

# BUILDING INSIDER

Official Publication of the Building Industry Association of Central Ohio

Volume 39 • Issue 4 | QUARTER 4 • 2022



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*2022 Parade of Homes Recap*

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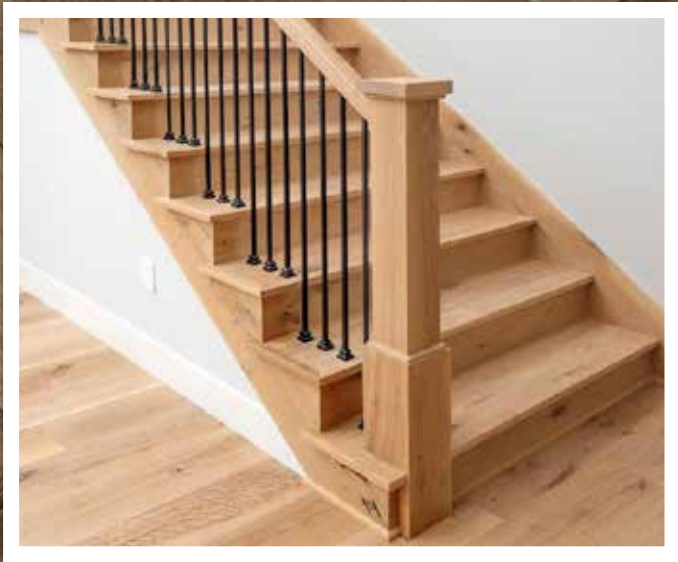
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Our builder division, headed by Mark Martin (Columbus) and Paul Thompson (Akron), has 18 staff members that are **laser-focused on partnering with builders.**

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Sean Stoner, President*

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## A Bright Future Ahead in Central Ohio



Bob Yoakam  
2022 BIA President  
Rockford Homes

As we get ready to wind up the year in central Ohio, reflecting on the last twelve months has shown a bright future is ahead for our region for many years to come.

We started the year in January with Intel announcing their new 1,000 acre 20-billion-dollar semi-conductor plant on the northeast side of central Ohio. The project will bring more than 3,000 permanent jobs to the region along with another 7,000 construction jobs during the build timeframe of ten plus years.

Intel believes the 20-billion-dollar investment is just the starting point in the region with potential plans for an investment north of 100 billion over the course of a couple decades. The project has garnered the attention of the national news and the Oval Office. While this project will certainly reshape central Ohio in the decades to come, it wasn't the only multi-billion investment announced in 2022 coming to the region.

Here recently in the month of October, Governor DeWine and Honda Motors announced another 4.4-billion-dollar investment in the region for an electric battery plant. Honda has a long history in central Ohio—the company invested 35 million in their Marysville plant more than 40 years ago. To date, Honda has spent over 11 billion here and employs more than 5,000 people at this auto plant.

We have seen how investments like this reshape local municipalities and become economic drivers for entire regions in other areas of the country. Look at Intel's most recent semi-conductor plant investment in Chandler, Arizona. Chandler's population has grown by over 1,900

percent in the 30 years since Intel invested in the community.

Sure, we have seen some volatility in the market as inflation runs at a 40-year high and interest rates have moved from the low 3% in January to the high 6% in September. I don't know that anyone knows how strong these headwinds will be coming at us over the course of the next 12 to 18 months but let's not forget that Columbus has strong basic fundamentals for future growth.

We have a greatly underserved market in both the rental and for sale markets. Vogt Strategic Insights estimates the region needs to construct more than 14,000 permits annually to meet the current growth demand without these two massive economic impact developments. We are currently producing just over 8,000 permits annually. Having an underserved for sale and for rent market coupled with both economic and job growth in the region sets central Ohio up to be a growth hub for many years to come.

It is on all of us, including the BIA, to continue to work and advocate with our government leaders to streamline and improve the entitlement process to close this gap between our current and future housing supply and demand needs. ■



JON MELCHI  
BIA Executive Director

## Getting Central Ohioans to Say Yes to More Housing

Fortunately, our report was later verified and confirmed by groups such as MORPC. The topic of supply-side constraints in the housing market generated more news, giving our organization and report more credibility. Unfortunately, our predictions of higher home prices and rents if we didn't meet the market needs were also proven correct.

