

**To:** Members of the City Council

**From:** Dana L. McDaniel, City Manager

**Date:** May 13, 2022

**Initiated By:** Homer Rogers, Assistant City Manager/Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer

**Re:** Dublin 2035 Strategic Framework

## 1) Summary

At its February 2020 retreat, City Council established a new goal of “Developing a 2035 Visionary Framework”. Staff is now coming before Council with a proposal intended to meet that goal by suggesting a revision to the vision statement that currently exists within the City’s strategic framework. That vision reads,

**“A global city of choice. Vibrant. Innovative. Engaged.”**

Staff is proposing a new vision statement that would read,

**“A global city of choice that is the most Sustainable, Connected, and Resilient.”**

Along with this, Staff is proposing a set of goals that support and clearly define the three aspects of the visions statement. These are presented later in this memorandum

## 2) Strategic Framework Development

Per the Center for Management and Organization Effectiveness, a strategic framework contains a vision, mission, values, plans, objectives, and tactics. Such a framework provides a shared language for thinking about the organization’s strategy and contains a complete vision for the direction of the organization. The organization’s leadership, strategic planners, and managers can reference the strategic framework as they create budgets, choose annual objectives, and make plans.

In Dublin’s case, a start-from-scratch or traditional strategic planning process is not warranted, but certain aspects of Dublin’s Strategic Framework must be re-examined periodically. The goal is to develop a strategic framework that ties together the many existing studies, plans, and strategies of the City and the region, many of which the City has helped fund and participated in. The City of Dublin has a long history of strategic thinking and planning. This can be witnessed by the numerous studies, plans and strategies in our repository <https://dublinohiousa.gov/strategic-plans-documents/>. City Councils for decades have been very disciplined in conducting an annual retreat to set Council goals and priorities. Again, and most recently, Council approved annual Goals for 2022-23 and felt it critical to focus one of those goals on developing the vision for the city. Those annual goals approved under Resolution 22-22 are:

Goal #1 - Become the Most Connected Community in the U.S.

**Goal #2 - Develop a Dublin 2035 Visionary Framework.**

Goal #3 - Strengthen the Stewardship and Vitality of our Historic District Core.

Goal #4 - Develop Dublin's "Destination of Choice" Next Generation Community Events Vision.

Records of previous goals set by Council, dating back to 1990, are on file with the City Clerk of Council/Director of Legislative Services and are also captured in large part in the ClearPoint platform. The City has already adopted Purpose, Vision, Mission, and Value statements, which serve as our Guiding Principles.

Again, with consideration to a model strategic framework, staff proposes that the 2035 Strategic Framework incorporate a revitalized Vision Statement supported by the Guiding Principles, Strategic Focus Areas, City Council goals, objectives, performance measures, and the many City and regional studies, plans, and strategies. As City Manager, I have challenged Homer Rogers, Assistant City Manager/Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer, to meld all of this into a 2035 Strategic Framework. The following is a summary of how this fits together. Additionally, I am sharing with you a copy of the book, *The Executive Guide to Facilitating Strategy*, by Michael Wilkinson. There are many models of strategic frameworks, plans and processes. We have found this book to be a very good guide. I hope it can work as a common reference for our collective team.

### **3) Background of Strategic Planning in the City of Dublin**

Dublin has a long and highly successful history of engaging in elements of strategic planning, which arguably began from the moment John Sells and his Family acquired the land from James Holt in 1803. Even then, there were aspirations of what "Dublin, Ohio" would become. In 1810, when Dublin first took on its name, it was in the running to become the state capital. Approximately 160+ years later, Dublin received the sparks that ignited its growth and be propelled it into the future. Those sparks were arguably the construction of the I-270 outer belt, the arrival of the Ashland Oil Company, and the construction of the Muirfield Village Golf Course. With these events, Dublin's Council recognized the need for strategic planning and adopted its first Dublin Comprehensive Land Use Plan in 1967. In 1971, the Village Council accepted the water and sewer contract with Columbus and in 1972 it appointed its first City Administrator. The Village approved its first Charter in 1979, hired its first Director of Planning in 1982, and drafted its first comprehensive Community Plan in 1988 after becoming an official City in 1987. In the midst of this, on February 3, 1986, Council appointed an ad hoc "Goal Setting Committee" and, in 1990, Council began conducting annual goal setting meetings. The City adopted its first formal Mission Statement in 1993, followed by its first Core Values and Leadership Philosophy in 2005. Later, 2010, Council established and defined five "Strategic Focus Areas". These were:

- 1) Fiscal Health and Economic Vitality;
- 2) Livable, Sustainable, Safe;
- 3) Civic Engagement;
- 4) Public Services and Infrastructure;
- 5) Smart Customer Focused Government.

