

Champaign County Commissioners

COMMISSIONERS

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STEVEN R. HESS



CLERK/ADMINISTRATOR

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BOOKKEEPER/CLERK/RECEPTIONIST

NATALIE RANDELL

April 7, 2025

RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE 2025 AMENDMENT TO CHAMPAIGN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2020 UPDATE

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS of Champaign County, Ohio met in regular session March 20, 2025 with the following present:

Nino Vitale
Timothy Cassady
Steven Hess

Mr. Cassady moved for the adoption of the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Champaign County Board of Commissioners (Board) authorized the Logan-Union-Champaign Regional Planning Commission (LUC) to undertake and complete a detailed Comprehensive Plan of transportation, utilities, land use, open space, environmental influences, and the social, cultural, and economic conditions of Champaign County; and,

WHEREAS, representatives of numerous agencies and organizations in Champaign County and members of the public participated in the creation of the Comprehensive Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan was prepared to serve as a planning tool to help guide growth and development within Champaign County; and,

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan contains numerous recommendations, goals, and objectives which may result in future changes in land uses, traffic patterns, locations of streets and roads, sanitary sewers, water lines, storm sewers, and other public utility facilities, and social, cultural, and economic conditions within Champaign County; and,

WHEREAS, the Board held a public hearing and otherwise solicited public input on the Comprehensive Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Board adopted the Comprehensive Plan on September 29, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, the Steering Committee met on October 23, 2024, and recommended an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Board held a public hearing and otherwise solicited public input on the amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, that in the interest of the public convenience, comfort, prosperity, or general welfare in accordance with RC §303.02:

1. The Champaign County Comprehensive Plan 2020 Update dated September 29, 2020, as prepared by the Logan-Union-Champaign Regional Planning Commission is hereby amended and adopted as the most current Comprehensive Plan for Champaign County.
2. The Champaign County Comprehensive Plan 2020 Update as amended and adopted this day shall serve as the official planning guide for Champaign County until superseded by a subsequent legally adopted plan.
3. This Board has already appointed a Steering Committee to oversee and lead the implementation of the various recommendations, goals, and objectives contained in this Comprehensive Plan.
4. It is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were passed in an open meeting of the Board, and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public, and in compliance with all legal requirements including RC §121.22.

Mr. Hess seconded the motion and the result of the vote was:

Mr. Vitale, yes; Mr. Cassady, yes; Mr. Hess, yes.

I, Natalie Ransdell, Clerk of the Board of Commissioners, certify this to be a true and correct statement as taken from the minutes of the Commissioners' Journal, Volume 66, under the date of March 20, 2025.



Natalie Ransdell, Clerk
Champaign County Board of Commissioners
Champaign County, Ohio

Cc: LUC

Champaign County Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update

Amendment – Page 1/4

Amend Section 1.0 Executive Summary by adding the following paragraph to the end of Section 1.0:

During a meeting of the Steering Committee in October 2024, the Steering Committee reviewed and discussed a 2024 decision by the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) on an application to approve a large solar facility (50 MW or greater); the Steering Committee reviewed the vision, goals, and objectives of the 2020 Champaign County Comprehensive Plan Update; and the Steering Committee recommended the Champaign County Board of Commissioners amend the Plan as a reaction to the OPSB decision.

Champaign County Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update

Amendment – Page 2/4

Amend Section 6.1 Local Context and Survey Results to include and read as written below:

The Land Use Section of this Plan Update was the last section to be written. It was developed after gathering information for all other sections, working with members of the Steering Committee, and working with the several members participating on subcommittees. Prior to the development of this section, several hundred survey responses were received through the public survey, over two dozen key leader interviews occurred, and input was received from the Champaign County Township Association and Champaign County Community Group (a group including local mayors). This section was intentionally developed last in order to promote an informed vision statement, goals, and objectives.

Survey Responses.

Survey responses indicated a preference to focus commercial, industrial, and residential growth within or adjacent to municipalities. With regards to residential growth, respondents and the Services & Housing Subcommittee identified the need for a variety of housing products. Products identified included affordable and workforce housing, middle-income housing, condominiums, and clusters of executive housing.

Survey respondents indicated interest in preservation of farmlands, open space, soils, water and air quality, rural and small-town atmosphere, and historic resources.

Most respondents reported attending fairs and festivals in the County. Examples provided included fairs/festivals, farmer's markets, farms, corn mazes, orchards, u-picks, wineries, and educational events.

A need identified by respondents was eating/drinking establishments, especially specialty restaurants like craft breweries and wineries. The Land Use Subcommittee felt wineries seem to be related to agritourism. The Retail Trade and Food & Drink industries were

identified as undersupplied by a recent Retail and Secondary Market Analysis (2019) done for the City of Urbana.

The Agriculture Subcommittee identified a general consumer trend to know more about where food being eaten comes from and felt it was important to create infrastructure supportive of this. Examples include encouraging farmers' markets, agritourism events, virtual markets, and community gardens.

There were also comments for and against alternative energy developments **with a majority being against**. In the Utilities Section, it was recommended that it may be important to establish and update model zoning text for alternative energy systems including solar and **small** wind projects **under 5 MW**.

In the past five years, the land cover of the County and the three counties in the LUC Region has been significantly changed by large solar facilities (50 MW or greater); these facilities are approved by the State's Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB). Recently, OPSB staff interpreted a neighboring county comprehensive plan, and the interpretation was referenced in the opinion and order from the OPSB on a decision to approve and issue a certificate for a large solar facility. In its interpretation, the OPSB staff concluded the plan was not in conflict with the solar facility because the comprehensive plan did not explicitly discuss solar projects (Fountain Point Solar Energy, LLC, 2024). The size, scale, and speed with which these solar facilities are occurring is unprecedented in terms of impacting regional land use cover. Consequently, it must be reiterated: The Board of Champaign County Commissioners declared County policy by designating 11 of the 12 unincorporated areas of Champaign County a "Restricted Area" under ORC 303.58 (A), thereby precluding the construction of economically significant wind farms, large wind farms, and large solar facilities. The Boards of township trustees in 12 of 12 zoned townships prohibited principal solar facilities under 50 MW; this Plan appreciates and respects the autonomy of individual political jurisdictions and incorporates this as the policy of this Plan until otherwise changed.

Table. Champaign County Solar Projects (Application of Clearview Solar I, LLC, January 2025).

	Champaign Co Solar Projects – 50 MW or Greater			
<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Case Number</i>	<i>Total Project Area</i>	<i>Acreage within Project Area with Ag Land Use Designation</i>	<i>Acreage within Project Area with Ag Land Use Designation Hosting Solar Arrays</i>
Clearview Solar Project I, LLC	20-1362-EL-BGN	1,195 acres (pp. 2)	1,168 acres (Figure 17)	1,028 acres (Figure 17)

Champaign County Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update

Amendment – Page 4/4

Amend Section 10.0 References to include the following additional reference and read as written below:

Application of Clearview Solar I, LLC, 20-1362-EL-BGN. Retrieved January 2025.