Suppose we are living in an environment where there is a genuine acknowledgment of a housing shortfall and a growing realization that housing is a significant component of economic development. What can our industry do to capitalize on the momentum that exists in a way it never has before?

A few things come to mind as we finish a crazy 2022 and move into 2023.

1. Engage with your local communities. One of the most significant accomplishments that we have had at the BIA over the past few years is our call for local governments to update their land use plans. Currently, several major communities are updating their zoning and comprehensive plans. These updates are an outstanding opportunity for our industry to be involved (Licking County and Fairfield County are undertaking master planning efforts, and Columbus, Plain City and Grove City are updating zoning). Keep an eye on your BIA This Week in Central Ohio email for requests to participate in one of the many working groups focused on central Ohio communities.
2. View the economic development community as an ally. Local

communities employ economic development professionals to help convince businesses to locate or expand within their respective jurisdictions. Right now, one of the biggest challenges communities have isn't the ability to get a tax benefit or the perfect site but, rather, to have a location close to its desired workforce. Having the support of the economic development community will help with elected officials and local leaders.

3. Think non-traditionally. One of the greatest opportunities for breaking through in specific communities is to identify potential supporters you might not immediately consider as allies. We have heard from anti-poverty and social justice-focused organizations regarding their growing realization that the lack of market-rate housing negatively impacts the affordable housing space. They can be allies in supporting housing creation. I would also add environmental and transit-oriented groups as we discuss projects that have more density.

We are a fortunate region. Despite economic turmoil around the country, we continue to hear of employers coming to central Ohio to grow and expand their businesses. The BIA is a trusted resource and partner for many communities throughout the region, and we have a resonating message.

Now is the time to be proactive and innovative in delivering our message. We need to talk about the broad benefits of housing and make it easier for people to say yes to housing. ■

In the pages of this magazine, you will read the update of the BIA's Housing Needs Assessment, which is probably not shocking to anyone in our industry, and shows that we continue to have a housing supply challenge in our market, and quite simply a big need to build more.

In 2018, the BIA released our first iteration of the Housing Needs Assessment. The difference in the reception of this most recent report versus our original study could not be starker. In 2018, we spent a lot of energy trying to demonstrate that our data was accurate and not simply a self-serving piece of developer propaganda.



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# Soil Connect Makes It Faster, Cheaper and Easier to Source and Move Dirt

By Carol Rich

The aha moment that launched Soil Connect, a digital marketplace for dirt and aggregates, began with a straightforward transaction between Cliff Fetner, the company's founder and CEO, and a fellow builder.

Fetner, a third generation builder and developer, had been struggling to find a way to get rid of all the dirt left over after excavating a home he was building on Long Island, New York. A builder with more than 30 years of experience and a past president of his local home builders association, Fetner examined the issue from a building industry perspective.

"I had a problem and I thought, there has to be a better way to do this," he says.

One day, when Fetner was at his job site, a builder working on a home in the same development, stopped by to ask what Fetner planned to do with the giant mound of dirt. "I said, 'I don't know.' And he said, 'Great, I need it,'" remembers Fetner.

The two didn't know each other — but they quickly struck a deal. Problem solved, trade accomplished — and each builder got what they needed.

"It was as simple as that," says Fetner.

The simplicity, transparency and mutual benefit of that transaction struck a chord with Fetner. He began to think about how builders, haulers and others in the building community could leverage technology to exchange dirt with the same ease.

The result: in 2019 Fetner started Soil Connect, a free and direct way for building community members to connect using their phones, tablets or laptops, to locate, transport and/or acquire soil and aggregates.

"That's what Soil Connect is doing. It's solving the problem of the sourcing and the moving of dirt," Fetner explains. "We put all the information out there, just like Airbnb and Craigslist and Zillow. I didn't reinvent the wheel. I just took technology that was already out there and applied it."

With Soil Connect, you can post listings and requests for soil and aggregates, as well as upload supplier-certified reports and/or geotechnical reports. You're able to find dirt providers or receivers closer to your job site, so you can save on expenses like fuel and truck rentals.

As a start-up, Soil Connect began by linking those who have soil and those who need it in the New York City metro area, but its reach has grown rapidly.



“Moving dirt is local and that’s why we concentrate on launching the marketplace one city at a time,” Fetner says. In September 2022, Soil Connect expanded its network to central Ohio.

I recently met with Fetner over Zoom to find out more about the ways Soil Connect simplifies dirt exchange.

