

**Dublin City Council  
Public Services Committee**

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

5:00 p.m.

5555 Perimeter Drive

Council Chamber

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Kramb called the February 8, 2023 Public Services Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Vice Mayor De Rosa, Mr. Reiner, and Ms. Kramb (Chair)

Staff Present: Ms. Goliver, Ms. LeRoy, Ms. Rauch, Ms. Willis, Mr. Rayburn, Mr. Ranc, Mr. Earman

Also Present: Mayor Fox

**Approval of Minutes**

Vice Mayor De Rosa moved to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2022 Public Services Committee meeting. Mr. Reiner seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Kramb, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes.

**Discussion Items:**

COTA Bus Shelters

Mr. Rayburn provided an update on the COTA Bus Shelter program. He began with the Project Development Timeline. Staff last touched base with the Committee in November 2021. The Committee provided feedback on the program and requested information on ridership data. In response, staff reviewed studies, guidelines, and best practices as well as input from Economic Development. All 47 total COTA bus stops in Dublin were audited. 23% have concrete pads, 15% have lighting (counting streetlighting in close proximity). 2% (one stop) have benches and shelters. Staff reviewed criteria in the transit system redesign from 2017. Given recent developments along Blazer Parkway, the spacing of stops does merit reevaluation. Staff looked at how COTA interacts with micro-transit and which stops picked up the most riders. The top stop is Carriage Place Plaza at Resler Drive and Sawmill Road. This is a big transfer point for Number 1 and Number 21. Last year, the Dublin Connector picked up 359 riders from that location. Sawmill and Snouffer was the second top spot in

terms of ridership with 193, followed by Hard Road and Heathermoor Drive with 185. Some employer destinations with the most riders using the service are Stanley Steemer International, Wendy's, LabCorp, and Heartland of Dublin. Mr. Rayburn detailed the routes of the six COTA bus lines serving Dublin. He shared average weekday ridership data for the lines from 2019 and 2022. The Covid years were not reliable. COTA has not yet reached 100% or pre-Covid ridership numbers. Historically speaking, Line 33 and 73 are important lines for the City of Dublin. They service a lot of the area of the City and include the Park and Ride.

Vice Mayor De Rosa asked for updated graphics indicating ridership.

Mr. Rayburn stated that according to the 2022 Community Attitudes Survey, 90% of respondents agree that expanding mobility options is a medium to high priority for Dublin. Our mission states, "We strive to provide the best quality of life in which our residents and businesses can thrive." These go hand in hand with housing strategies, particularly ones that speak to sense of community. A bus stop that looks neglected can provide a negative perception of riding the bus. Mr. Rayburn shared images of a variety of bus stops in Dublin. He noted that Dublin has received a silver level Bicycle Friendly Community award. As it pertains to the bus stop program, we have an opportunity to lead by example and provide bike parking at City bus stops.

Mr. Rayburn shared lessons learned by benchmarking against other cities regarding workforce considerations. Communities that align public transit investments with development projects drive economic growth. Staff has identified 12 bus stops based on high ridership and feedback from Economic Development. Blazer Research District contains the first set of stops followed by MetroCenter. Mr. Rayburn shared options for upgrade of the bus stops.

Option One: Concrete pad, bench and trash receptacle. (\$9,000 per stop)

Option Two: Concrete pad, bench, trash receptacle plus canopy structure and bike racks. (\$25,000 to \$35,000 per stop)

Option Three: Concrete pad, bench, trash receptacle, canopy structure, bike racks, lighting, and smart mobility components. (\$100,000 to \$125,000 per stop)

Staff does not recommend option three due to cost but would like to preserve the ability to add these components at a later date.

Funding for the program is included in the 2023-2027 CIP including \$65,000 in 2023 for study/design work and \$400,000 for construction in 2024. Staff would like to proceed with the design for the bus stops and amenities in 2023 and is seeking feedback on which option the Committee would like staff to pursue.

Mr. Rayburn posed the following questions for discussion:

1. Does the Public Service Committee (PSC) have feedback regarding staff's analysis of the COTA Bus Shelters Program?
2. Is the PSC supportive of pursuing the amenities outlined in Option 1 or Option 2 and preserving the ability to pursue the amenities outlined in Option 3 at a later date?



3. Does the PSC prefer updating bus shelters with the amenities outlined in Option 1 or the amenities outlined in Option 2, or does the PSC prefer staff to pursue an option not provided?

