



HISTORIC DISTRICT TASK FORCE

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

TASK FORCE REPRESENTATIVES

Task Force Chair	Kim Way - Dublin Resident
Task Force Vice Chair	Kathy Lannan - Historic District Resident
Business Representatives	Craig Price Enas Lanham Lynn Long
Historical Society	Clay Rose
Historic District Residents	Alan Szuter Mary Szuter
Dublin Residents	Sally Van Horn Jay Nordenbrock Garrick Daft Burt Downden Carol Matune Ed Ostrowski Paula Yonnotti-Ansel
Youth Representatives	Rohan Madan Olivia Wirth



City of Dublin, OH

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

The City of Dublin would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Historic District Task Force for their dedication and participation in this process. Each member provided an invaluable perspective as residents, business owners and members of the Dublin community, and were appointed to the Task Force to provide various perspectives about the future of the District. Members were highly engaged in a range of meetings that included member input

sessions; personal and hosted tours of the District; a presentation series and involvement from Heritage Ohio that specializes in the vitalization and historic preservation, and staff and outside agency-facilitated sessions. These sessions resulted in the development of specific recommendations by the Task Force outlined in this document for City Council's consideration. The dedication and time commitment of the group is well recognized and we thank them for your efforts.



PURPOSE

The Historic District Task Force was established by City Council by Resolution 57-19 that was approved on October 21, 2019. The Task Force was appointed to provide an update to the Historic District Area Plan that was previously adopted in 2007 and subsequently incorporated in the Bridge Street District in 2013. City Council wanted to reevaluate whether this significant portion of our community should be embodied in its own area plan and what other recommendations the Task Force would have for the future of this area. City Council has always embraced continually revisiting our City of Dublin Community Plan, as well as Special Area Plans to ensure these plans align with the short-term and long-term objectives of the City. Council emphasized the need for the Task Force to provide a venue for community-wide visioning and selected a wide range of stakeholders throughout our community to assist in this process. Specific tasks of the Historic District Task Force included:

- Referencing the 2007 Historic District Area Plan as a starting point for this future area plan update. This may include but is not limited to considerations including the character of the area, historic preservation, housing needs, economic vitality and mixed-use opportunities, gateways to the District and wayfinding, streetscape and open space/gathering spaces, and public art and events.
- Understanding the complexity and needs of the District and identifying key issues that require additional exploration. This includes significant input from our community, as a whole, as well as key stakeholders in the region.
- Engaging with Heritage Ohio that concluded an inclusive two-and-a-half-day visit that would assess the Main Street Program and provide input gathering sessions from other relevant groups that align themselves with the health and vitality of a historic area.
- Producing specific recommendations for implementation and present to City Council for consideration.



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The Task Force was appointed to present their findings in the enclosed report which includes specific recommendations to City Council. The

Task Force has worked diligently to meet these tasks and respectfully submits this report as a result of their efforts.



PROCESS

The Historic District Task Force held twelve meetings overall with a kick-off meeting on January 30, 2020 and the last meeting held on November 17, 2020. The meetings were put on hold from March to July based on health considerations of the pandemic but resumed in the later portion of July 2020.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION MEETINGS:

The first three meetings were educational in nature and included introductory comments from the City Manager and the Mayor, as well as other members of City Council as to the purpose and expectations of the Task Force. The meetings included an overview of planning principles by City staff that outlined the purpose and utilization of a Comprehensive Plan, as well as Special Area Plans in evaluating development proposals that were presented to the various Boards and Commissions, including City Council. The meetings also included a speaker series that involved our Economic Development and Finance teams to outline economic incentives and programs related to the Historic District. The presentation series also included presentations from various interest groups of the District including the Visit Dublin, the Historic Society, the Historic District Business Association and the Downtown Alliance. These presentations culminated in a two-and-a-half-day event with Heritage Ohio.