### **Building Insider: Soil Connect sounds like a great idea! Can you tell me how it works?**

**Cliff Fetner:** It’s a marketplace for 18 different kinds of dirt and aggregates, and mulch and compost and recycled concrete and recycled glass — so all the materials that we are moving and hauling each and every day on our job site are on our marketplace. That’s what we’re doing in its simplest form, but we take it to another level, by putting everyone who plays in the dirt all in one place and at one time. We’re creating a transparency in the marketplace that’s never existed before.

### **How do you sign up?**

You go to the website, soilconnect.com — it’s that easy! It’s free and it takes just three minutes to download the app. We’re built on simplicity.

### **Did you say free?**

Yes — we’re free. And we’re going to stay free. Our growth is off the charts because it doesn’t cost anything. And we’ve saved some of our biggest users hundreds of thousands of dollars.

### **Does Soil Connect tackle other building industry issues too?**

Dirt exchange is not the only problem our industry has, so we’ve also worked on another one — ticketing. How do you get rid of the paper tickets used from job site to job site? The answer is digitizing. We capture your information through GPS and cell phone technology, track it and share the details of hauling materials from one destination to the next. Drivers don’t have to use pen and paper. We’re saving builders thousands of dollars in administrative fees every single day with eTicketing.

We’ve also introduced eRegulatory, so you can digitally capture and save truck, load and route data. This makes it easy for you to share your information with regulatory agencies. The turn-by-turn tracking in eRegulatory establishes a chain of custody so you can protect your assets and minimize your risk.

### **You’re a home builder, right?**

I come from a family-owned, home building business background. I grew up on the job site, playing as a kid on the trucks and equipment. I got an economics degree from the University of Buffalo and never did anything with it except hang the diploma on the wall.



**Cliff Fetner,**  
Soil Connect founder and CEO

I’ve been a single family builder for more than three decades. I’ve run my own home building company, Jaco Builders, out of Port Washington, New York. I’m a past president of our local home builders association, the Long Island Builders Institute, and I’m an active member of NAHB and New York’s state home builders association.

Soil Connect has brought the fourth generation of my family into the home building business. My son, Daniel, was getting his MBA at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business when I started Soil Connect and he became its co-founder. He advises us on our investment side.



### **How would you sum up Soil Connect?**

It’s one-stop shopping for any and all your dirt needs. It’s for the dirt ecosystem — and the dirt ecosystem is made up of everyone and anyone that plays in the dirt. That includes builders, developers, earth-moving contractors and people in pavement, concrete, swimming pools and landscaping. And when you put everyone and anyone that plays in the dirt all in one place and all at one time — there’s the magic, there’s the efficiency of the movement of dirt. ■



For more information, visit [soilconnect.com](http://soilconnect.com)

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# New BIA Housing Study Finds Home Construction Needs to Double

By Carol Rich

An August 2022 update of the BIA's landmark 2017 BIA housing study warns that central Ohio still has a serious housing shortage. To keep pace with demand, the Columbus region will need to double home construction over the next decade.

The new report confirms and expands on the BIA's earlier study, which estimated central Ohio needs approximately 14,000 housing units each year to meet growth demands.

In the years between reports, the Columbus area has fallen short of the production target cited in 2017. The 2022 study finds that 14,000 to 19,000 housing units should be built each year to keep up with our area's growth. But instead, just 8,000 to 9,000 units were constructed per year during the last decade. The study used job growth estimates to assess our region's housing needs through 2050.

"The recent housing study validates what most in our industry have either experienced or already intuitively know. The lack of housing and not keeping up with job growth continues to challenge affordability, which will

be exacerbated as the region grows," says Matt Callahan, Division VP of Land Acquisition, Pulte Group and a Past President of the BIA.

With this most recent Housing Needs Assessment, the BIA continues to take a leadership role in quantifying the depth of our housing shortfall and alerting central Ohioans to the problems this deficit can bring.

"What has stood out to me is the near universal acceptance of this study and its recognition, by local and state leaders, economic development professionals and the community at large, of the BIA as a leader on housing policy," observes Jon Melchi, Executive Director of the BIA.

Earlier this year, the BIA recognized the need for an updated analysis of our region's housing situation due to the arrival of Intel, additional business expansions and our region's continued growth.

