Nearly Nine in 10 Columbus-Area Residents Call Housing Affordability a Serious Problem, New Survey Finds

New survey finds widespread concern about affordability and support for expanding single-family rental housing for Columbus-area residents

COLUMBUS, Ohio – November 18, 2026 – Nearly nine in 10 Columbus-area residents say housing affordability is a serious problem, and more than half have considered moving because of housing costs, according to a new survey. Yet fewer than one in four are aware that Congress recently passed federal legislation, the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, to address affordability concerns.

The survey also found support for expanding access to single-family housing, including newly built single-family rental homes. Among the key findings:

- **Affordability pressures are widespread:** Nearly 90% of Columbus-area residents say housing affordability is a serious problem, and 55% have considered moving because of housing costs, including 30% who have considered leaving Ohio altogether.
- **Essential workers are feeling it:** 63% say it is hard for teachers, nurses, police officers and firefighters to afford to live in the communities where they work.
- **Residents want housing choices, including access to single-family homes:** 69% believe people should have access to single-family homes whether they rent or own, compared to those who believe they should *only* be available to people to own.
- **A majority of residents support new rental housing:** 57% of Columbus-area residents support building more rental homes, 2-to-1 over those opposed.
- **Renters choose community over commute:** By more than four to one, Columbus renters would rather rent a single-family home in the community they want than buy a larger home farther from work and family (46% to 10%). Two-thirds support building more single-family rentals to make that possible.

“Housing affordability challenges are affecting communities across the country, and these results underscore the need for more housing options. No single housing type will solve today’s housing shortage. We need more opportunities for homeownership, more rental choices, and a continued focus on expanding supply so families can find housing that meets their needs,” said Adrianne Todman, CEO of the National Rental Home Council.

The findings come as Ohio policymakers continue to weigh housing affordability, following federal action this past summer. The 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act authorized several new programs, streamlined existing programs, like the HOME grant program, and placed limits on large institutional investors from purchasing existing single-family homes.

“As state policymakers look ahead to 2027,” Todman said, “the opportunity is to help families find a home that works for them, close to the jobs and communities they’ve built their lives around.”

About the survey

The survey of 600 Columbus-area residents was conducted via Pollfish in October 2026.

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