



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE CHAMBER
Of Greater Springfield

CHAMBER OF GREATER SPRINGFIELD LAUNCHES DATA TOOL TO PROVIDE FREE UPDATES ABOUT OPEN BUSINESSES AMID COVID-19

New hyperlocal business directory, 'ZoomBusiness,' designed to help area shops & restaurants engage with local residents.

Springfield, Ohio – May 6, 2020 – The Chamber of Greater Springfield through www.ExpandGreaterSpringfield.com today launched its own area ZoomBusiness, an online tool that enables local businesses across the region to communicate with customers for free in real time. ZoomBusiness, created by GIS Planning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, is an interactive, mobile-responsive mapping directory for communities that ensures customers can find open restaurants, stores and services in their region at no charge.

Businesses can list themselves for free on the Chamber's ZoomBusiness site (www.expandgreaterspringfield.com/openforbusiness) to help residents find the businesses and services they need. The businesses can provide customized details including websites, modified hours, delivery or curbside pickup options, promotions and gift card stimulus programs. Residents can search for area businesses by categories, including grocery stores, pharmacies, banks, health facilities, hardware stores, pet stores and automotive shops, among others.

The Chamber's ZoomBusiness is a simple-to-use data tool, powered by Google Maps, using various "layers" for precise queries. Businesses are prompted to directly enter information on their current status and the content is verified by the Chamber. GIS Planning also added free map layers, including a COVID-19 case map updated daily by the New York Times, and a job-loss vulnerability index using recent employment data from Chmura.

Local ZoomBusiness sites have already been deployed in over 30 communities across North America during since the new online GIS mapping tool launched April 22nd, including regions of eastern Pennsylvania, Columbia, S.C., the state of Wyoming (which has listed more than 600 businesses on the directory) and Abbotsford, British Columbia.

The Chamber's ZoomBusiness tool currently is now active and over 100 businesses have added their information, helping residents discover delivery and curbside food options. That number is expected to quickly rise as business owners input data.

"Through our work with GIS Planning, we've been able to take our list of open restaurants and service businesses and integrate it into the available properties map on our website," said Horton H. Hobbs IV, Vice President of Economic Development for the Chamber of Greater Springfield. "During this crisis and recovery, local businesses need every advantage we can give them, and this is another tool in their arsenal in helping to mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19."

The Chamber will continue to support local businesses in other ways, but there is nothing better than bringing residents back to the restaurants, shops and services that make their community so distinctive.

"Main street businesses are truly the lifeblood of a community," says Alissa Sklar, vice president of marketing for GIS Planning. "According to FEMA, up to 40% of small businesses never reopen after a major disaster. With ZoomBusiness, we want to help make sure the local restaurants, retailers and service providers that define local communities are still there to serve area residents when this pandemic is over."

GIS Planning has provided its ZoomBusiness tool at no charge to its existing economic development clients (those using its investment attraction map, "ZoomProspector") and it is also available to new clients for a nominal fee. Prices

are indexed to population size to keep them affordable for all communities. New clients can also be set up and ready to launch the tool within one day.

Following the COVID-19 recovery, data experts at GIS Planning forecast continued use of the directory to promote small and medium-sized businesses across North America.

Click [here](#) to access the Chamber's ZoomBusiness tool.

For more information about ZoomBusiness, visit www.gisplanning.com/products/zoombusiness/overview.

About the Chamber of Greater Springfield

Founded in 1889, the Chamber of Greater Springfield is the premier advocate for the greater Springfield business community; dedicated to promoting regional economic growth, advancing business-friendly public policies and servicing our members with outstanding programs and benefits.

About the Community Improvement Corporation of Springfield-Clark County (CIC)

Created in 1970 as a partnership among the City of Springfield, Clark County, and the Chamber of Greater Springfield, the CIC to facilitate economic and workforce development throughout Clark County, Ohio

About GIS Planning

GIS Planning, a service of the Financial Times, is the world leader in online economic development solutions for corporate site selection. Its suite of tools provides real estate, demographic, labor force and industry data to help investors select optimal geographic locations through powerful online mapping analysis. GIS Planning's software as a service helps regions create jobs, nurture existing companies and grow their economies through business investment. GIS Planning tools currently serve six out of 10 Americans in 45 states, including 28 statewide economic development organizations, Canada, Switzerland, several counties in the U.K., Murcia (Spain), Bordeaux (France), Dusseldorf (Germany), Gothenburg (Sweden), Kyiv (Ukraine) and more. For more information visit: www.gisplanning.com.

For questions regarding this release, please contact:

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