategy process. As we went forward and COVID-19 continues to be a crisis in terms of health and socioeconomically, this has become a priority issue for stakeholders. The need only continues to grow.

She then shared the Regional Housing Strategy website that can be accessed at www.morpc.org/rhs The work of the project culminates in that online resource hub. It includes tools to identify and address housing issues within the City of

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Dublin and across Central Ohio. They are continuing to add more resources going forward.

She invited everyone to explore the Implementer’s Toolkit on the site, which houses all 110 actions that exist within the Regional Housing Strategy. It also offers the opportunity to learn about the unique submarkets that make up Central Ohio’s housing landscape, as well as actions that can be implemented to move the needle on supply and affordability. (She shared screenshots for the various portions of the website.)

MORPC will continue to champion this project and provide support to local governments to help address housing needs in the community. She shared an example of a local housing action agenda. They are in the process of developing metrics to track the region’s progress on the core issues. The Regional Housing Strategy dashboard is going to be an important part of MORPC’s ongoing commitment to those priority actions and other goals of this project.

Ms. Carr stated that MORPC will facilitate a speaker series every other month in 2021, featuring local and national speakers around various topics related to housing. The first is on February 19 and will focus on innovative development projects. The second on April 30 will showcase different communities and how they have updated or adjusted their zoning code and comprehensive plans to bring in innovative development. They also plan to facilitate conversations with school districts and the idea of creating “15-minute cities” – where most of the amenities and needs can be accessed within 15 minutes of your home. More information will come. In conclusion, she shared a slide displaying the incredible public-private partners who sponsored and collaborated the Regional Housing Strategy. She offered to respond to any questions.

The Clerk and Ms. Weisenauer noted that no comments have been received regarding this matter.

Mr. Keeler thanked them for the presentation and the hard work on this strategy. When it comes to supply and demand statistics used to determine a deficit or surplus, and since the studies take months/years to complete, how real time is the data? It appears apartments are under construction throughout the Central Ohio region and have been built in a short time period.

Ms. Carr stated the data is fairly up to date. They work closely with the BIA and Columbus Realtors Association on statistics. Currently, homes are being purchased at higher price points than ever before. This is a good indicator that the housing market is tight and not meeting the demand.

Ms. Noll stated that there are some limitations to the data sets, some of which go back to 2018 or so. For this particular area, more current data can be obtained by pulling building permits for the previous year and looking at vacancy rates for rentals and owner-occupied units, using that for a proxy of housing availability.

Mr. Keeler asked about senior housing. The study seems more broad. If he is interested in finding out more about housing for people aged 55 and over, where would that information be found?

Ms. Noll responded there is not a one-stop location currently. They are looking into whether there is a need for consolidated information, and if so, where that should live. To find housing for older adults on a fixed income and qualifying for subsidized living, the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority would have that information for Franklin County. For market rate housing, it is not easy. Often, one would need to go to each municipality to obtain a sense of the stock available. There is no one-stop shop for this type of information.

Ms. Alutto asked if some of the other speaker series further out have been scheduled. For many, especially those in the suburbs, another topic of interest and challenging is “Nimbyism” – not in my back yard. She would find it interesting to have people from suburbs come in and talk about their experiences, as well as those in Columbus.

Ms. Carr responded that is one of the topics they will be scheduling. This is happening in every single community and is the number one barrier to some of the denser and newer developments that people are not accustomed to in their community. We need

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to tell a better story of who will live in these housing developments and how it helps the community at large, helps with economic development, etc.

Ms. Alutto added there is also an issue of race and equity. Some communities feel they already have these developments and why is there pressure to locate more of this housing in their communities. There are some systemic issues in the overall continuum of care. She works in affordable housing, specifically permit-supported housing. It is not just a matter of working with the community – it is also a matter of working with organizations like CMHA, ADAMH and the Community Shelter Board. For tax credits, the applications are scored and it is challenging to meet all of the requirements even before moving forward to pursue rezoning. There are many layers and difficult issues involved.

Ms. Carr stated they may touch base with her in planning sessions for the future.

Ms. Fox stated that the City will talk about this in the context of the 2035 Plan. Has there been discussion about the struggle that exists for types of housing that developers want to build? Many times, Nimbyism exists because the type of development developers want to build, i.e. large apartment complexes that absorb an entire block and change the character of a neighborhood, tend to be the reason the development is not well accepted. In looking at the older suburbs like Grandview, Upper Arlington and Clintonville, there is a mixture of duplexes, four-family units all mixed into the neighborhood. No one is aware who receives subsidies for their housing. The new developers propose a whole new character of housing that separates itself by way of visual appearance. Was this discussed in the sessions?

