Building a Greater Ohio

Greater Ohio Policy Center
2020-2021
Public Policy Agenda
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Through advocacy, research, outreach, and education, Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC) strives to create a policy and political climate that allows communities to stabilize and thrive for statewide economic growth. It is imperative that state policymakers be well informed about the issues and opportunities facing Ohio.

Two years ago, GOPC set six policy goals focusing on A New Beginning for Ohio. Since that agenda was published, GOPC has seen great strides made in advancing those to become a reality.

These accomplishments have advanced GOPC’s mission “to improve the communities of Ohio through smart growth strategies and research.”

Now, as GOPC focuses on the next set of recommendations for Ohio’s leaders and policymakers, it will continue to work towards the vision of a revitalized Ohio.

GOPC’s 2020-2021 public policy agenda is based on objective data, not politics. It builds upon what exists, sees what could be, and creates solutions to enable sustainable growth; encourages pride in place; and fosters collaboration to “Build a Greater Ohio.”

Investing in Brownfields

Ohio once was a leader in redeveloping blighted industrial and commercial properties, known as brownfields. Found in every county and community, and unusable in their current condition, brownfields discourage investment and create barriers to economic advancement. To enhance opportunities for job growth and strengthen quality of life throughout Ohio, the state must invest in brownfield redevelopment.

To Build a Greater Ohio:

Fund the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund: Provide a dedicated source of funding that is flexible, sustainable, and complementary to existing environmental remediation programs.

Incentivize Private Investment in Brownfield Remediation: Encourage the private sector to invest in existing industrial and commercial sites to help limit urban and suburban sprawl and, instead support growth in established neighborhoods and communities.

Innovating Mobility & Transportation

Ohio is a diverse state, requiring a range of transportation options. Yet, it continues to expect 20th-century infrastructure to meet the demands of a 21st-century economy. Ohio needs to invest in a range of transportation options to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and services to better connect them to places through a diverse transportation network.

To Build a Greater Ohio:

Invest in Public Transportation: Ohio has made important strides in providing state funding for public transportation, but shortfalls remain. It is paramount that the state establishes a source of dedicated funding for public transportation—one that is complementary to existing state and local funding; provides needed investment in transit innovation; and ensures all Ohioans have access to safe, efficient, and reliable transportation.

Adopt a Statewide Complete Streets Policy: As more Ohioans travel by means other than a personal vehicle, the state must implement standards and designs in shared road usage that make it safe for all users to access Ohio’s roadways and create opportunities for transit-oriented development.

Regionalism & Shared Services: Regionalization and shared services in public transportation, especially transit, is a proven strategy to better connect workers to jobs or job training, and residents to health care and essential services.
Empowering Ohio’s Legacy Cities

Ohio’s legacy cities have an important role in Ohio’s future as communities of opportunity where people from diverse backgrounds will choose to live, work, invest and thrive. Legacy cities in Ohio were the engines of the country’s prosperity for decades. Despite population loss and economic shifts, today these older industrial communities are the home of millions of people and remain important contributors of new economic activity.

Assisting Ohio’s legacy cities transition to be prepared for new economic realities must be a partnership between local and state leaders, with local leaders making and executing revitalization plans that guide state investments and support.

To Build a Greater Ohio:

Enact Placemaking Programs: Placemaking capitalizes on a local community’s assets and potential to create public spaces that promote health, happiness, and well-being. Placemaking programs that make communities attractive to talent and businesses through physical investments like façade improvements, streetscaping, public art, mixed-use buildings, and transit-oriented development are key to revitalizing Ohio’s legacy cities.

Establish a Capacity Building Program: Capacity building is the process by which organizations obtain, improve, and retain the skills, knowledge, and tools needed to do their jobs competently. The state needs to assist legacy cities become vibrant, prosperous and connected places—making them poised to compete in the global marketplace.

Provide Strategic Tools and Incentives for All Housing Types: Communities across the state are finding more of their low- and moderate-income residents are facing burdensome housing cost. While at the same time, home values are often too modest for market-rate homeowners to secure financing for rehabs or new builds. Cities need strategic tools and incentives that spur new housing for all types of homeowners and renters, while also limiting sprawl.

Public Engagement

GOPC will continue to advocate for policies and initiatives with the Ohio General Assembly and the DeWine-Husted Administration—related to capital investment, budget and taxation, housing, brownfields, transportation, and other areas that are central to GOPC’s mission of improving Ohio’s communities through smart growth strategies and research and fulfill the vision of a revitalized Ohio.

Ohio’s Champions for Urban Revitalization and Sustainable Growth

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Our Values

Non-partisan Voice, Bi-Partisan Work
Our policy platforms are based on objective data, not politics, and we work with both sides of the aisle to achieve our goals.

Connecting Ohio
Collaboration and cooperation are fundamental to how we plan our work.

Pride in Place
The vitality of Ohio, and its cities and towns, matter to us and motivate our actions.

Recognize Potential
We build upon what exists, see what could be, and create solutions to enable sustainable growth.

Informed Leadership
Our research and analysis are designed to impact strategic decisions and investment.