



Dear Champaign Co. Housing Stakeholders:

The Champaign Economic Partnership is pleased to release *Open for Business: Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis for Champaign County, Ohio*, completed by the Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC) in early 2020.

The study provides an analysis of market rate and affordable housing markets in Champaign County and its four largest communities: the City of Urbana and the Villages of Mechanicsburg, North Lewisburg, and St. Paris. The study concludes with a slate of thoughtful policy recommendations that can guide local leaders in their efforts to enhance community housing markets.

Since this study was drafted, Champaign County, along with the rest of the state, has entered into an unprecedented period of emergency which has disrupted many facets on individual and community life. As the state experiences and recovers from the COVID-19 Crisis, I firmly believe that the recommendations from this report will help our municipalities support and improve their housing markets and rally stakeholders. Housing impacts economic and community development efforts, and as the community progresses through these extraordinary times, county and local leaders will be able to utilize this report to support housing needs of Champaign County.

This study captures the intrinsic values of Champaign County: family-friendly communities, open space and natural amenities, and vibrant, affordable downtowns and main streets. An explicit goal of this research was to find recommendations that build on existing assets in order to attract and retain more residents. Much of the data analyzed as part of this report will remain relevant, and its distribution can provide value for our communities today.

Throughout the study period, GOPC was guided by a multi-sector Advisory Committee representing government and private sector leaders from each of the four focus areas. In the final stages before publishing, CEP hosted a series of public presentations to county government officials and interested community members. These were held in the County Government offices on February 14 and March 2, 2020, where over 60 unique individuals reviewed study findings and recommendations for Champaign County community. These final documents reflect the content and commentary from those public meetings.

While we are in uncertain times now, they will not last forever. And when we emerge on the other side, I know that I and all residents of Champaign Co. will be eager to continue our work in making Champaign Co. the best place to live in the state.

Be well and I look forward to working with each and every one of you on this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Marcia Bailey'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'M' and 'B'.

Marcia Bailey  
Executive Director  
Champaign Economic Partnership