Vice Mayor De Rosa referenced COTA ridership by stop. There are only 20 stops that really had any ridership in 2022. When serving on the COTA Board, she continually requested that they do a reassessment of bus stops. Stops with zero riders indicates that they are in the wrong place. She would like COTA to help determine if stops are optimized to where the need is. Ridership data shows that there is zero ridership/need in some of these locations. That has to be analyzed before deciding where to invest. There are stops with activity and usage, and it makes good sense to improve those.

Ms. Krumb stated that she had the same thought. She also wondered about the wisdom in placing bus stops before Blazer Parkway is redeveloped. The stops on Sawmill Road are not moving so it makes more sense to spend the investment there. Her concern is that there are a lot of stops in areas that are going to be redeveloped.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that in her experience, riding the bus takes an hour and a half to downtown Columbus, and if you leave Dublin after 4:45 p.m., it is a two and a half hour trip downtown. The reason people are not riding the bus is not because we don't have nice stops, it is because we don't have optimized routes. We should ask about total time elapsed on some of those trips. She urged staff to invite COTA to the table for discussions. The head of operations is a Dublin resident. All of the people that come to Dublin are not coming from downtown, they are coming from other places, so the existing hub and spoke model is not the most effective solution.

Mr. Reiner stated that the first consideration may be how many bus stops are needed. The Historic District, Bridge Street District, Blazer Research District and Metro Office District may be the only areas that really need the bench and concrete. He agrees that COTA should be here. He was shocked to learn how few people use these.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that the stop placement is not ideal for a work hub or the living base with the exception of Bridge Park. There is some evidence that we should do some improvement to traffic stops that are being used.

Ms. Krumb stated that she travels Sawmill Road frequently and sees stops getting used, especially the Hard and Sawmill stop, because people live there. There is no bench there. She also sees people crossing the Sawmill Road/I270 interchange to reach the Billingsley Road stop. Dublin could be more appealing and made more user friendly. Along Sawmill Road, we could at least put in a concrete pad and bench at the stops. She is personally aware of "commuter kids" who ride the bus to and from Ohio State University (OSU). It takes them an hour and a half get down to OSU. It would be great to help those kids out. The stops could be more inviting on Dublin's side of Sawmill Road. An investment of

\$9,000 per stop should include a bike rack. Some people are walking one to two miles to a bus stop. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that the security of bikes is worth considering. People will be hesitant to secure bikes and leave them.

In response to Vice Mayor De Rosa's question about conversations with COTA, Ms. Willis stated that staff has had several conversations with COTA last year, most focused on LinkUs. We have talked about where stops are. They have not been overly welcoming in pursuing that conversation.

Vice Mayor De Rosa suggested talks be held about how long it takes to get anywhere. We need an east-west route, more frequency and we need stops in the right places. There are COTA bus stop dollars as well that could be allotted, if their ridership is at a certain level. Dublin's stops do not reach those numbers. If we are going to fix housing strategies, this must be fixed, as well.

Ms. Kramb stated that the LinkUs stop at SR161 and Sawmill Road is critical. A bench and concrete pad could increase ridership. It is a deterrent now.

Vice Mayor De Rosa requested that the stops be sorted by ridership and brought back to the committee with a recommendation based on usage.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated Economic Development requested employers to ask employees if they would ride the bus. She would hesitate to ask for that survey if there is no service to meet the need. The frequency is not viable if it takes an hour and a half to get downtown.

Ms. Kramb asked staff to elaborate on the Dublin Connector. Mr. Rayburn stated that it provides first and last mile connection from the COTA stop for Line 1. It is scheduled.

Ms. Kramb asked for Committee feedback on amenity options. *The Committee provided consensus for Option 1: Concrete pad, bench and trash receptacle. (\$9,000 per stop) with the addition of a bike rack.*

Ms. Kramb suggested staff use the data regarding the stops and see how far to spread the money. Vice Mayor De Rosa suggested staff arrange with COTA to sit down and look at drive times, proximity to homes, last mile, and put issues on the table so there can be some improvement. COTA is not back at full capacity yet, but the data clearly shows this is not working. Ms. Kramb stated that we want more people to ride the bus, but we need COTA's help. In the summer, COTA has the express pass to zoo. Maybe they could add a stop in Bridge Park. Mr. Reiner stated that the reality is that if we can't produce the riders, they won't give us the buses.

Ms. Kramb stated that the younger generation is less likely to drive. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that there is an equity and inclusion aspect. We need service that is viable for everyone.