In 2015, Council agreed and directed the City Manager to review language regarding the City's Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Focus Areas. Work commenced and during the 2017 Council Retreat, the City Manager presented an overview of the proposed City 2017 Strategic Focus Areas along with the rest of the Strategic Framework elements that had been developed, reviewed, and adopted over the years. That Strategic Framework is as follows:

**Purpose** - "The City of Dublin, Ohio secures the benefits of home rule and exercises the powers of local self-governance as conferred by its Charter, the Constitution, and the laws of the State of Ohio for the governing of our City." - Preamble, Revised Charter of Dublin, Ohio

**Vision** – A global city of choice. Vibrant. Innovative. Engaged.

**Mission** - We are and always have been a proud local democracy. In our service, we strive to provide the best quality of life and environment in which our residents and businesses can thrive. We seek to ally our proud traditions with the best innovations of the future."

**Values / Guiding Principles** –

***Integrity:*** We are open and honest. We honor our commitments to the community and each other. Our actions are consistent with what we say.

***Respect:*** We treat our coworkers and members of the community with courtesy and dignity. We embrace diversity and acknowledge the needs, responsibilities and inherent worth of each individual.

***Communication:*** We maintain an environment in which employees feel free to share ideas and information. We promote open interaction throughout the organization to ensure knowledge and understanding among all employees and our community.

***Teamwork:*** We create a climate in which all employees work together and support the individual talents and contributions of team members. We celebrate successes and see mistakes as opportunities for growth; we will never willingly let a member of our team fail.

***Accountability:*** We are responsible to our community and each other for our personal and organizational decisions, actions and performance results. We are committed stewards of our City's assets and resources.

***Positive Attitude:*** We focus our efforts on constructive behavior, attitudes and solutions. We promote an environment that people love going to every day – a place where each individual can find a sense of belonging, inspiration, enjoyment and meaning.

***Dedication to Service:*** We pursue innovation and continuous improvement in all we do. We are committed to efficient, effective and responsive service delivery that makes a difference in the lives of those we serve.

**Strategic Focus Areas (aka Goals)** - Each of the following Strategic Focus Areas also included a set of Priorities (aka Objectives) and Strategies that defined how the goal would be successfully accomplished. **NOTE:** *For the sake of brevity in this memorandum, only one set of*

*objectives and strategies are provided below as an example. All of the Focus areas (or Goals) listed in this section have additional objectives and strategies associated with them.*

**Fiscal Health:** The City ensures its financial health through the implementation and coordination of sound fiscal policies.

**Objective 1** - Maintain high bond ratings

**Strategies:**

- a. *Maintain a General Fund Policy requiring a balance of at least 50% of operating costs.*
- b. *Comply with the city's Debt Ratio policy.*
- c. *Continually assess the city's bond rating position with the assistance of appropriate experts.*
- d. *Maximize revenues by taking steps to ensure collection of established taxes, rates, fees and fines.*
- e. *Maintain an accurate and up-to-date cost of services analysis and recommendations for cost recovery.*
- f. *Assess the long term future of City revenues.*

**Economic Vitality:** The City ensures its economic vitality through sound land use planning; forward investing in infrastructure; and continuous focus on innovative economic development programs to compete regionally, nationally, and globally.

**Smart Customer Focused Government:** The City is a high-performing organization that is accountable and responsive to the needs and desires of the community and continuously improving on its best-in-class services.

**Community Engagement:** The City secures home rule powers and local self-governance for its residents through proactive communication and a focus on public input, volunteerism, diversity, and inclusion.

**Safe and Resilient Community of Choice:** The City provides a secure and stable environment and continuously prepares to respond to, withstand and recover from adverse situations.