The BIA Foundation commissioned Vogt Strategic Insights, the same real estate research firm that prepared the original report, to create this year's assessment. "The Foundation Board

**"The recent housing study validates what most in our industry have either experienced or already intuitively know. The lack of housing and not keeping up with job growth continues to challenge affordability, which will be exacerbated as the region grows."**

*Matt Callahan, Pulte Group*

generously agreed to fund this study because of its overall importance to the community and the residential construction industry," Melchi says.

At the current construction pace, central Ohio is lagging behind in its jobs-to-housing ratio, even before the expected Intel job surge. If the rate of home building doesn't pick up to meet demand, home prices and apartment rents will rise much faster than income growth — a scenario that's already occurring. The housing



report finds that Columbus region home prices have climbed approximately 10 percent per year over the past five years, while incomes have only risen two percent to three percent per year.

The new Housing Needs Assessment covers 10 central Ohio counties: Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Pickaway and Union. The study indicates that while underbuilding is more acute in some central Ohio neighborhoods, shortfalls occur in every county and municipality. Additionally, increases in home prices and rental rates continue to far outpace income growth within all geographic areas covered in the study.

Vogt Strategic Insights estimates that the central Ohio region will add 145,000 to 202,000 jobs through 2032. Each year, there will be a corresponding need for single families and apartments to support this growth. One of the report's key findings is that the Columbus region is in need of affordable housing, particularly affordable rentals.

“This study confirmed and expanded upon the need for housing of all types throughout the region,” says Melchi.

“There’s clearly a deficit of housing all up and down the spectrum, whether it’s single families, condos or apartments,” says Tre’ Giller, President and CEO of Metro Development.

Wide-ranging issues impede the ability of builders and developers to create the different kinds of housing needed to meet market demand — and to build at an efficient pace.

“It’s an issue that has to be addressed and how it is addressed is really important to us as builders and developers,” Giller says. “We can only deal with the rules and regulations and guidelines in place, concerning density and process.”

Giller observes that the market segment searching for a “missing middle” — affordable housing such as townhomes, courtyard apartments and duplexes — is especially underserved. But if laws don’t change, municipality rulings will make building all kinds of homes, including missing middle housing, more difficult and costly, even in the face of tremendous market need.

Municipalities that want to reassess rules and guidelines can look to the BIA report for helpful data. The study gives local decision-makers the information they need to understand the challenges our region faces now and in the future. It’s also meant to spark discussions around potential solutions to the underlying issues related to zoning, land use, regulatory guidelines, infrastructure investment, construction costs and the availability of skilled workers.

“The contributing factors noted in the study are all real, including zoning limitations, regulatory guidelines and construction costs that are in part related to the lack of skilled workers,” Callahan says. “These factors could be partially mitigated by modifications to long-range land use planning and zoning regulations leading to fewer restrictions which in turn would create greater efficiencies in the homebuilding process.” ■



**Wide-ranging issues impede the ability of builders and developers to create the different kinds of housing needed to meet market demand — and to build at an efficient pace.**

# We love a parade!

## 2022 Parade of Homes Recap

Central Ohioans turned out in record numbers to tour the annual Parade of Homes presented by the Building Industry Association of Central Ohio. With nearly 50 homes on the tour, the Parade is the largest showcase of new homes in the region.

This was the second year for the new scattered-site format that enabled more homes – as well as living styles, including condominiums – in a variety of price points, to be included in the event. The Parade spanned three long weekends to allow visitors more time to tour more homes.

The BIA Parade of Homes Excellence Party was held at Beulah Park in Grove City. It was a sell-out event that offered great networking and celebrating. The beautiful setting enhanced the fun food and drinks!

A contest component that was added this year encouraged multiple home visits. Participants scanned a unique QR code found in each home in the Parade. The prize is a Cambria Kitchen Package including Cambria quartz, a faucet and sink from Worly Plumbing Supply and installation by Midwest Quartz. Look for before and after photography of the winner's kitchen in an upcoming issue of CityScene Magazine.



Winner of the Scan to Win contest pictured at the BIA office with representatives from contest sponsors: CAMBRIA, Midwest Quartz, 3 Pillar Homes (builder with most entries) and Worly Plumbing Supply.



The builder with the most entries in the Scan to Win contest was 3 Pillar Homes. Rachael Durant from 3 Pillar Homes is pictured with Jon Melchi and the prize: \$500 in gift cards, courtesy of CityScene Media Group.