Vice Mayor De Rosa provided a report from a fact-finding trip to Germany on Holiday Markets with input from Mayor Fox and Ms. LeRoy. The discussion goal today is to share findings, discuss success criteria and possible next steps.

Vice Mayor De Rosa began with a timeline.

- February 28, 2022 - A proposal was brought forward to investigate the feasibility of a holiday market to Dublin
- May 9, 2022 - Council authorized a fact-finding trip to Germany
- December 6-12, 2022 – Two council members and two staff members traveled to Germany

She stated that this program would advance City Council's Strategic Goal #4, which is the desire to activate and use parks and bring entertainment and engagement to make Dublin a destination of choice.

Vice Mayor De Rosa shared reasons to consider a holiday market. It enhances the quality of life and builds community. There is a void in City events between Dublin Irish Festival and St. Patrick's Day. There are economic benefits. It would build Dublin's brand as a destination of choice. There is an opportunity to leverage shared learning across multiple events.

Trip goals were to visit the best of the best; see as many markets as possible; meet with holiday market managements; observe operations on various days; see if there are possible synergies; if the program moves forward, identify the type/design of market appropriate for Dublin; and bring back set of information needed for a feasibility study.

The group visited five different cities that were larger communities. Many of the markets were easily accessible by transit and were walkable.

Vice Mayor De Rosa shared some general design characteristics with the markets. There was a uniform design for stalls/huts. There was a personality being built by using uniformity, as if designing a village. There were centerpiece stalls/huts. There were no tents. The look and feel is meant to be a village or community. General characteristics also included extensive festive lighting, collectible market cups (every beverage was served in a market cup), and regional holiday foods. There was one brand or theme. There is no sponsor signage and no vendor brands displayed. The brand is the market. Signage displays what is in the market, not who is in the market.

Some operational characteristics included no entrance charge for any of the markets, extensive use of greenery, traditional beverages, very little signage. The group agreed that one of the things that make holiday markets so attractive is the authenticity of the experience. The designers painstakingly figure out how to create a theme and design and reinforce that theme.

Mayor Fox stated that in visiting the 22 markets, even though each market was unique, they could be grouped into four market types. Each city had a particular type that seemed to be identifiable to that particular place. This will help

determine type of market that would be sustainable, unique and identifiable to Dublin. She reviewed the four market types.

- Shopping Markets - The shopping markets were only for shopping. There would be a variety of gift items. The markets themselves were not heavily concentrated on experiences, beverages or food. The ratio of merchandise to food was probably 5 to 1. There were not very many gathering places. They had a sense of walking through aisles. The design was very linear. There were plenty of unique, beautiful items. The variety, quantity and quality was extensive. There was a market brand and it usually had a directory of stalls.
- Destination Markets – The backdrop of a destination market is what invited you to experience it. There were iconic landmarks and dominant attractions. They were in areas of the city that would draw visitors. These markets also had a 5 to 1 ratio of merchandise to food, but you might find more gathering spaces. These markets were an interesting balance. These markets were varied.
- Experience Markets – These markets had merchandise that is all holiday inspired. In every market there was some unique local merchandise exclusive to each market. These were comprehensive in entertainment. They had entertainment around the clock including music, wood carving, candle dipping and many wonderful experiences. Most experience markets had a focal point like an ice skating rink or carousel. There was something that created a sense that you were in a different place. The lighting in the experience market set the mood. The lighting, music and entertainment was almost Disney-like. They took advantage of center plazas. The merchandise to beverage ratio was three to one. Experience markets concentrate on gathering and socializing. The layout was non-linear. There was seating that could be leveraged with other festivals.
- Niche Market – Niche markets concentrated on one theme; for instance, a pink market for the LGBTQ community or a medieval market. Those markets tended to have a two to one merchandise to food ratio. That layout was different. They visited a market on top of a parking garage. There are opportunities for niche markets to be put in a small area that attracts a particular interest.

Mayor Fox closed by stating that looking back, the one thing important to consider is that each of these markets tried to find something identifiable that spoke of their community and played to those strengths.

Vice Mayor De Rosa added that you would see multiple of these next to each other.

