

Purpose

The Economic Development chapter will seek to strengthen the City's robust economy, and commercial centers and major corridors. It will provide key priorities and recommendations that can improve the overall business climate and encourage new investment in Dublin's burgeoning growth areas. It focuses on approaches to invigorating the City's aging business parks with more contemporary neighborhood areas that offer diverse employment opportunities. The chapter also explores workforce development as a strategy to strengthen Dublin's employment base. The Economic Development chapter identifies Dublin's goal of sustaining and growing its economy and tax base and offers recommendations for how the City can achieve that goal.



06 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Dublin has a thriving economy that, paired with its exceptional quality of life, lures investment, innovation, and a skilled workforce. A historically healthy real estate market, connection to major transportation infrastructure, and proximity to Columbus have laid the foundation for a strong local economy and future prosperity. Community members repeatedly associated Dublin with innovation in face-to-face meetings, stakeholder interviews, and through the online survey and mapping exercise. They emphasized the importance of the City's economic stability and fiscal sustainability.

However, changes in how people work presents an opportunity to rethink the corporate office segment of Dublin's real estate market - to capitalize on underutilized properties and adapt policies that ensure a prosperous future. Key stakeholders, and the resident community stressed the need to utilize available properties strategically. They expressed a desire to see efforts to use existing vacant commercial and office spaces and to encourage infill development before new development.

Looking forward, Dublin's potential for growth and prosperity is not just a vision, but a tangible reality that can be achieved. By ensuring a workforce that can meet the labor demands of the regional, national, and global corporations that are attracted to the City, Dublin can encourage sustainable economic development in the years ahead. The City's commitment to maintaining a welcoming and supportive business climate, while adapting to take advantage of changes in the corporate office real estate market, will continue to enhance its appeal as a place to start or grow businesses, innovate, and make a career.

The Economic Development chapter builds on the proven record of Dublin's entrepreneurial ecosystem and recommends strategies to align future growth and policies best with repositioning the existing business districts, fostering a business-friendly environment that helps build a skilled workforce, and leveraging events and the hospitality industry to invigorate the City's economy further. Lastly, the planning area is categorized into three growth areas in an economic development framework that should be used to guide future commercial and industrial land uses and development. In addition to the Economic Development chapter, please see Chapter ## - Special Area Plans for detailed recommendations for commercial and industrial areas encompassed within the six special areas in the community.

*Goal and Objectives for
Economic Development*

**FOSTER AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY THAT
SUPPORTS A STRONG, RESILIENT TAX BASE.**

To achieve this goal, Dublin can pursue the following objectives:

- Retain and support existing businesses.
- Reposition aging business parks as premier employment destinations for the future.
- Maintain Dublin's regional/national position as an employment hub for corporate, technology, and health and medical sectors.
- Uphold the City's long-standing policy of an overall land use mix of 60% residential and 40% non-residential development.
- Promote entrepreneurship and small business growth.
- Increase local tourism.
- Increase workforce job readiness.
- Protect long-term economic development resources and opportunities.
- Diversify the City's economic base.

The goal and objectives of the Economic Development Chapter were developed in response to what we heard from the community, an analysis of existing conditions, and a review of relevant past planning efforts and align with the objectives and strategies in Dublin's 2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan.



Most Sustainable.

Through cultivating a welcoming business climate, being dynamic to respond to innovation and the needs of diverse industries and businesses, supporting a skilled workforce, diversifying its economic base, and prudent fiscal planning, Dublin can ensure the sustainability of its economy.



Most Connected.

By supporting reliable high-speed internet and planning for and improving transportation infrastructure, Dublin can continue to be one of the most connected cities attracting regional, national, and global corporations to the City and ensuring a skilled workforce to meet their labor demands.



Most Resilient.

Encouraging diverse housing options and the development of complete neighborhoods, supporting the development of quality corridors and business nodes, and supporting adaptation of underutilized and vacant business parks will make Dublin's economy the most resilient to changes in the economy, how people work, and will enable the City to adjust to the changing preferences and requirements of the corporations that call Dublin home or will in the future.

THE BETA DISTRICT

The Beta District concept was initiated in 2014 through collaborative efforts among public, private, and academic entities situated along the 33 Smart Mobility Corridor. The Beta District is located in the Columbus Region and is formed by City of Dublin, City of Marysville, Union County, and City of Columbus. This cooperative venture aims to attract innovative businesses to the area, with a focus on sectors such as ag-tech, healthcare, automotive manufacturing, logistics & distribution, transportation, insurance, technology, finance, smart cities, and aerospace. It offers a smart infrastructure ecosystem and living labs, facilitating cross-industry resource access and collaboration for pioneering projects.