L to R: Pat Kelley, Falco Smith & Kelley Ltd.; Shawn Conrad, Grove City Chamber of Commerce; Jon Melchi, BIA



Congratulations to all of this year's winners. See page 18 for full list of awards.



# And the winners are...

## **Condo**

\$300,000 – \$600,000

### **Curb Appeal**

Thrive Companies | 2316 Quarry Trails

### **Outdoor Living, Floor Plan, Kitchen**

Epcon Communities | 3218 Korg St.

### **Owners Retreat, Living Area**

Trinity Homes | 3368 Joberry Loop

### **Best Overall**

Epcon Communities | 3218 Korg St.

## **Condo**

\$601,000 – \$1.5 Million

### **Curb Appeal**

Thrive Companies | 2316 Quarry Trails

### **Outdoor Living, Floor Plan, Owners Retreat, Living Area**

Epcon Communities | 6660 Trinity Mist Way

### **Kitchen**

Thrive Companies | 2316 Quarry Trails

### **Best Overall**

Epcon Communities | 6660 Trinity Mist Way

## **Single Family**

\$380,000 - \$500,000

### **Curb Appeal**

Fischer Homes | 6153 Honey Farm Way

### **Outdoor Living, Kitchen**

PulteGroup | 7715 Nottingham Blvd.

### **Floor Plan, Living Area**

Fischer Homes | 6153 Honey Farm Way

### **Owners Retreat**

PulteGroup | 9569 Coach Line Ave.

### **Best Overall**

Fischer Homes | 6153 Honey Farm Way

## **Single Family**

\$501,000 - \$600,000

### **Curb Appeal, Floor Plan, Living Area**

Collective House | 8792 Eliot Dr.

### **Outdoor Living**

Epcon Communities | 5729 Arcadian Ave.

### **Kitchen**

D. R. Horton | 2775 Aldengate

### **Owners Retreat**

Epcon Communities | 10189 Hyland Run

### **Best Overall**

Collective House | 8792 Eliot Dr.

## **Single Family**

\$601,000 - \$800,000

### **Curb Appeal, Kitchen**

Bob Webb | 5584 Butternut Dr.

### **Outdoor Living, Floor Plan, Owners Retreat, Living Area**

Epcon Communities | 10305 Tipperary Dr.

### **Best Overall**

Epcon Communities | 10305 Tipperary Dr.

## **Single Family**

\$850,000 ++

### **Curb Appeal**

3 Pillar Homes | 5565 Evans Farm Dr.

### **Floor Plan, Owners Retreat**

Bob Webb | 11339 Winterberry Dr.

### **Outdoor Living, Kitchen, Living Area**

Old World Homes | 5424 Maple Glen Rd.

### **Best Overall**

Bob Webb | 11339 Winterberry Dr.



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## Free and Downloadable BIA Contracts and Warranties

Need a contract or warranty to protect yourself and your business? The BIA has you covered.

The BIA provides members with fill-in forms that you can download and use for free. Each contract and warranty was written by the BIA's lawyers specifically to meet the business needs of people in our industry and to protect them.

Depending on the document, the contracts and warranties clearly spell out the duties of both builders and buyers, as well as the terms and conditions for a home project. This helps prevent confusion and/or disagreements later on.

The BIA updates contracts and warranties as needed to address any major changes made to Ohio law.

Among the many contracts and warranties you'll find in PDF form on the BIA's website:

- New home contract - builder's lot
- New home contract - owner's lot
- Contract required items checklist
- Limited warranty agreements
- Real estate purchase agreement for purchase and sale of a home where construction is substantially complete
- Minimal quantifiable standards to define workmanlike manner of construction services agreement
- Addendum to BIA real estate purchase for new construction
- Remodeler's agreement
- Remodeler's limited warranty agreement
- Arbitration rule addendum

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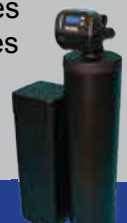
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# Membership *Fun!*

## Pups on the Patio

Tons of fun was had at the Pups on the Patio networking happy hour held Sept. 29 at Land-Grant Brewery. Open to all members, it was a doggone good time for all!

We partnered with Stop the Suffering Columbus Ohio, who brought some adorable, adoptable dogs to the event. The raffle and all donations went directly to Stop the Suffering.

Look for more networking and fun events announced in weekly emails and on the BIA website.