Ms. LeRoy shared observations regarding market operations. In Nuremburg, all food and beverage locations were run by two families, which added real authenticity. The successful markets had an emphasis on high-quality items. It



was amazing to hear that they are facing some of the same issues Dublin is experiencing with Dublin Irish Festival vendors. Early in the process, the thought was that there needed to be one big location, but they liked that these were not all in one place. They had the ability to have different types of markets. She referenced the stall design and construction, stating that they saw a standard design and all were collapsible. A few had a tent top on a wood stall. Many vendors, especially food vendors, had stalls that were not standard. The stalls could be repurposed without the Christmas decorations. Most markets start mid-November and end right before Christmas. The supporting infrastructure was interesting. Everything was so hidden. Power cords were not visible because they flew overhead or were hidden. Trash boxes were more in the Disney style. They were designed in the market style. There were some elaborate hand warmers. Nothing was simply utilitarian. The closest to utilitarian were the barricades. Every one was decorated and camouflaged. They saw very few staff or volunteers. There was only one information booth. Market managers were only there, if needed. One major staffing item goes back to cups. Nuremburg bought a cup washer. They pick the cups up every night, wash them and take them back to vendors. All markets closed at 9:00 p.m., and they saw no security issues. Most visible security personnel were outside the markets. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that cold weather helps.

Ms. LeRoy spoke about cross-event leverage opportunities. The opportunity is there for leveraging stalls at multiple Dublin events. If trashcans were made, those could be used for multiple events. If we bought a cleaning machine for the Christmas Market, we could use that for the Irish festival.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that the group spent a few hours with the gentleman who runs the market in Nuremburg. They have a niche market next to the main market, and that niche market celebrates their economic development department. Each country had a booth with their wares, and all proceeds went to charitable operations. She noted that there was a children's experience market that was separate.

She closed by sharing the following key learnings:

- The atmosphere is one of energy and excitement;
- Authenticity and consistent branding make it work;
- Things work in tandem;
- Selecting vendors and merchandise is key; and
- The market is the brand.

#### Staff Holiday Market Report

Ms. Goliver shared staff's holiday market report. The timeline of the program follows the holiday market research with staff traveling to Bethlehem and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Carmel, Indiana in December 2022.

At the 2022 Council Retreat, City Council established a goal of making Dublin a "Destination of Choice." The purpose of this first phase of the feasibility study is to further this goal and assess another large-scale event in Dublin.

Staff met with event organizers to discuss logistics, tour the markets, view operations first-hand, and learn how a European-style holiday market could be successfully implemented in the United States.

Staff visited Christkindlmarkt in Bethlehem, PA. This market takes advantage of an event space in the shadow of an abandoned steel mill. There were German-style huts combined with four massive tents filled with vendors. A nonprofit organization, ArtsQuest, runs the market and other events in that space. Ms. Goliver shared photos of the market.

Staff next visited Christmas Village in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This market is located in Love Park across from City Hall. There were 115 vendors all in German-style huts. There were experiential elements with a Ferris wheel, carousel, and kids' train. She shared images of the market. The only vendor in a tent was a vendor selling German merchandise. This market is run by a man born in Germany, whose goal is to bring the experience he had as a child to Philadelphia. The food vendors did not have names displayed and were all employed by German American Marketing, Inc. The organization saw revenue through vendor fees and food and beverage sales.

Located across the street from the Christmas Village was the Made in Philadelphia Holiday Market. This market is run by the Center City District. Center City District contracts with a private company to manage the market. The only City involvement is the permitting. Stalls are tents, and all vendors are local and sell artisan crafts and handmade goods. It is complemented by the ice rink and chalet, which preceded the market, so the market was intended to keep people around the ice rink longer. This market sees revenues from beverage sales and vendor fees. Each night there is a light show on City Hall.

Ms. Goliver stated that staff visited Christkindlmarkt in Carmel, Indiana. This market is very traditional with German-style huts and traditional foods. The ice rink is a complementary feature. A nonprofit was set up using City funds to launch the market. The nonprofit manages the market. The market manager goes to Germany every year to recruit vendors. In addition to startup costs, the City is heavily involved in setting up the market. The City stores the stalls, builds the huts, and sets up each year. The City upfitted the park, built the pavilion and pyramid. The upfitting of the park included access to electric and water for vendors. They contract with a vendor to operate the ice rink.

Ms. Goliver shared key findings. The markets:

- Ran from mid-late November through mid-late December
- All sold traditional German foods;
- All sold hot chocolate, Gluhwein, and German beers
- Had a mix of traditional German items as well as a variety of gift options
- Had varying revenue-generating models; and



- Differing operational models

Because there was such variation between the markets, staff recommends developing an RFP to find a consultant to conduct the second phase of this feasibility study. Details of the second phase are outlined in the staff memo and would cover the following topics:

- Market need
- Possible operating models
- Potential locations
- Entertainment
- Availability of vendors
- Pro forma

She closed by posing the following questions for discussion by the Committee:

1. Is the PSC supportive of staff moving forward with phase 2 of the feasibility study?
2. Does the Committee support the topics staff has identified to be explored by phase 2 of the feasibility study?

