

# DEKALB COUNTY HOUSING STRATEGY GUIDE

HOUSING OPTIMIZATION MARKET EMPOWERMENT

# 2022

DEKALB COUNTY, IN



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
THE DEKALB COUNTY EDP

---

THE HOUSING RESOURCE HUB  
[WWW.YOURHOUSINGRESOURCE.ORG](http://WWW.YOURHOUSINGRESOURCE.ORG)  
FORT WAYNE, IN

# DEKALB COUNTY HOUSING STRATEGY TEAM

The DeKalb County Housing Strategy was commissioned by the DeKalb County EDP. It has been led by a Steering Committee comprised of key stakeholders. We thank the following individuals for their input and direction.

Brent Shull – DCEDP Board, Town of Hamilton

Mary Simcox – DCEDP Board, Town of St. Joe

Amy Demske – DCEDP Board, DeKalb County, Remax Results Real Estate Agent

Anton King – DCEDP Director

Rudi Eidam – Sweitzer Family Office

Jeremiah Otis – Sweitzer Family Office

Chris Gaumer – DeKalb County Department of Building and Development

Steve Teders – DeKalb County Central School District

Tyler Cleverly – United Way of DeKalb County

Aaron Campbell – Community State Bank

Debra Bruce – DCEDP Staff

Tanya Young – Community Foundation DeKalb County

Sarina Harig – DCEDP Staff

Mayor Mike Ley – DCEDP Board, City of Auburn

Mayor Todd Fiandt – City of Garrett

Mayor Mike Hartman – City of Butler

Pam Howard – Waterloo Town Manager

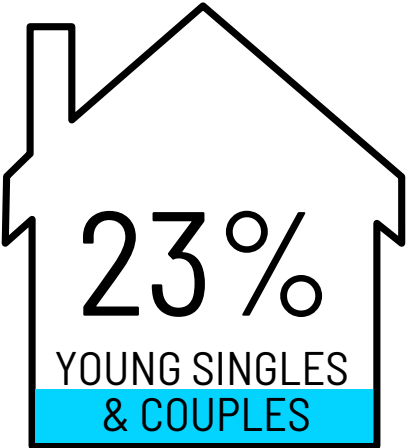
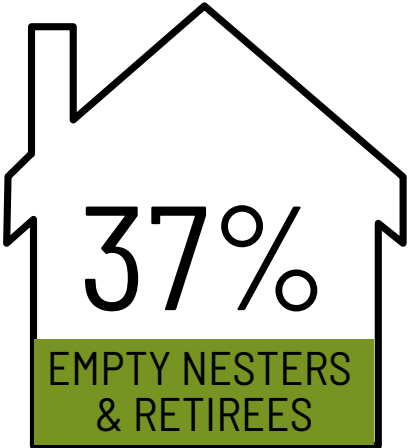
# DEKALB COUNTY HOUSING MARKET POTENTIAL

## DEKALB COUNTY POPULATION OVERVIEW 2021

POPULATION: 43,770  
HOUSEHOLDS: 16,655  
1 & 2-PERSON HOUSEHOLDS: 59%  
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$60,500  
HOUSING UNITS: 18,315  
OWNER-OCCUPIED: 79%  
SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED: 78%  
MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE: \$140,500



## HOUSEHOLD LIFESTAGE



# DEKALB COUNTY HOUSING MARKET POTENTIAL CONTINUED

WHERE DOES THE POTENTIAL MARKET FOR THE COUNTY LIVE NOW?

DEKALB COUNTY: 53.1%  
ALLEN COUNTY: 14.7%  
STEUBEN AND NOBLE COUNTIES: 14.0%  
BALANCE OF THE U.S.: 18.2%

2,420

HOUSEHOLDS OF ALL INCOMES HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO MOVE TO DEKALB COUNTY EACH YEAR!