Ms. Noll responded that this came up in the conversations and the MORPC team also talked of this quite a bit. This is an area where improvement can occur – not just in Central Ohio, but also across the country. MORPC advocates for a strong comprehensive plan where a community puts forward its vision. Dublin has that in place. On the other hand, there is a developer perspective and she highly encourages them to be thinking of these matters as well. They may have a stock product they build, but they could come up with development proposals more fitting with the character of a neighborhood.

Ms. Fox stated that in other parts of the country, developers are building more innovative housing styles. Those who build only in Central Ohio know only their own product. MORPC could help all of us see the possibilities and options that exist across the country to break the trend. Options will go a long way toward solutions.

Ms. Carr stated that they want to showcase what is happening elsewhere and connect through that creativity. They have been talking extensively with the Building Industry Association and hope to bring in local government and developers to the table at the same time for open, frank conversations.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated she is amazed at what they have accomplished in the time period. This is great work and the tool shared is so impressive. Thanks for doing this for Central Ohio! Her question as she thinks about her life and how far she would commute to a job she wants, relates to the critical connection between infrastructure of transportation and housing. Could they share their thinking about that aspect?

Ms. Noll responded that this project connects in the world of transportation and transit. They view the regional housing strategy as a natural next step from the Insight 2050 Corridor Concept work completed a couple of years ago. We have a solid understanding of the benefits of corridor development and providing access to high capacity transit, safe walking and biking and other modes of travel. Now it is about ensuring there is housing available near those locations so that access to the job is critical. They have been looking through the lens of how we can connect the dots of land use, housing, and infrastructure that supports the transportation and transit systems.

Ms. Carr added that they are working with COTA and Columbus on how the regional housing strategy elements will play into the new development of the corridors such as the northwest corridor and ensuring as we do infill and new development to include true mixed-income communities, not just mixed-use. As subsidized homes are sited, it is important that the areas have true access to transit, bikeways and trails. Land use and transportation needs to be looked at together.

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Vice Mayor De Rosa commented that in terms of tools for Dublin, it does make sense for us to think about how do we move this forward. Do we look at a Dublin specific version of this? How do we take this large piece of work and strategize more effectively for Dublin. That would be the next step as Dublin works on its framework for the Dublin 2035 Plan.

Mayor Amorose Groomes stated that the next step would be to engage the same consultants who have done this study for MORPC. These are regional challenges identified. Not any one community can do everything on the list, but every community can do some of the items on the list. Dublin has been an employment center for the region and provides a lot of jobs. The challenge for people to have quality housing is incumbent upon their ability to earn a living. Transportation to get to and from those jobs is also a challenge. She is looking at this more school district wide, as the lines that are drawn on the map as the City of Dublin limits do not reflect our community. The school district is a far more accurate reflection of the City of Dublin and the larger Dublin community. Part of the development hurdle is the cost of land, as noted. That is out of the control of the City of Dublin. She asked Mr. McDaniel to speak to next steps and thanked Ms. Carr and Ms. Noll for sharing the Regional Housing Strategy tonight.

Mr. McDaniel thanked MORPC for taking on a leadership role in this study. It was initially brought up by the City of Columbus, and they involved the Central Ohio Mayors and Managers Association (COMMA) and MORPC. Thanks to Dublin staff as well for their work on this. He suggests that the City continue to support this effort and perhaps look at Dublin’s contribution to this. His recommended motion for Council would include an ongoing discussion about local housing action agendas that become local action unique to Dublin; authorizing staff to engage with any consulting services that staff might determine necessary; engaging the Dublin community in the process as much as possible; and reporting back to Council relative to findings and tying that into the 2035 Framework Plan process. The timing of this would work well within the next year.

Mayor Amorose Groomes asked about the 2021 operating budget and if there are monies available to engage these consulting services for this purpose. Mr. McDaniel responded affirmatively. Staff budgeted \$250,000 for consulting services related to the 2035 Plan and this could be included as part of that. There are also some contingency monies budgeted. Staff would need to draft a scope of services and if the monies would exceed what is budgeted, staff would return to Council and report this. However, he believes the 2021 operating budget can accommodate this expense.

