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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **BALANCED APPROACH NEEDED TO IMPROVE HOUSING MARKET**

*Muscatine Housing Market Demand Study presented Thursday night.*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – The results of the Muscatine Housing Market Demand Study were presented Thursday evening with a call for a balanced approach to improving the housing market in Muscatine for present and future populations.

“One of the things that we recognized a few years ago was that we have a relatively stagnant population,” Dave Gobin, Community Development Director for the City of Muscatine said. “That hasn’t changed much since World War II.”

The demand study grew out of this concern and the concern that many of those who work in Muscatine live outside the city limits.

“We are working to make Muscatine a more attractive place to work, live, and play,” Gobin said. “This study gives us an understanding of what we need to do to keep the people who work here from living elsewhere.”

Amy Haase, RDG Planning & Design, made the public presentation Thursday (Sept. 14) in the Muscatine City Council Chambers. The firm conducted several stakeholder meetings and surveys of the workforce and of the community in gathering data for the report.

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“The correlation between housing and economic development goes hand in hand with creating the community of the future” Haase said.

Some of the challenges that need to be overcome are the effects of rental demand, negative tax rate perceptions, disparity in neighborhood perceptions, limited lot supply, and a “for sale shortage.

But the good news for Muscatine is that there is plenty to brag about and plenty of opportunity to improve the housing market.

“There are a lot of good opportunities for Muscatine,” Haase said. “There isn’t any reason that the city could not grow at one percent per year and reach that 30,000 level by 2020. What that means is that we have to add 814 units during this time period.”

Haase noted that one of the biggest opportunities is the strong economy and job growth in Muscatine.

“There is also regional growth, in the county and in the larger region, but it is the variety of community amenities that really sell this community,” Haase said. “You also have an intact downtown which a lot of communities do not have.”

Some of the strategies suggested by the study include creating incentive investment in existing housing stock, growing the number of rental units, increasing the supply of affordable lots, increasing mobility through additional housing variety, investing in success by creating strong

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neighborhoods, and sharing the risk to meet the needs that the private market cannot meet alone.

The complete report will be available on the City of Muscatine web site on Friday.

#### [MUSCATINE HOUSING MARKET DEMAND STUDY](#)

[PDF \(Low Resolution\)](#)

[PDF \(High Resolution\)](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation](#)

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