TRADITIONAL & NON-TRADITIONAL FAMILIES  
43%

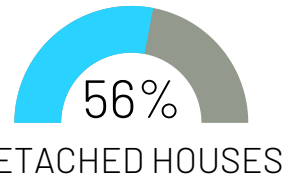
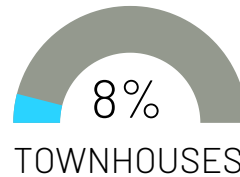
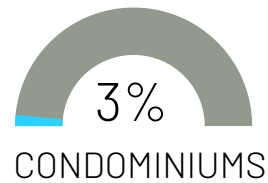
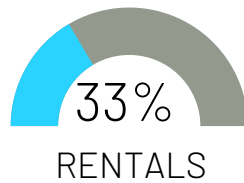


YOUNGER SINGLES & COUPLES  
31%



EMPTY NESTERS & RETIREES  
26%

# DEKALB COUNTY HOUSING MARKET POTENTIAL CONTINUED

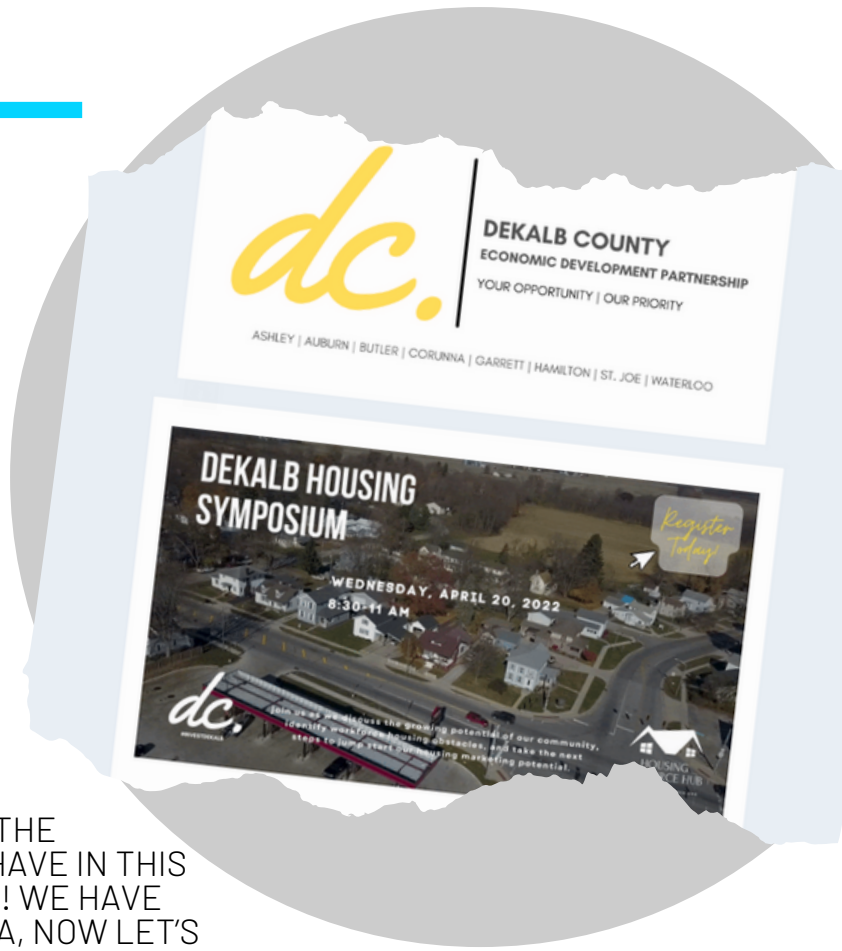


## Absorption Forecasts

Municipality	Annual Potential Market	Rents		Condominiums		Townhouses		Single-Family	
		20% Capture	25% Capture	20% Capture	25% Capture	20% Capture	25% Capture	10% Capture	15% Capture
DeKalb County	1,707	109	136	12	15	27	33	97	146
Auburn (51% of total)	872	56	69	8	10	14	17	50	74
Garrett (21% of total)	358	23	29	4	5	8	10	20	31
Butler (9% of total)	154	10	12	n/a	n/a	5	6	8	13
Waterloo (7% of total)	119	8	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	10
Hamilton (7% of total)	119	8	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7	10
Ashley (3% of total)	51	4	6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	4
St. Joe (1% of total)	17	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2
Corunna (1% of total)	17	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	2
	1,707 households	109	136	12	15	27	33	97	146
		dwelling units		dwelling units		dwelling units		dwelling units	

# DEKALB COUNTY HOUSING SYMPOSIUM

The DeKalb County Housing Steering Committee and leaders from all around the county gathered to discuss the growing potential of the community, identify workforce housing obstacles, and identify the next steps to jumpstart the housing market potential for DeKalb County.