Mr. Reiner stated that he found the four types of markets interesting. He likes the idea of encouraging people to move around. The decision would need to be made about who would build the structures. Dublin could pull this off by varying locations. The return on investment (ROI) is the bottom line. He agrees that we do provide cool adventures for people here. Adding this would be an interesting thing to try. The American markets were quite bland. Lighting, greenery and decorating are key elements and are expensive. He posed the questions, "Who is going to build the huts?" and "Do we extend this for the entire Christmas season?" He likes the idea of extending this beyond Christmas Day. He supports the next phase of the feasibility study but does not want to overburden staff.

Ms. Kramb stated that she likes the idea of multiple niche markets with different focuses. She is interested in exploring more than just the German theme. They might be able to have different niches for those. Mr. Reiner offered support for that. Ms. Kramb stated that it comes down to money. She does not think the City should sponsor it themselves. She would be interested in giving this presentation to Visit Dublin, the Downtown Strategic Alliance, and Crawford Hoying Foundation. She thinks holiday markets are a great idea but does not think the City should be responsible for all of it; we need another partner. Ms. LeRoy stated that she is on the Downtown Dublin Strategic Alliance and they meet next Wednesday. She could request to discuss this.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated she has spoken to a few of our partners, and they are supportive without much detail. To get a realistic set of feedback, we need to give more information. There is start-up cost and ongoing cost. It would be important to know what it would cost to set it up and what are the possible

grants/partnerships to do that. The feasibility could look at the start-up cost and ongoing operational costs. She agrees that there has to be a positive ROI.

The Committee offered consensus in support of beginning conversations with partners.

In response to Mr. Reiner's question about vendors, Ms. LeRoy stated that in Nuremburg, they charged a flat fee for every booth. Mr. Reiner asked about the cost for selling a booth; it would be good to give that information to vendors, as well. Ms. LeRoy stated that she could get that information from Nuremberg.

Ms. Kramb moved to recommend proceeding with Phase 2 of a Feasibility Study after additional consultation with Visit Dublin, Downtown Dublin Strategic Alliance, and Crawford Hoying Foundation.

Mr. Reiner seconded the motion

Vote: Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Ms. Kramb, yes.

The Committee recessed for 5 minutes with all members returning at 7:03 p.m.

#### International Benchmarking Report

Ms. Rauch provided a report on the international benchmarking trip. She stated that she looked at things from a planning/benchmarking standpoint considering how spaces connect people and create places. This can help provide some reference and conversation among planning staff and boards and commissions. Her efforts were focused on streetscape/mobility, gathering spaces, and planning/design. Ms. Rauch showed photographic examples and shared observations.

##### Streetscape/mobility

- The cities visited were larger cities than Dublin with much more density;
- Pieces work together in tandem;
- Architecture frames the street;
- Lighting is used to create a pedestrian feel;
- Creative pavement applications are used;
- There were bollards that rise or can be depressed to provide vehicle access to pedestrian only areas;
- Double decker bike parking arrangements at an intersection were an interesting solution;
- They observed sidewalks with outdoor seating and interchanging parking spaces;
- There was electric charging at on-street parking spaces.

##### Gathering Spaces

- They saw a variety of types and sizes of gathering spaces;
- Spaces were framed by buildings and trees;



- There was a variety of materials and seating;
- Some spaces offered bike racks and overhead lighting systems;
- They felt unique, safe and comfortable.

Planning/Architecture/Design/Sustainability

- The integration of variety of height and detailing was notable;
- Ground stories of buildings create a base that is not necessarily the same as above;
- Long expanses of buildings were broken up in a meaningful way.

Key Takeaways:

This is a great opportunity to begin a larger conversation with staff and Boards and Commissions around the creation of meaningful spaces.

Mr. Reiner asked if staff felt the experience was worth the expense of the trip. Ms. Rauch answered affirmatively. Mr. Reiner asked how this will change conversations with developers. Ms. Rauch stated that this provides context and examples of what is possible.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that this is the definition of infill. These cities have been around for a long time and can show how to make infill fit with existing. Their integration of mobility was a key takeaway. Bike lanes are integrated. Designs are clear.

Ms. Kramb stated that she has not seen those areas, but she studies architecture and feels it would be wonderful if we start building things that don't all look the same.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.



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Chair, Public Services Committee



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Deputy Clerk of Council