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# Marketing Your Home Renovation Business

on an ad and purchase something if the ad specifies that you are offering a special sale (Buy-One-Get-One or “Competitor Price Match” sales).

However, utilizing tools like SEO (Search Engine Optimization) makes it easier to target consumers in your area. When a consumer is looking for a service in your category, they usually google keywords related to their needs. Local SEO involves optimizing your website to achieve a higher ranking when customers search for home renovation businesses on Google. If your potential clients are searching for your services online, and they are likely to be in close geographic proximity to you, they can find you in their search results.

By:  
Rachel Karas  
Editor,  
CityScene Media Group

## Advertise!

### *Use Online Advertisements*

While there are many options for free or very low cost online advertising and exposure, this really is an area where what you pay is what you get. For online advertising to generate measurable response (customers) you need to create a budget and be prepared to pay. Most small business owners don’t know that consumers need to see digital ads an average of seven times (versus three times in print) before taking action. When marketing online, use one of the proven methods and invest enough of a budget that your efforts aren’t wasted.

Online advertisements come in many forms but the most common are PPC ads (pay-per-click) or SEO (search engine optimization). Pay-per-click advertisements can be purchased through sources like Google AdWords, Bing, or Facebook. If you choose to go this route, it is best to make these kinds of ads as compelling as possible by offering something that will catch consumers’ attention. For example, consumers are more likely to click

Don’t be afraid to ask for verification of circulation—Standard Rate & Data System is the gold standard for print verification numbers.

## Promote on Pinterest

Pinterest has become one of the top networks for home renovation inspiration. When Pinterest started in 2010, it was mainly used as a platform to save ideas and style trends. But since then, more homeowners are using it to find home renovation ideas. Not only that, but products can now be linked in Pinterest photos. This means that when homeowners see a photo of their dream kitchen on Pinterest, they can click on it to see how much it will cost to have it done themselves.

## Be the Go-To Source for Information

Creating online content that provides consumers with relevant renovation information may give them incentive to trust that your company knows how to get the job done correctly. Similarly, an ad or editorial in a well-respected publication helps to build your brand not only by showcasing your projects or special skills, but also by aligning your company with an already established brand.

## Leverage Online Reviews

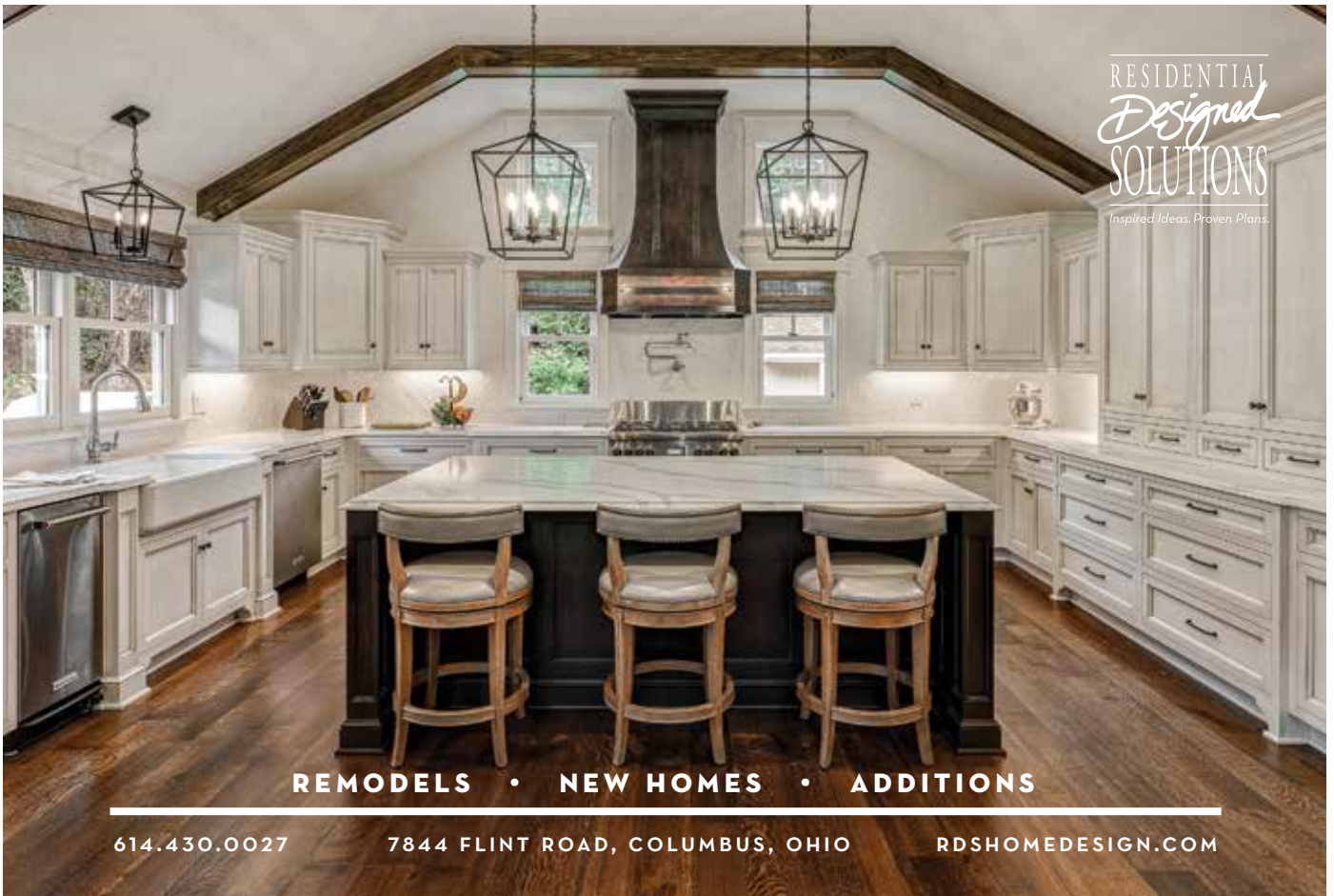
Lastly, client reviews are a great way to get more business. They are crucial for marketing your business and can be used to increase the number of customers you gain through word-of-mouth recommendations. Reviews help potential clients find you by boosting your local search ranking in Google or Bing. One of the best ways to get feedback is to ask for it. Tell customers that you'd like their input and make it easy for them to leave a review on your website or via a print letter that you can post for them. ■