"THANKFUL FOR THE LEADERS WE HAVE IN THIS COMMUNITY! WE HAVE THE DATA, NOW LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN.  
#BUILDDDEKALB"  
- ANTON KING,  
EDP DIRECTOR



# 40+

COMMUNITY LEADERS ATTENDED

"AMAZING HOUSING SYMPOSIUM!"

"WE'VE RECEIVED NUMEROUS COMMENTS AND POSITIVE FEEDBACK."

## FEEDBACK

"IT EXCEEDED A LOT OF EXPECTATIONS FROM GUESTS!"

# Measuring Progress

The H.O.M.E. Method uses a practical methodology that produces tangible results. Communities with SWAGGER seek housing solutions, not just a study of them. Many "housing studies" are designed to look back at past trends as an indicator of future housing market performance. They can be excellent tools for making applications for Federal and State funding streams, but high performance leaders are typically not looking to simply ask for funding. They want a tool to help them make good decisions about how to jumpstart their own local housing initiatives, with or without outside funding streams and the restrictions that come with them. The H.O.M.E. Method begins with the end in mind by determining a community's optimal housing market position and then builds a strategic plan for addressing key variables that are interacting in the market, that are preventing this from occurring.

Key Indicator	Activity / Project	Data / Outcome
New housing units developed or underway	Housing Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimum market position</li> <li>• Capacity to undertake complex housing projects (swagger)</li> </ul>
Homebuyers assisted and/or supported	Local Government Homebuyer Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced worker commute time</li> <li>• Employer engagement</li> </ul>
New investment attracted (\$)	Catalyst Housing Development Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income taxes</li> <li>• Real Estate taxes</li> </ul>

# HOUSING STRATEGY WORK PLAN

- Informational Webinar on Six Steps to Success
- Leadership Inventory
- Catalyst Sites
- Housing Optimization Plan
- Market Empowerment Plan
- Execute Housing Strategy



# DeKalb County Market Empowerment Plan

## Main Goal: Empower the Community

With the housing production wheels in motion, Phase II is Market Empowerment. This strategy is designed to enhance the community's economic stability and prosperity through increased homeownership and reduced employee commutes. By focusing on the talent that local employers are seeking to attract and retain as targeted buyers and renters of housing, this approach blends community attachment with employer/employee engagement.

The project is composed of three high-level tasks:

- **Program Design:** Employers are the focus of this step. Employers are engaged to help to define housing program priorities, including programs designed to increase homeownership and reduce commute time. An optional employee housing needs survey may be used to further define housing preferences of local employees.
- **Fund Development:** Community investors & creditors (employers, banks, lenders, etc.) are the focus of this step. With the Hoosier Homes down payment assistance program as a lead tool, a workforce housing toolkit is developed from available community development grants & loans, the sale of tax credits, etc.
- **Program Delivery:** Employees are the focus of this step. With a "Homeownership Is Possible" webinar, a pipeline of interested buyers for new homes under construction is built. The webinar walks participants through the process of understanding what's available to help them to become a homeowner and where to apply for available resources, such as down payment assistance.

# Recommended Next Steps to Empower the DeKalb County Market

This process takes approximately 12 months to complete.

01

## Project Initiation

- Launch Catalyst Sites with interested communities
- Create customized ongoing Marketing Strategy

02

## Set the Baseline

- Launch community-wide housing needs survey
- Align survey results with housing market potential
- Set housing production goals

03

## Engage Stakeholders

- Employers / Talent Recruitment & Retention
- Banks & Lenders / Available Programs for Buyers
- Local Governments / Catalyst Sites
- Realtors

04

## Implement Housing Strategy

- Catalyst Sites & Construction Timelines
- Pursue other tools for Home Buyers and Renters
- Fundraising Plan for Identified Development Gaps

05

## Launch Media Strategy

- Prepare Marketing Kit
- Launch Marketing Strategy
- Build Home Buyer Pipeline