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## TO BEGIN COUNTYWIDE HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

*Muscatine County, local municipalities to involve citizens in determining housing needs*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – The City of Muscatine, in partnership with Muscatine County and the cities of West Liberty and Wilton, have joined forces with Atlas Community Studios (Atlas), an Iowa-based firm specializing in strategic planning and economic development, to develop a countywide housing market analysis.

“The 2017 Housing Demand Study provided us with an idea of the need for affordable housing in Muscatine”, said Dr. Brad Bark, Mayor of the City of Muscatine. “This housing market analysis takes that study to the next level and provides us with valuable information that we can use to address the housing concerns in our community and in our county. We all want a safe and growing community that will increase opportunities for more local shopping and entertainment. This analysis will assist us in planning for our future.”

The housing market analysis will be informed by existing plans and studies, community input, and local, regional, and national data so the County and Municipalities will have a better understanding of their housing challenges as well as the opportunities for development and rehabilitation.

The project will be completed in four phases:

- Phase I: Community Engagement
- Phase II: Data Collection + Research
- Phase III: Market Analysis
- Phase IV: Strategic Recommendations



The planning process will begin in August 2023 and will conclude at the end of February 2024, following a joint presentation to the county and municipalities in late January 2024.

“Muscatine County offers the best combination of a rural and metro lifestyle – far enough from the metro areas to have the ideal locations to live and raise a family without the hassles of larger communities, yet close enough to take advantage of what the metro lifestyle offers”, said Danny Chick, District 1 Representative on Muscatine County’s Board of Supervisors. “This housing analysis will help guide us in developing strategies on how to best serve the housing needs of our current and future residents”.

The final deliverable will not only include a housing market analysis for Muscatine County, but will also offer standalone housing market analyses for the cities of Muscatine, West Liberty and Wilton, respectively, and strategic recommendations for consideration at the regional and municipal levels.

“The City of West Liberty is excited to partner with other communities in Muscatine County and Atlas Community Studios to gain a firmer grasp on the housing needs across Muscatine County”, said Kenneth Brooks, Executive Director of West Liberty Economic Area Development Corporation. With West Liberty’s businesses and industry growing at an accelerated rate, our need for housing has never been greater, and we want to be mindful of meeting the needs of the growing population. This tool will make it easier to develop a comprehensive plan to serve our residents and businesses in the near future, and for years to come.”

“Wilton is that small town that everyone is looking for, close to the big city but far enough away to maintain our small-town values”, said Jeff Horne, City Administrator of the City of Wilton. We have much to offer our current and future residents but the amenities would mean little without available and affordable housing. This market analysis will help us determine the strategies to meet the housing needs in Wilton.”

The project will officially launch on Thursday, August 17th at the Muscatine Housing Council meeting, with an online survey and community visioning meetings to follow shortly thereafter.



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All information related to the project as well as a schedule of upcoming events can be found at  
<https://engage.atlascostudios.com/muscatine-county>.

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