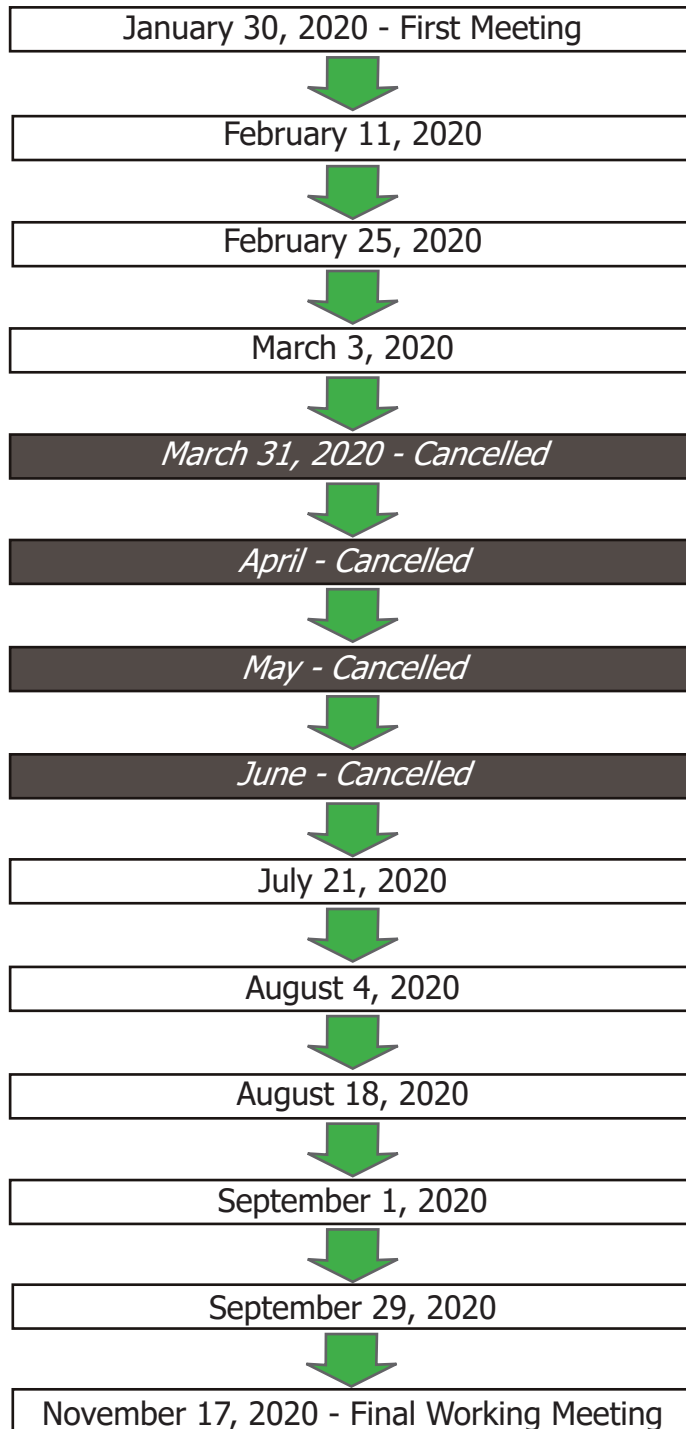


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HERITAGE OHIO:

The City of Dublin consulted with Heritage Ohio to discuss their Main Street Program and gain their insight on how the City can continue supporting the vitality of the District while appropriately balancing preservation efforts. This two-and-a-half day process included small and large group discussions with the Historic District Task Force, walking tours of the District, and an interactive public meeting that hosted over 80 people from the Dublin community to share their visions for our Historic District. Heritage Ohio produced a report summarizing their recommendations and is included on the City's website at <https://dublinohiousa.gov/planning/historic-dublin-task-force/> under the meeting date March 3, 2020.