DUBLINK TRANSPORT

Dublink Transport, sponsored by the City of Dublin, is a broadband connection initiative facilitating data transportation from office buildings to local carrier-neutral data centers at no expense. Operating across Dublin, OH, and nearby communities, Dublink is not an internet service provider but provides a connection to the user's chosen service provider. With various locations serviced by Dublink Transport, businesses along the 125+ mile network can access critical broadband internet providers from the get-go.

REPOSITION BUSINESS DISTRICTS

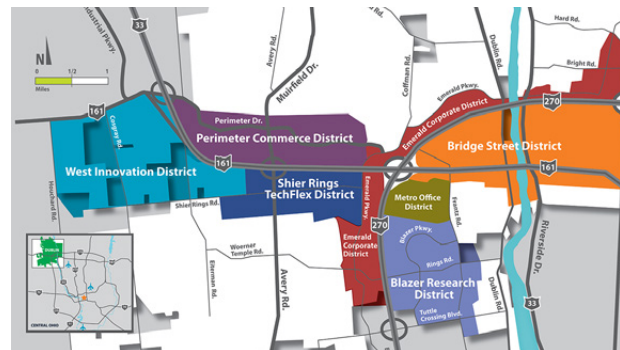
Dublin's business districts constitute the core of its economic development. The districts are home to a long list of successful local, regional, national, and international businesses. According to the Dublin Economic Development, the total economic activity from Dublin companies is in excess of \$8 billion per year, representing 7.4 percent of the \$108 billion worth of goods and services produced in the Columbus MSA.

The business districts in Dublin encompass a variety of development potentials ranging from urban mixed-use opportunities to high-tech offices to light and clean manufacturing uses. Dublin business districts include:

- Bridge Street District
- Emerald Corporate District
- Blazer Research District
- Metro Office District
- Perimeter Commerce District
- Shier Rings Techflex District
- West Innovation District

However, the COVID-19 pandemic and technology today have disrupted the way we work, resulting in more employees working either entirely remotely or in a hybrid fashion and a rising expectation for flexibility in where and when people work. This has increased vacancies in Dublin's business parks and is a challenge to the City's commercial real estate market. Still, it also presents an opportunity for Dublin to reimagine the corporate workspace of the future. The following recommendations can help Dublin reposition its business parks to encourage sustainable and resilient economic development. Dublin target industries include:

1. IT
2. Medical Biosciences & Healthcare
3. Corporate HQs & Managing Offices
4. Business Services
5. Automotive R&D & Logistics



WORKING DRAFT
FOR STAFF REVIEW ONLY



ADAPTIVE REUSE

The core of Dublin’s commercial building stock dates back to the 1980s and 90s. Despite the City’s legacy of success in attracting large employment and single-site company destinations, traditional office parks are not aligned with the demand for dense, live-work-play environments, presenting a need for diversity through new development.

Reduced demand for office space may present an opportunity to put office buildings to new uses. Adaptive reuse is the most sustainable way to utilize an existing building to meet a community’s needs. Converting office buildings to residential, retail, and other mixed-uses can be an effective strategy to accommodate employees’ desires to balance work, health, and well-being by living closer to work, amenities, and services. Adaptive reuse of office buildings can also help Dublin add more diversity to its housing stock. By embracing adaptive reuse, Dublin can not only meet the evolving needs of its community but also make significant strides towards achieving carbon neutrality and fostering a more sustainable built environment.

CAPITALIZE ON UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES

In addition to adaptive re-use of existing office buildings, Dublin can encourage the construction of mixed-use and multifamily development on undeveloped sites and in underutilized parking lots in the districts. Residential and mixed-use infill development would provide a variety of housing options for professional close to their jobs and increase the customer base for local businesses in and around the district. This will help the City achieve its goal of increasing housing diversity while maintaining and even enhancing the character of its existing neighborhoods. Requirements for high-quality design and support for mixed-use development can result in attractive, walkable, complete neighborhoods close to employment centers.

