



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Central Ohio Leaders to Create “Regional Housing Coalition” to Expand and Diversify Housing Infrastructure**

*Coalition will seek to foster affordable, healthy housing market amid record population growth*

COLUMBUS, OH – Today Mayor Andrew J. Ginther joined leaders from across Central Ohio to announce the creation of the Regional Housing Coalition, a new entity that will support the efforts of communities and organizations spanning sectors and jurisdictions as they work to increase the speed and scale of new housing projects.

Expanding and diversifying housing supply throughout the region will lower housing costs and improve housing affordability for more families, ensuring inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth in the years ahead.

“If you work in Central Ohio, you should be able to live in Central Ohio – but Columbus cannot be the sole housing provider for the entire region,” said Mayor Ginther. “This is a time for us to lead, and to act, and to do so in a comprehensive, collaborative way. This is critical to our region’s competitive advantage and to making sure that we remain accessible and affordable to all.”

For over a decade, the pace of new housing construction has lagged behind the pace of job creation and population growth. According to projections, Central Ohio will have fewer homes than families by 2030. This has resulted in a housing supply crisis that is driving up rent and housing prices across Central Ohio. Data from Redfin Realty shows that a Central Ohio homebuyer needs to earn at least \$90,000 per year to be able to afford purchasing a home, while regional census data places the median household income at \$76,000 per year.

In 2021, community leaders – led by Mayor Ginther, Lark Mallory (then president and CEO of the Affordable Housing Trust) and Kenny McDonald (then president and CEO of the Columbus Partnership) – convened to determine how best to maintain the region’s affordability as economic growth continues. Four task forces were established, each focused on addressing a

specific challenge facing the region: supply, affordability, equity and advocacy, and coordination.

“Serving as one of the three conveners was the right thing at the right moment, bringing together key stakeholders to discuss four key pillars that cover every topic we need to tackle to solve our housing crisis,” said housing advocate Lark Mallory, now CEO of Mallory Economic Advisors.

Ultimately, the task forces engaged with more than 150 community stakeholders to develop a comprehensive list of actions that would, at a regional level, meet Central Ohio’s housing needs while supporting its growth and promoting equitable prosperity. Given the number of partners and initiatives involved, it was determined that a new regional entity – the Regional Housing Coalition – would be required to successfully lead a comprehensive and coordinated approach to build more housing, with a particular emphasis on breaking down siloes and strengthening housing affordability in Central Ohio.

“The lack of affordable housing impacts everyone – from senior citizens and those on fixed incomes to families just starting out and everyone in between,” said City of Reynoldsburg Mayor Joe Begeny, the host of today’s announcement where Reynoldsburg and Franklin County are partnering to build affordable housing in the city’s core across from city hall. “While each of us must take a unique approach to address the needs of our individual communities, by working together we can make a meaningful impact in the lives of our community members.”

“Our region’s population growth is an outcome of our success in creating abundant job opportunities and a diverse economy across Central Ohio,” said Kenny McDonald, President and CEO of One Columbus. “Sustaining that momentum requires comprehensive planning coupled with bold action so that we can retain the character of our communities, sustain high performing schools and build an adequate supply of housing.”

In the coming months, the Regional Housing Coalition will be collaboratively developed through conversations with regional partners, stakeholders and leaders to create a business plan for the new organization to ensure that it will successfully become the regional steward for implementing housing solutions and monitoring the overall health of the region’s housing market.

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