#### **4) Elements of a Strategic Framework (or Strategic Plan) defined**

Most of the following elements of a strategic framework or plan are defined in the aforementioned "Executive Guide to Facilitating Strategy" by Michael Wilkinson. Here are the typical elements:

- **Purpose:** A clear statement of why the organization exists. In Dublin, the Preamble to the City Revised Charter serves as the purpose statement.
- **Vision:** A statement describing how the organization will look if the organization fulfills its mission. It describes what the organization wants to be and how it wants to be perceived if it is successful.
- **Mission Statement:** Simply and clearly defines what the organization does, for whom, and to what benefit. In some organizations, it also serves as the Purpose Statement.

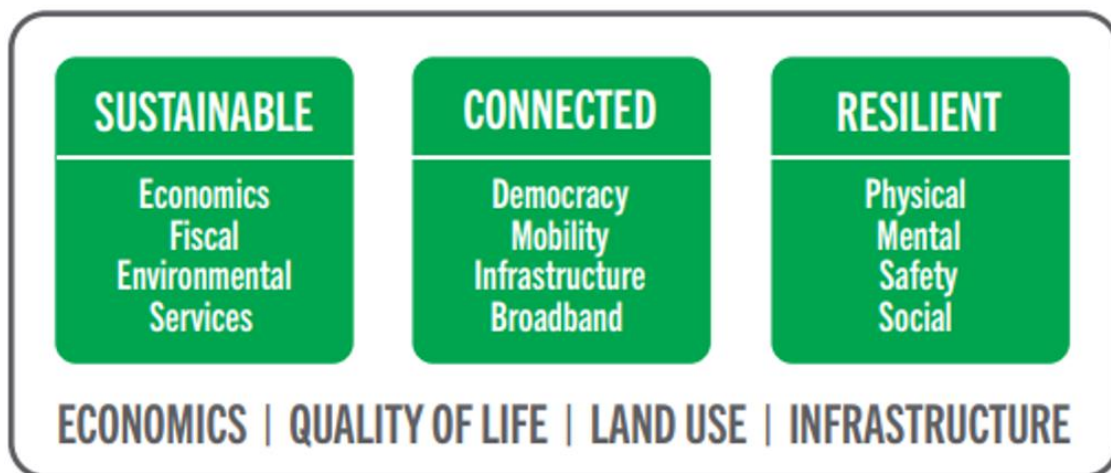
- **Values / Guiding Principles:** This is the culture of the organization. It provides guidance on how the organization will operate. When a listed value has a behavioral statement added to it, it then becomes a Guiding Principle. "We value..., therefore we will ...."
- **Goals:** Broad long-term aims that define the fulfillment of the mission.
- **Objectives:** Targets that measure the accomplishments of Goals. These must be Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, & Time Bound (SMART).
- **Identification of Critical Success Factors (CSF) and Barriers:** The key conditions that must be created to achieve one or more objectives and the existing or potential challenges that hinder the achievement of one or more objectives.
- **Strategies:** Specific activities required to achieve an objective, create a critical condition, or overcome a barrier
- **Action Plans:** Detail the specific steps to be taken to implement a strategy. They state what will be done, by who, by when, and the resources required.

In considering the definition of "vision" provided above, the work done thus far in collecting "Big Ideas" and initiatives provides insight and evidence as to what residents, businesses, city partners, Council, the City Manager, and even City Staff want Dublin to be and what they want it to be perceived as. The input gathered also provides great insight into the various goals, objectives, and strategies needed to support the overall strategic vision. These goals, objectives and strategies should be reflected in the City's overall Strategic Framework and in the supporting plans such as the Community Plan, the Economic Development Strategic Plan and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. These and the various other supporting plans and studies the City produces, or are engaged in, must support the vision of the City's overall Strategic Framework.

## 5) Proposed Vision for the Strategic Framework

Keeping this in mind, staff recommends that the Vision statement for the "Dublin 2035 Strategic Framework" be revitalized/modified and remain focused as an overarching / high-level vision for the City as follows:

**"A Global City of Choice that is the Most Sustainable, Connected, and Resilient."**



This vision statement has three categories identified that envision Dublin as a, if not THE, most sustainable, connected and resilient City. Each of these categories has four goals associated with them that articulate the successful achievement of the mission and hence the realization of the overall vision for the city. The entire framework is foundationally supported by the themes of Economics, Quality of Life, Land Use, and Infrastructure that were originally articulated by City Council during its February 2020 Council Goal Setting Retreat for the development of the framework.