METRO CENTER REDEVELOPMENT

Metro Center in the Dublin Corporate Area is ripe for repositioning from a 20th century business park to a 21st century center of employment and active living. The City’s Metro Place visioning processes, completed in 2021, recommended that the Metro Center be redeveloped to provide more diverse office options mixed with restaurants, retail, and residential uses set in a walkable environment. With the help of a team of urban design and landscape architecture consultants, the City is completing a plan for transforming the area into a desirable and active community and employment center. The plan for this ambitious and exciting repositioning project is expected to be completed in August 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Key Findings

The results indicate the City's current residential development base is not paying its own way, which is not surprising given the municipal revenue structure for Ohio cities, which favors at place employment (meaning withholding tax stays in the jurisdiction a person is employed). As the long-term effects of the COVID 19 pandemic on nonresidential space needs and the ability of employees to work at home become better known, these may have an effect on the City's revenue raising abilities.

That being said, the City of Dublin has done an excellent job developing a framework for funding growth through its economic development policies and use of various Tax Increment Finance Districts. It is clear that the City of Dublin does not have many of the budgetary constraints that most of our clients nationwide grapple with on an annual basis.

QUALITY CORRIDORS

A significant portion of Dublin's existing economic activity and employment continues to thrive along its major corridors, including U.S. Route 33, State Route 161, and Interstate 270. These corridors are characterized by a mix of premium offices, businesses, and institutions that support the City's economic vitality. Dublin should build upon the success of the 33 Smart Mobility Corridor initiative to expand the value of the City's corridors for innovative mobility development while encouraging the development of quality corridors that will further attract investment, retain and create jobs, and contribute to the City's sense of place and quality of life.

Dublin's high-visibility corridors along US 33, SR 161, and I-270 support vital employment clusters in various retail- and service-sector activities ranging from healthcare institutions to local businesses. The architecture along these corridors has also established a sense of identity that sets Dublin apart from surrounding communities. Development opportunities along such highly visible corridors should be reserved to ensure the City protect its long-term economic and fiscal health. Quality architecture, well-landscaped areas, and streetscapes will continue to reinforce the standards for which the City is widely known.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt policies that allow for the flexible development and redevelopment of business parks, including the development of a mix of multifamily housing, retail, and services and office space that adapts to changes in how people work.
- Require that redeveloped business parks include gathering places and facilitate active transportation including pedestrian and bicycling amenities.
- Build on the example of the Metro Center Redevelopment to reposition business parks to continue to provide productive business locations that enable workers to achieve work-life balance better.
- Consider tax incentives or financing mechanisms to encourage adaptive reuse of vacant properties along high-visibility corridors.
- Ensure any redevelopment meets the high-quality and standard in Dublin.
- Continue to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce to support the business districts in Dublin.
- Continue to provide incentives to businesses that want to locate in Dublin.
- Use buffers to mitigate exposure of incompatible land uses.
- Adopt requirements that ensure quality design for any new development, repositioning, and redevelopment that complements and maintains Dublin's character.

CREATE DISTINCT DEVELOPMENT NODES

Building from the 2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan Update, Dublin can energize economic development by creating distinctive development nodes. This can enable the City to meet 21st century industrial demand for vibrant physical space while maintaining Dublin's high-quality built environment. The Economic Development Strategic Plan Update anticipates that Dublin's headquarters companies and concentration of information and business services industries will feel a disproportionate impact of any long-term shifts to decentralized operations or remote work but that the City also stands to gain from an increase in remote workers thanks to its quality neighborhoods and strong residential market. Distinct development nodes will attract high-paying industries and the skilled labor force they require through creating modern, flexible spaces. Efforts to develop distinct development nodes should build on the momentum in the Bridge Street, West Innovation District, and Dublin Corporate Area.

BRIDGE STREET

The Bridge Park/Bridge Street District, with its high-quality, dense mixed-use design, and connection to major transportation networks, is primed to become a distinct development node. Building on the 2010 Bridge Street Corridor Study, it will continue to develop as Dublin's centerpiece, connecting the City's cultural and historical centers across the Scioto River. Though some components of the district have yet to be developed, it already contains more than 600,000 square feet of office space and 231,000 square feet of retail, 728 housing units for rent, 248 units for sale and more than 400 hotel rooms.

DUBLIN CORPORATE AREA

The Dublin Corporate Area offers an opportunity to use existing infrastructure and reposition its business parks to create a distinct development node. Building upon the 2017 Dublin Corporate Area Plan, which laid the groundwork for an active, walkable, residential, commercial, and recreational area, the Dublin Corporate Area can be re-imagined to accommodate residents' changing work and lifestyle preferences and meet the needs of the businesses, regional headquarters, technology firms, health-care organizations, financial institutions, and professional service providers. Its existing road network, internet and energy infrastructure, built environment, and proximity to City shopping centers, hotels, recreational facilities, and residential neighborhoods make it an ideal location for this transformation.