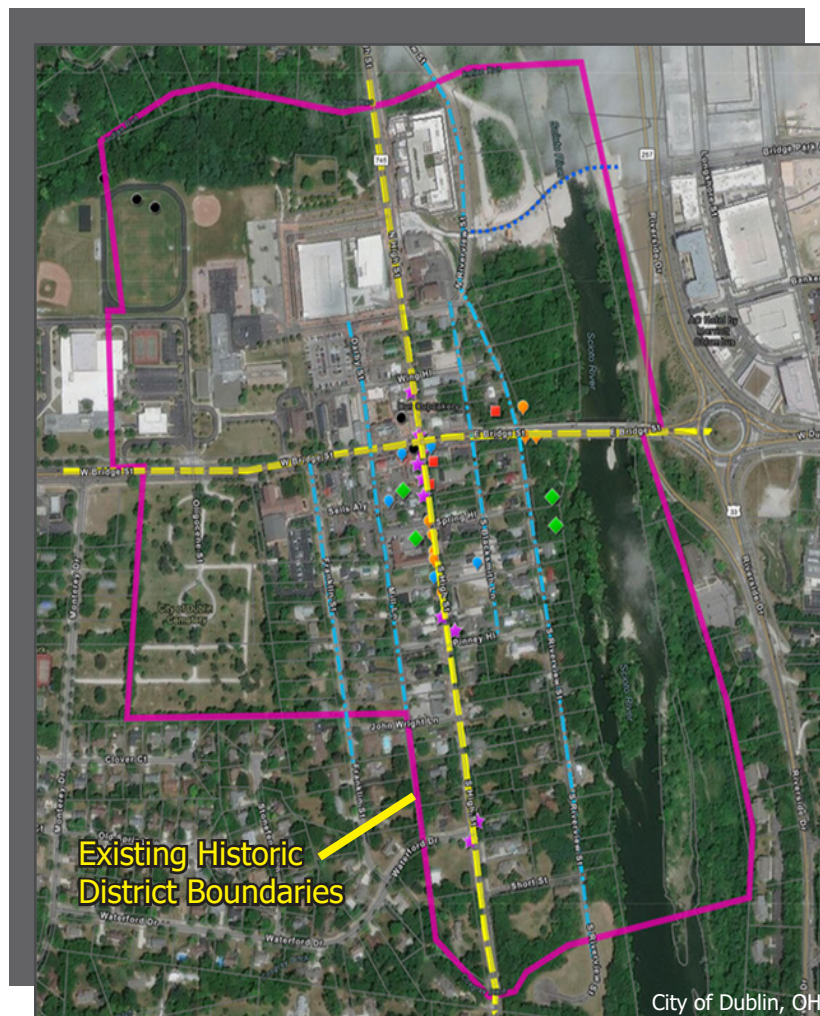
Meeting Dates and Progression



The Task Force reconvened on July 21, 2020. This meeting incorporated the findings of Heritage Ohio and a representative of our consultant was available for questions. This meeting provided an in-depth overview of pending modifications to the Historic District Zoning Code and Historic District Guidelines. The members had strong support for the modifications and incorporated their support in their final recommendations.

In August, staff led the Task Force through a mapping exercise that helped members visualize members' comments

related to examples of preferences and challenges in the District. The map includes a color-coded legend that identifies specific themes the group discussed including; Architecture and Historic Preservation, Land Uses, Open Space and Natural Corridors, Parking and Way-finding. Each example includes comments made by the Task Force members that memorializes their references to the District. A visual representation of the mapping exercise is below and the link is <https://dublinohiousa.gov/planning/historic-dublin-task-force/>.



The following two meetings in August and September provided the opportunity for City staff members representing Engineering, Parks and Recreation, and Planning to present current and future efforts within the District to the Task Force. These meetings proved beneficial to members of the Task Force to understand the many efforts the City of Dublin is undertaking within the District, which addressed previous concerns raised by Task Force members for improving the District. Examples of projects the Task Force learned included:

- Utility line improvements within the District.
- Safe pedestrian crossings within the area.
- Brick sidewalks and lighting fixtures improvements.
- Wayfinding efforts.
- Historic District specific street signs installation.
- Planting and landscaping improvements.
- Updates about the Downtown Parking Study.
- Mobility programs such as shuttle services and bike share programs.
- Alternative transportation option plannings.

Finally, the Task Force convened in September to review and finalize their recommendations to City Council. This task was the primary purpose of the Task Force and included recommendations that focused on all components of the vitality in the District. The recommendations of the Historic District Task Force are listed below in the “Outcome” section of this report. The recommendations have been grouped in three main areas of focus including; the creation of an Historic District Area Plan, management options for the Historic District, and supporting existing efforts that lead to short-term successes within the District.

**“THE CITY NEEDS
TO SUPPORT
SMALL BUSINESSES
THAT MAKE UP
OUR HISTORIC
DISTRICT”**

-Task Force Member



OUTCOME

I. CREATION OF AN UPDATED HISTORIC DISTRICT AREA PLAN

The Historic District Task Force has worked diligently to compile recommendations to City Council about their desired outcomes for the Historic District. The members considered historic preservation, open space preservation, economic vitality of the District, event planning, streetscape design and historic features, building mass and scale, walkability and pedestrian movement, and overall management and oversight of the District. The Task Force presents the following for consideration to City Council.

The Historic District Task Force had lengthy discussions about the purpose of an Area Plan and how the recreation of the Historic District Area Plan would give the appropriate considerations to the character, scale, diversity of uses, walkability and preservation that is especially vital in an historic area. The Task Force recommends the following objectives and specific tasks be addressed within an Area Plan update.

- a. GATEWAYS:** Consider gateway features at the transition points into the Historic District that differentiate the District from other parts of the City.
 - Incorporate features that signify entry into the Historic District; (i.e., columns, archways, monumental signage, walls, landscape, etc.).

- Specific focus and improvements need to be made to the east gateway, across the SR161 vehicular bridge to High Street, to minimize or eliminate curb cuts and screen parking areas, (i.e., low screen walls, landscape screening, street trees, etc.).