**MOST SUSTAINABLE:** This category of the vision encompasses the following four goals:

**Economics** - The place where diverse businesses want to be located in order to grow, thrive, develop and participate in the global economy. (Economics)

**Fiscal** – A City recognized globally among its peers for exemplary fiscal health, accountability, & transparency. (Economics)

**Environment** – A community that is the model for sustainable community design, is zero-waste, carbon neutral, and supportive of its natural environment while providing diverse living, entertainment and recreational experiences that are envied by all. (Quality of Life & Land Use)

**Service** – A city that delivers world class, innovative and efficient services to its residents, business, and visitors as demonstrated by a system of analytics and performance measurement. (Quality of Life, Land Use & Infrastructure)

**MOST CONNECTED:** This category of the vision encompasses the following four goals:

**Democracy** – To be a model democracy where people are connected and engaged with their local government. (Economics, Quality of Life, Land Use & Infrastructure)

**Mobility** – A city that connects its populace with the most advanced multi-modal transportation options available to meet their every need. (Quality of Life, Land Use & Infrastructure)

**Infrastructure** – A City with state of the art, reliable, and safe water, power, sanitary sewer, storm water, waterways and thoroughfares. (Infrastructure)

**Broadband** – Ensure 10 Gigabit access and capability to all Dublin residents, businesses and visitors. (Quality of Life & Infrastructure)

**MOST RESILIENT:** This category of the vision encompasses the following four goals:

**Physical** – A City that provides a multitude of options geared toward the physical well-being of all who live and work here be it medical facilities, recreation/sporting venues, parks, playgrounds, or shared-use paths. (Quality of Life & Land Use)

**Mental** – A community that cares and provides for the mental and behavioral well-being of all and is also a community of lifelong learning & modern educational experience. (Quality of Life)

**Safety** - A community that prides itself as the safest place to live and is prepared and resourced to withstand and quickly recover from any crisis or disaster. (Economics, Quality of Life & Infrastructure)

**Social** – A city where all are welcomed, valued, engaged, and included regardless of socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, color, sexual orientation, gender, disability, age, military or religious status. (Quality of Life)

### **Framework Implementation**

Again, the Dublin 2035 Strategic Framework is intended as an overarching and visionary guide for the City's strategic planning and will define success around the City's mission accomplishment, future policy decisions, investment opportunities, and partnership development. The "Big Ideas" identified through this effort will lead to or become the many goals, objectives, specific strategies and action plans needed to realize the strategic vision of the "Dublin 2035 Strategic Framework". As such, all the valuable work and information gathered in this endeavor cannot and should not be forgotten or set aside. As articulated in the January 24, 2022 memorandum to Council, the various other supporting plans and studies that Council has adopted and implemented throughout the years will require some updating to ensure their alignment with the vision of the 2035 Strategic Framework. Staff, the various Boards, Commissions, and Committees will need the information and suggested initiatives moving forward to make this happen.

Returning to Dublin's history of strategic planning, Dublin has obviously thought and worked strategically over the decades. It has been thoughtful of the future and innovative while always considering what is best for the residents and businesses that call Dublin home. The strategic planning effort has developed along the way. Council has conducted annual goal setting retreats in a very disciplined fashion and has developed a set of "Strategic Focus Areas" that effectively serve as strategic goals in the sense of strategic planning. In effect, the City of Dublin has all the elements of a formal Strategic Framework, it just needs to be pulled together, reviewed, and published as such.

To that end, the vision statement and associated goals for the "Dublin 2035 Strategic Framework" are a critical first step for the City of Dublin to refocus its strategic planning process and publish a formal document that will drive the City toward realizing its strategic vision of the future reaching out to the year 2035. The Strategic Framework should then be the central focus for goal, objective, strategy, and action plan development going forward and revisited on an annual basis.

### **Recommendation**

Staff requests feedback from City Council on the proposed vision and associated goals for the "Dublin 2035 Strategic Framework" and further requests Council to direct staff to draft legislation adopting it.