MAKING STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS IN PLACE-BASED DEVELOPMENT NOW CAN HELP DUBLIN REMAIN COMPETITIVE IN THE CURRENT GROWTH CYCLE, BUT ALSO PREPARE IT TO WEATHER THE NEXT ECONOMIC DOWNTURN.

- Dublin Economic Development Strategic Plan 2023



WEST INNOVATION DISTRICT

The West Innovation District (WID) is a key growth area. Described by the 2017 West Innovation District Area Plan, it encompasses approximately 1,100 acres, bound by US 33 on the east, Post Road on the north, Houchard Road on the west, and Shier Pings Road on the south, mostly consists of undeveloped land. The 2017 WID Area Plan envisioned the area as a world-class innovation and research district. It provides opportunities for mixed-use, walkable development focused on research and innovation, accessible to the US 33 Smart Corridor. It has the potential to accommodate 3.9 million square feet of development and is a prime location to be cultivated as a distinct development node. The City recognizes this potential and has guided its development to establish premier innovation and research district centered around Ohio University's recent development of an advanced academic research campus in Dublin and the new medical campus for Ohio State University. These developments could create 10,500 jobs and include a future passenger rail station.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct economic impact analyses of new or redeveloped nodes to capture the broader impacts of live, work, and play environments
- Build on the momentum of Bridge Park/Bridge Street District
- Continue to prioritize the redevelopment of Dublin Corporate Area and provide additional points of connection to alternative living/retail space.
- Continue to market development-ready sites and streamline approval, permitting and construction processes.
- Ensure development nodes align with the Land Use Plan and the Special Area Plan recommendations.
- Connect development nodes through deployment of mobility technologies.
- Consult and coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions for development review, transportation infrastructure planning, and physical design standards for developments that abut municipal boundaries.

BUSINESS FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

DIVERSIFY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Dublin's economy, while robust, is heavily reliant on a few sectors such as corporate headquarters, business services, and information technology. However, by strategically supporting the diversification of its employment opportunities, Dublin will remain resilient to economic shifts and attract cutting-edge industries. This shift will provide employment for residents of varying educational backgrounds and experience, contributing significantly to the economic and social stability of the community.

TARGET INDUSTRIES

As Dublin's updated Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines, the City should concentrate on key industries that can enhance its existing business ecosystem while diversifying its employment opportunities. These industries include information technology and computer services, medical and biosciences, healthcare services, and research and development. Leveraging its strength as a corporate headquarters and its well-developed business park infrastructure, the City should focus on activities that have not been as affected by remote work, such as light manufacturing (especially technical applications like electronics and advanced materials) and bioscience lab space (building on the development of new medical facilities complexes and momentum created by the recent arrival of several bioscience firms).

SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Locally owned businesses are critical to advance economic growth and opportunities in Dublin. In addition to providing essential services to the surrounding communities, small businesses are key to a robust local economy, creating jobs and stronger social community ties. As Dublin progresses, supporting small and local businesses across the City is essential. In addition to encouraging residents to buy and shop locally, the City should engage the local business community and remediate barriers to ensure they have the space to grow and thrive in the future.

INCUBATOR AND ACCELERATOR PROGRAMS

To help spur innovation and create opportunities for residents, the City can support business start-up incubators and accelerators. Incubators and accelerators can offer physical space, collaborative work environments, networking, mentorship, and educational opportunities for residents with business ideas that they are trying to grow into viable ventures or businesses working to gain traction. Business incubator and accelerator programs can attract venture capital investment from partners such as Rev1Ventures and help cultivate an innovation ecosystem that can benefit established targeted industries and start-ups by attracting skilled workers and providing training and education to workers to meet employers' needs. Incubators and accelerators can help diversify Dublin's economy and make it more dynamic.





WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce development is crucial in encouraging resilient and sustainable economic growth in Dublin. Cultivating a diverse and multi-talented economy that is friendly to new and existing businesses is critical to ensuring Dublin continues to grow and thrive. There are several areas where the business community can attract new businesses, and improve access to jobs, wages, and the economy. The City should continue to encourage an entrepreneurial ecosystem, encourage partnerships between businesses and schools or higher education institutions, and promote the local workforce. An innovative and entrepreneurial community requires active involvement from decision-makers, economic development partners, and stakeholders from businesses, large and small.