## Use Print Advertisements

Much has changed since the first known print ad (found on a papyrus fragment dated around 3000 B.C.). Motives and tactics have shifted from strictly sales, to building customer trust and loyalty while solidifying brand awareness. Print ads uniquely build trust and reputation while digital can build awareness.

Print ads therefore should be placed in publications that have high consumer respect and engagement to build maximum trust and loyalty. And, for the most effect, choose a publication with long shelf life—that is, one that is kept by consumers, in their homes, for long periods or are collected. Also consider your company’s image and product. Will it present better in color or newsprint? Finally, judge the distribution. Mailed to homes will generate better response than a pick-up circulation. It puts your message in the hands of consumers rather than passively waiting for someone to pick it up. And, the larger the circulation the more people will see your ad.





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# Zoning Reforms Are Essential to Solving Central Ohio Housing Shortage

By Malcolm Porter

Elsewhere in this issue are details related to the BIA's recently updated Central Ohio Housing Needs Assessment. In the Assessment there is clear and compelling information presented about the need to build approximately twice the current levels of housing being produced in our region.

Why aren't we building more housing to meet this need?

This is a common question and one for which there are multiple answers. Macro challenges exist like interest rates, inflation that impacts buyer/renter affordability, material shortages resulting from supply chain issues, and workforce shortages of construction labor and design professionals. All these barriers are real. They are complex and largely cannot be solved at a small level, in one community, or even region.

However, there is an additional barrier, that arguably is the biggest hurdle to overcome to be able to build sufficient housing in our region. And,

this barrier is completely within the control of individual communities: zoning.

Zoning is the underlying basis that a community uses to impose its will on land use and determine the amount and form of housing that can be developed on a particular piece of property.

Building sufficient housing will require sufficient zoning codes that allow the region's needed number of housing units to be built. Density of units is the key measure of housing capacity that will be allowed.

Zoning is a political process. Whatever challenges or deficiencies a community's zoning code has can be fixed in a relatively short period of time if there is sufficient political will of local elected officials.

There is increased awareness in the news and economic discussions of the need for more housing, and the need for housing at price/rent levels that is more affordably aligned with area incomes. This awareness has contributed to many communities undertaking zoning code reviews and changes, including Columbus, Grove City, Hilliard and Plain City.