"PRESERVATION
OF DUBLIN'S
HISTORIC
CHARM IS KEY
WITHIN THE
DISTRICT"

-Task Force Member



South High Street Sidewalk



West Bridge Street Streetscape

b. STREETScape: Focus on a streetscape design that is pedestrian friendly and fits the character of the Historic District.

- Wider sidewalks to allow adequate pedestrian movement that are well kept, well maintained and surfaces are level and do not create tripping hazards.
- Amenities for various modes of transportation including biking (i.e. bike racks, bike service/repair stations, etc.).
- Streetlights that are similar in nature and appropriately designed and scaled for the District.
- Benches, trash receptacles, and other amenities that are in character with the District.
- Street tree selections that are species native to central Ohio and have a growth rate and scale that is appropriate for the District and local streets.
- Ensure that street trees are provided with underground space and soil conditions that will support healthy growth (Silva Cell System, etc.).

c. PARKING: Rely on existing parking lots and on-street parking instead of creating new parking areas/lots, unless required.

- Encourage shared parking, when possible.
- Investigate alternative parking standards to allow for easier consolidation of parking lots and parking lot upgrades, minimize or eliminate suburban design requirements for a more urban character and material, and landscape that is compatible with the Historic District.
- Investigate and if appropriate, adopt application-based technology to assist in the management of parking.
- Investigate methods to ensure private parking lots are well maintained and incorporate necessary screening and landscaping.



d. OPEN SPACE AND PARKS: Strongly encourage the preservation of natural open space and greenway connections.

- Preserve and maintain existing open spaces and parks.
- Properly identify, demarcate and physically connect the existing parks and open space network that connects to and through the Historic District including; Indian Run Falls Park, the Dublin Veterans Park/Grounds of Remembrance, West Pedestrian Bridge Plaza, Library Plaza, BriHi Plaza, Visit Dublin Plaza, Karrer Barn Park; Dublin Springs Park, Kiwanis Riverway Park and the new Riverside Crossing Park.
- Identify areas for greenway connections throughout the District and in particular, designate a connection from Dublin Springs Park back to High Street.
- Create more designated physical access points to the Scioto River and Riverside Crossing Park.
- Identify the potential for additional open space or park areas south of SR 161. Identify opportunities for a southern anchor and river access on underutilized properties (i.e. Karrer Barn and McDowell property).
- Encourage future redevelopment of 55 S. High Street (L-Shaped Building) to integrate a new public park or plaza with a new, appropriately scaled building or buildings
- Coordinate and collaborate with Dublin Parks and Recreation Department on all open and park space.

Existing Indian Run Falls Park Boardwalk



e. **INDIAN RUN CORRIDOR:** Provide recommendations to ensure the preservation of the Indian Run and adjacent greenway corridor.

- Ensure the character of future development minimizes impacts on the corridor (limiting building heights, ensuring building setbacks, etc.).
- Maintain a significant natural buffer along Indian Run Falls and the adjacent corridor to ensure a natural corridor, which could become a city owned linear park/open space.

Schwan Falls at Indian Run



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**“WE NEED TO
RESPECT OUR
NATURAL
CORRIDORS
WITH EMPHASIS
ON INDIAN RUN”**

-Task Force Member

- Consider a permanent easement or agreement (conservation easements).
- Investigate the inclusion of a multi-use paths and ravine overlook areas along the southern boundary of the Indian Run corridor to provide an east-west connection.



f. SOUTH HIGH STREET VITALITY: Encourage vitality focused in the south side of the District.

- Promoting more event venues for the core district (i.e. uses that encourage more foot traffic, such as; farmers/seasonal markets, holiday festivals, ethnic festivals, small movie theater, outdoor theater, or performing arts theater, etc.).
- Allowing promotional opportunities that announce events such as banners, displays, street/sidewalk art, etc.
- Investigate the opportunity for more family-oriented activities.

g. DIVERSITY OF USES: Encourage mixed-use development that promotes pedestrian movement with a focus on retail and the lack of reliance on vehicular travel.

- Focus on development opportunities that utilize active uses at the ground floor level and encourage retail uses that support local businesses that are unique to the District.
- Encourage service commercial and office uses (law offices, insurance agencies, real estate agents, etc.), as well as residential on the upper levels.
- Investigate incentives or methods to promote/encourage retail uses.

h. PRESERVATION: Highlight the importance of historic preservation as development pressures continue within the District.

- Identify areas where the existing development character will be preserved. Demolition should be considered a last resort when

health, safety and welfare is at stake.