Education and Employer Connections

Supporting the development of a skilled workforce to meet the needs of targeted industries and provide attractive career opportunities for residents begins with young people. By encouraging connections between employers and the City's high schools and the region's many colleges and universities including Ohio University's Dublin Integration Center, Columbus State Community College, and Ohio State University's Outpatient Care Clinic, Dublin can leverage its high-quality education system and proximity to major employers to help facilitate the creation of training and career paths into targeted industries including technology and health care.

They also allow high school students to begin to network opening career opportunities when they finish their degree. Connection programs can enable college students to gain skills and experience. At the same time, they pursue their degree maximizing the value of their higher education experience and preparing skilled workers to meet employers' needs.

Internships and Training, and Certifications Programs

Internships and training, and certificate programs are two of the most effective ways to create career opportunities for residents. Both can bridge the experience and training gaps between a college degree and the needs of targeted industries or assist residents as they transition careers to take advantage of rewarding, high-paying jobs. Dublin should support internship, training and certification programs to make career opportunities available to residents and meet employers' needs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider the needs of target industries in crafting land use policies to enhance the City's ability to attract these industries and create technology and computer services and bioscience as well as healthcare ecosystems.
- Collaborate with partners such as Rev1Ventures to reinforce an entrepreneurial-friendly business environment.
- Continue to build on the success of Riverview Village and the Dublin Entrepreneurial Center to provide space and infrastructure for remote-workers, and local and start-up businesses.
- Adopt policies that encourage the creation of business incubators and accelerators.
- Encourage and promote the use of community facilities to support training and certification programs.
- Foster partnerships between schools, colleges and universities, and employers to increase access to and awareness of internships, vocational training, and education in skilled trades in alignment with economic opportunities.
- Set aside space for local businesses in new developments.
- Provide economic development incentives and resources to small businesses.



TOURISM

Dublin has excellent potential to expand its tourism sector to diversify its economy further. Its appealing built environment, public art, recreational amenities, community facilities, parks and natural areas, and retail and dining options make it an ideal regional tourism location. By leveraging its existing tourism assets and proactive planning, the City can grow tourism as a durable and sustainable economic driver.

EVENTS AND MEETING FACILITIES

Dublin hosts many successful and well-attended conferences, meetings, and events. The Conference Center and OCLC, Ohio University Dublin Integrated Education Center, the Exchange at Bridge Park, and the Club at Tartan Fields host many large regional and national conferences. Dublin's many hotels have meeting spaces capable of hosting business and professional association meetings. The City can build upon this component of its tourism industry by continuing to provide quality community facilities, ensuring sufficient hotel accommodations, supporting active transportation, including well-connected public transportation, and planning for the development of quality dining, retail, and other tourism-oriented experiences to make Dublin the obvious choice to host conferences, events and meetings.

SPORTS

With Muirfield Village, Dublin is an established premier golf location, but it is also a first-class destination for hosting other sporting events. Its high-quality athletic facilities provide venues for soccer, football, ice hockey, swimming, cycling, and other sporting tournaments, from small, local events to large-scale international competitions. Further, its hotels and other amenities make it a true sports location. The City can leverage this identity to expand its tourism sector.

FESTIVALS

Dublin is well known for its reputation as a place to visit, celebrate, and be enriched. The City is well-known for the Dublin Irish Festival, the St. Patrick's Day celebration, and the Memorial Tournament. Still, it is also popular for its other festivals, including Independence Day and Fore! Fest. Further, the lively weekly Dublin Market attracts residents and visitors throughout the summer. Dublin can lean into the popularity of these events and cement its identity as the go-to location for festivals by continuing to maintain and develop quality community facilities and an active transportation network, including accessible public transportation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