Ms. Fox suggested a local roundtable discussion with developers, the community and Council is in order. Nimbyism is one of the largest barriers, and buy-in needs to be achieved at the outset. A consultant may not understand the personal concerns in our community, and she would advocate including a roundtable discussion in any resolution. Mr. McDaniel commented that in terms of consultants, he would recommend using the expertise MORPC has already used and then drilling down on specifics about Dublin and the Dublin surrounding area – how that ties into our workforce and housing stock. In formulating any recommendations, he would anticipate a number of community discussions occurring.

Ms. Fox stated that perhaps Council could incorporate PZC formally in this conversation, as it would be helpful going forward.

Mayor Amorose Groomes moved to pursue the ongoing discussion with MORPC and the use of consulting services to see what areas might be available for Dublin to participate further. Mr. Keeler seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Alutto, yes; Mr. Keeler, yes; Ms. Fox, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Mr. Peterson, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Mayor Amorose Groomes, yes. Mayor Amorose Groomes added that given the passion everyone has for this topic, it would make sense to schedule a work session before hiring consultants and moving forward.

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Mr. McDaniel responded that staff will return with a conversation about a scope of services for any consulting expertise needed.

Special Recognition

Mayor Amorose Groomes noted this is Clerk of Council Anne Clarke’s last Council meeting, given her pending retirement after 30 years of service to the City. She read a proclamation on behalf of City Council recognizing her for her service. Ms. Clarke expressed her appreciation for this recognition, as well as the opportunity to have served this City and played a small role in its development over the past 30 years. Thank you to all of City Council and City staff for their support.

Mr. Reiner stated she is dedicated, humble and incredibly efficient. He has enjoyed her friendship over all of these years. She performed the Clerk duties in a magnificent and excellent manner that has brought honor to the City. He will miss working with her, but he wishes her well with her family and future travels. Thank you and God bless you!

Mr. Peterson noted that a strength of Dublin is the stability and continuity of our leadership. There has been an amazing line of leadership over the years that has allowed Dublin to commit to the vision they want to be and execute upon that. Anne is a representative of that leadership on staff. Personally, he thanked her for what she has done for this community, helping to make it a wonderful place to raise our families. Her success in this community will carry on for generations to come. Thank you for everything!

Mr. McDaniel, on behalf of all the City staff, thanked her for all of her service over 30 years. The City’s mission statement states “we are a proud local democracy.” Anne has been the “linchpin” of that. The long-standing continuity she has provided puts her in this special place in our local democracy. She is an example of the profession of the Clerk of Council in the state and internationally. On behalf of all of staff and all of the past and present City Managers, thanks for being a great teammate, partner, teacher, coach and mentor. We wish you the best!

Ms. Alutto noted that the coach and teacher description is appropriate. From the beginning of her service on Council, Anne has been a source of counsel and advice. She thanked her for everything she has done for her personally, and echoed all that has been said tonight! While she will miss her, she is happy that Anne can now enjoy a well-deserved retirement!

Mr. Keeler stated that, unlike his peers, he has not had the privilege of serving with Anne for many years. However, what strikes him is her level of professionalism, setting the standard that others Clerks of Council should hold themselves to. In his mind, she is essentially a “Director of First Impressions” at the City! He is sorry that she is leaving, but understands there will be a celebration later in the year. He wished her the best of luck and wished health to her father.

Ms. Fox stated that after watching what has happened in the country in the past week or two, she has thought about what the Clerk has contributed to the City over these 30 years. She provided some perspective on the role of a Clerk throughout history, dating back to 1620. In fact, the first local government office set up by the colonists was City Clerk. The backbone of government lies with those who hold government accountable, keep the records and ensure efficient operations. This provides confidence and transparency in public information that is essential to our democracy. The Clerk is the one-stop shop for citizens who want to contact their government and the Clerk ensures they receive a response. She has been a true servant of the City and will be missed very much! Council and the citizens appreciate everything she has done.

Vice Mayor De Rosa congratulated Anne on a wonderful career. She recalled that Anne indicated she wanted a career that would really have an impact. Not only has she had the impact in Dublin, but Clerks look to her in terms of the standards she has set. In an early interaction with Anne, she contacted Anne for assistance with campaign finance filings. It was clear that citizens in the community who come to Anne for assistance receive her full attention. She has done that for thousands of people over