- Provide information about and funding for programs to assist historic home and business owners to maintain the integrity and character of their properties.
- Conduct rigorous and strict code enforcement on absentee landlords and property owners.
- Purchase derelict historic properties and to renovate for market rate purchase price.



BriHi Development and Plaza



Dublin Link Pedestrian Bridge

i. PROPER SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT: Ensure the proper height, scale and massing of buildings within the Historic District to ensure the quaint nature of the area.

- Enforce design standards that reinforce the established character of the Historic District including building height, scale, massing and materials.
- Recommendations should align with all activities that guide development in the area (Architectural Review Board, Historic District Zoning Code, Historic Design Guidelines, and Historic District Area Plan).

j. CONNECTING THE DISTRICT: Ensuring adequate transition from the east to the west side of the River and embracing the amenities that each has to offer to the District.

- Identify opportunities for synergy throughout the District, connecting and leveraging

the development patterns and activities between the northern and southern end of the District.

- Encourage pedestrian connections and movements crossing Bridge Street.
- Focus on opportunities to provide an anchor in the southern portion of the district to strengthen the connections.
- Explore opportunities for a continuous riverfront open space connection and along existing north/south streets.
- Reinforce connections from the Historic District to the; Bridge Park development; The West Bridge Street Commercial District and Metro Center, the East Bridge Street Commercial Corridor and Sawmill Road; and the adjoining residential neighborhoods of Indian Run Estates, Corbins Mill, Waterford Village, Longview and River Highlands; and the City of Dublin, in general.





City of Dublin, OH
North High Street

k. WAYFINDING: Ensuring that both pedestrian and vehicular movement is easily accessible throughout the District through appropriate signage and wayfinding.

- Explore app based technology to enhance wayfinding and provide historic and cultural information as well as on-going events and other helpful information.

I. ARTS AND CULTURE: Embrace opportunities to provide art and cultural artifacts that represent the history and vitality of the District.

- Encourage art and cultural displays that celebrate the Historic District, the history and culture of Dublin and the creative resources and talents of the community.
- Work with the Dublin Arts Council to coordinate citywide opportunities with Historic District opportunities.
- Continue to engage with the Dublin Historical Society to ensure valuable resources and information are made available to the public in an accessible manner.

“THE DISTRICT NEEDS MORE EVENT SPACE AND GREEN AREAS FOR GATHERINGS”

-Task Force Member

II. CONSIDER MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Historic District Task Force discussed the importance of various groups within the Historic District including the Historic District Business Association, Visit Dublin, the Dublin Historical Society and the Downtown Alliance. The members discussed the importance of each of these groups but felt it was important for a singular entity be identified whose daily purpose is to promote and give guidance to small business owners with any needs they have including financial incentives for improving their properties, assistance with public process by the City of Dublin including the Architectural Review Board, and any other needs to promote their business.

a. MANAGEMENT OF THE DISTRICT:

Consider a management program that oversees the goals and objectives of the Historic District and collaborates with the existing organizations in the District including Visit Dublin, Dublin Chamber of Commerce, Dublin Historical Society, Downtown Alliance, Architectural Review Board, and the Historic District Business Association. This may include:

- Further consideration of Heritage Ohio's Main Street Program or other similar programs.
- In collaboration with existing services including the HDBA and the City of

Dublin Economic and Development, consider a businesses "concierge service" that would assist local business with issues associated with local entrepreneurship.

"THE SCALE OF THE DISTRICT NEEDS TO REMAIN SMALL, DENSE AND URBAN"

-Task Force Member

- Assemble a full-time and designated entity or appointed person to oversee, review, coordinate and collaborate on all planning, design, preservation, and development decisions in Historic Dublin, help residents and small businesses navigate the City of Dublin and other available resources, with the mandate to preserve and maintain the character, quality and experience of the Historic District, as well as to promote the use and enjoyment of the Historic District for all Dublin residents and visitors.



III. SUPPORT EXISTING EFFORTS THAT WILL LEAD TO “SHORT TERM” SUCCESSSES.

The Historic District Task Force stressed the importance of supporting current efforts being completed by the City of Dublin that further the objectives of the Historic District, which are outlined below.

a. Educational Effort:

Provide learning opportunities about the District including historic perspective, cultural diversity and background as well as significant people and places in the District.

- Encourage an educational program that highlights the history, progression and historic amenities of the District. This

could be app based and include using virtual reality or other forms of technology.

- City staff will work with Dublin Historical Society to showcase “The Story” of the Historic District.

b. Processes and Regulations:

Ensure updates to the Historic District Code and Guidelines are compatible with the vision for the District and the development review process is streamlined, clear and fair. Planning staff should finalize and forward these amendments in a timely manner.