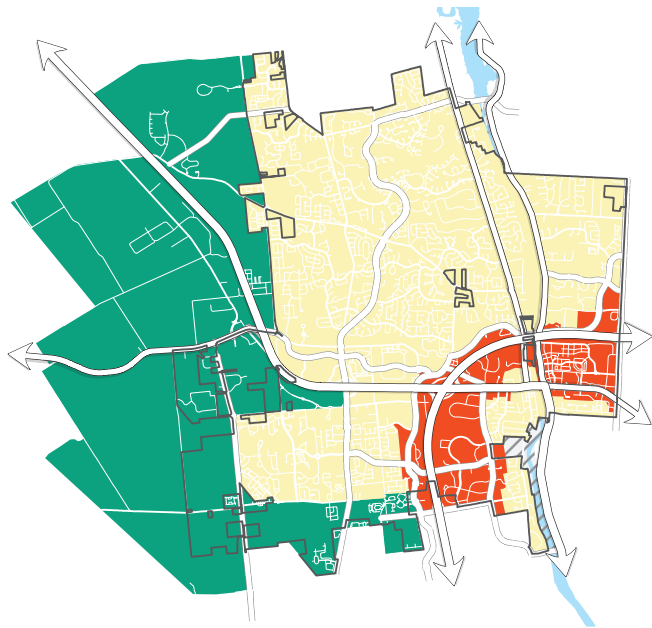
- Support the maintenance, improvement, and development of quality community facilities to host large meetings, events, sports tournaments, and festivals.
- Support the development of retail, dining, and other tourist-oriented businesses close to lodging and event venues.
- Plan for active transportation, including public transit near hospitality uses that visitors can access easily.
- Promote Dublin's identity as a tourism location through the City's website, branding, and partnerships with tourism-oriented businesses.
- Collaborate with businesses on strategies to support housing and transportation for the low skill service industry workforce

EMERGING TRENDS

Based on the 2021 Update of Dublin's Cluster-based Economic Development Data Analysis report, major declines in Dublin's occupational employment mix during the pandemic were concentrated in low-skilled jobs in service industries, particularly sales and food services. Rebuilding these labor bases may prove challenging since much of this workforce relies on non-resident commuters whose preferences and opportunities have shifted as a result of the pandemic. Rising housing prices in Dublin continue to make it even more difficult for these workers to live near where they work.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Dublin's commercial and industrial landscape covers a broad geographic area and responds to several markets. As such, a more localized look at commercial and industrial areas is necessary to understand how places differ and what improvements are appropriate in the different growth areas. This section looks at the three growth areas within the Planning Area and presents recommendations aimed at improving local land use, functionality, and character. The framework should be used in conjunction with the Special Area Plan recommendations in Chapter ##.



DEVELOPMENT INTENSIFICATION

Prioritize adaptive reuse, infill, and mixed-use development. Areas identified in the Land Use Plan for development opportunity should be prioritized for a shift from suburban office model to a broader mixed-use development format. These areas will accommodate land uses including employment, hotel, retail, and potentially residential uses. The area presents opportunities to guide development toward creating a distinct development node and further solidifies its sense of identity and value. The City should continue to encourage a walkable and pedestrian friendly development that resonates with modern workforce looking to live close to their jobs and around urban amenities Dublin has to offer.

MAINTAIN NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Encourage commercial nodes that maintain the neighborhood character. The established neighborhoods and suburban offices along key corridors should experience minimal change. Within established neighborhoods, the City should identify opportunities to create a small-scale neighborhood commercial node that is easy to walk to and provides a mix of uses and amenities, making the neighborhoods complete. The mix of uses can include:

- small-scale and pedestrian-oriented retail,
- office,
- commercial uses integrated into the existing community.

Such nodes help establish a focal point of vibrancy and activity conveniently located in residential neighborhoods. In established suburban offices and business parks, the City should adopt design standards that encourage multimodal transportation and complement Dublin's built environment.

NEW GROWTH AREA

Diversify employment opportunities. Where commercial and industrial development in new growth areas is identified in the Land Use Plan, it should encourage a variety of employment opportunities that align with the City's economic development goals and aspirations. Industrial land uses in the area is appropriate for facilities that involve manufacturing, processing, storage, and distribution of goods and materials, including resource production, processing, and/or extraction. Meanwhile, the Flex Innovation use caters to a mix of non-residential employment, including administrative, engineering, research, and development, offices, wholesaling, and business incubator space. As development gains traction in the area, coordination with adjoining jurisdictions would be required. As the area supports a variety of housing options that allow people to live closer to jobs, the City should consider including natural space and extending the public park systems to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities and walkability. In addition to pockets of mixed-use developments that serve the adjacent community, the area provides flexibility necessary to attract targeted industries and fosters a diverse economic base for Dublin.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS

The map recommends where Dublin can best employ suggested commercial and industrial land uses to achieve its economic development goals in addition to the Economic Development Framework.

Future Land Use

- Mixed Use - Neighborhood
- Mixed Use - Village
- Mixed Use - Center
- Mixed Use - Urban
- Suburban Commercial
- Neighborhood Office
- Suburban Office
- Flex Innovation
- Industrial

Context Layers

- River
- Parks and Open Space
- City of Dublin
- Planning Area Boundary