Additionally, as a result of Intel plans, 14 jurisdictions in Licking County are working through the Evans Foundation in a planning effort that will set the table for potential zoning code work in those areas. And Delaware City completed its new comprehensive plan, and it is considering zoning reforms to better implement this plan.

The BIA is involved with all of these efforts. BIA staff and members meet with elected officials, staff and consultants for each community. Our work is to help local leaders understand the market, and what our customers, and their future residents/voters, want to buy or rent. What can be built to accommodate the

customers' preferences? Where will workers for local employers live?

In too many of these meetings with local officials, the conversation starts with a position of "here is what I personally like" and judgements are made from that lens and not from a community need perspective.

Combine this personal preference orientation with the perception that existing residents oppose new residents, and there is the basic equation for zoning codes that prohibit the region from building the housing capacity that it needs.

Zoning, and particularly density, is where the rubber meets the road in every city, village or township. Historically "less" is the preferred alternative.

What is one sentence NEVER heard at a zoning hearing? Your project is rejected - it does not have enough units.

If left to our current zoning norms, it is hard to see how central Ohio can fulfill its housing needs. Our region risks its future economic growth if workers cannot find affordable apartments or houses.

The BIA is focused in its zoning reform efforts to work not only with local officials, but also other stakeholder groups, primarily economic development officials who are more and more aware of the need for housing, and advocacy groups who understand that without more housing, affordable housing for all income levels is impossible to achieve.

Members who are willing to join in this work on the BIA's zoning efforts are encouraged to contact BIA Executive Director Jon Melchi. ■

*Malcolm Porter is Public & Government Affairs Consultant for the BIA.*



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## BIA Foundation Provides Leadership and Support



**JON MELCHI**  
BIA Executive Director

One of the things our team at the BIA talks about is not operating under the assumption that all of our members are aware of absolutely everything that is happening within the association and every arm of the association.

A perfect example of this is the BIA Foundation. The Foundation is an affiliated 501c(3) charitable organization of the BIA with a mission to support the building industry and housing community through research, promotion and financial support.

In this issue of *Building Insider*, you've read about the BIA's Housing Needs Assessment study, which projects the housing needs of the central Ohio region through 2032. This endeavor would not be possible without the support of the BIA Foundation, which determined that the study would be of great value to our membership and the community at large.

The Foundation has also been active in supporting the next generation of industry professionals. For many years, the Foundation gave support through our scholarship program, which provided financial aid to students considering careers in the residential construction industry. More recently, it has moved toward more programmatic support, directly supporting organizations such as Franklinton Rising.

I believe the Foundation has a unique opportunity to provide thought leadership to the overall housing community in central Ohio. Still, to do so, we will need two things.

The first is ideas for research topics and educational ideas. If there are

ideas for areas of study or seminar topics that might be of benefit to our membership, the Foundation is an excellent place to bring these ideas.

The second is to continue to raise funds. Any Foundation donation is tax deductible, and corporate checks are encouraged. Your support of the BIA Holiday Party is a way that you can help continue to keep the Foundation viable.

I look forward to hearing what ideas our membership has for the Foundation and for your current and future support of our efforts to improve our industry and community. ■



# Cancer?

## Find your support here

If you are living with cancer, are a survivor, a caregiver, or a loved one of someone with cancer, you can find your community here.

Whether you are looking for educational resources, someone to talk to about your journey, or you're not sure where to start, we can help.

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# Membership Philanthropy

## PWB Donates Needed Items to Free Store

The BIA Professional Women in Building Council donated more than 3,000 items to the Free Store on Parsons Avenue. This annual Bra/Hygiene Drive is in support of the organization I Support the Girls every October. This is also a good reminder for busy ladies about breast cancer awareness and the importance of yearly screenings.

PWB kicks off every October with guest speaker and “honorary member” Kathy Jackson who teaches us the importance of home breast exams, then we move into the October drive for women in need. Kathy has been a huge inspiration to all of us and a key member in connecting us with the free store. None of this would be possible without her.

The members of the BIA's PWB worked at the Free Store on Parsons Avenue to distribute the items donated by our members on November 10. We also helped organize different rooms of the free store, in addition to also providing and passing out breakfast to those shopping.

Many thanks to 3 Pillar Homes for sponsoring lunch for our volunteers, as well as all of our members who donated their time and supplies!

If you are interested in joining Professional Women in Building please email [Marilyn@biahomebuilders.com](mailto:Marilyn@biahomebuilders.com)







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