



commercial development task force
city of dublin



SUMMARY AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

Draft | July 2014

Prepared by:  M I G

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Acknowledgements

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

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I. Introduction

Project Background

Commercial development for any city can have a significant impact on the quality of life for residents and economic development for the community as a whole. To seek community input regarding future development in Dublin, the Dublin City Council, on March 18, 2014, created the Commercial Development Task Force (CDTF) – an appointed committee of 12 local citizens – to examine the potential for additional commercial development throughout Dublin. City staff identified five “opportunity sites” that were the key focus of the CDTF. These sites included: 1) Downtown Dublin; 2) The Green at Park Place; 3) Dublin Land Company; 4) The Promenade/Grafton Plaza; and 5) the Chen property. A consultant team was hired by the City to work with the CDTF and City staff to provide information on economic viability and commercial design considerations, and to assist in facilitating and documenting all CDTF meetings. Throughout the project, City staff from Community Development, Economic Development and the City Manager’s Office provided helpful support to the CDTF and the consultant team. All members of the CDTF have shown strong dedication to this planning effort and have volunteered many hours in discharging their duties as outlined in direction from the Council.

Opportunity Sites Map



Task Force Purpose and Charge

The purpose of the Commercial Development Task Force (CDTF), as defined by the City Council, is to engage residents and seek their input regarding the remaining undeveloped commercial properties in Dublin. For this specific planning effort, the CDTF was charged with the following three tasks:

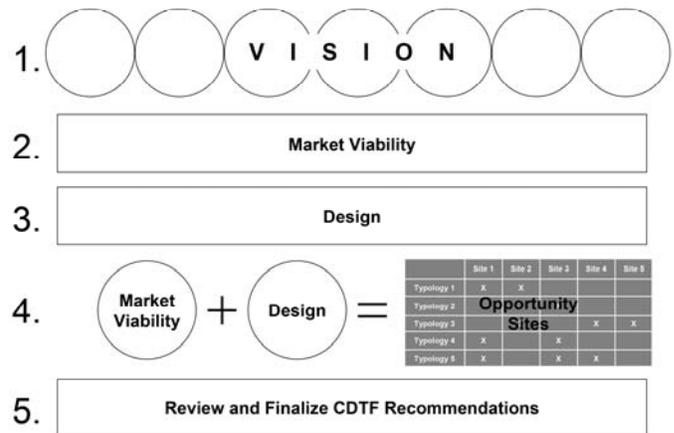
1. Classify the desirability of existing commercial sites for future development
2. Define desirable design principles to shape the vision of future commercial development
3. Identify additional economic development incentives to attract and retain commercial uses



Planning Process

The planning process for the CDTF was comprised of five facilitated meetings to guide the CDTF through the process of creating a series of key recommendations for future development in Dublin. For each of the five meetings, the CDTF was asked to focus on a specific aspect of the planning process including, vision, market viability, design, desirability of the opportunity sites, and key recommendations.

Planning Process and Meeting Organization



Planning Tools

Each meeting included a presentation on the specific aspect of the process given by either a member of City staff or the consultant team. This was followed by a period of discussion for CDTF members to ask questions and consider what was presented. All meetings were open to the public and time was provided towards the end of each meeting to offer an opportunity for community feedback. A wallgraphic recording was created for each meeting to help facilitate the discussion and to record comments from the CDTF and community members present. As a supplement to each meeting, CDTF members were also provided meeting packets that included a meeting agenda, meeting notes, and a copy of the wallgraphic recording from the previous meeting. Supplemental material was provided to CDTF members prior to some meetings and that information was included again in the meeting packets for the CDTF members' reference. Surveying tools were used to gain additional feedback from all participants. These included an interactive community design survey (Meeting 3) and an individual homework assignment (Meeting 4). All meeting materials and notes were made available to the public on the CDTF website at www.dublin.ca.gov/CDtaskforce.

The Appendices provided at the end of the report include copies of all meeting notes, wallgraphic recordings, presentations, supplemental documents and the homework assignment and its summary for reference.

CDTF Meetings Summary

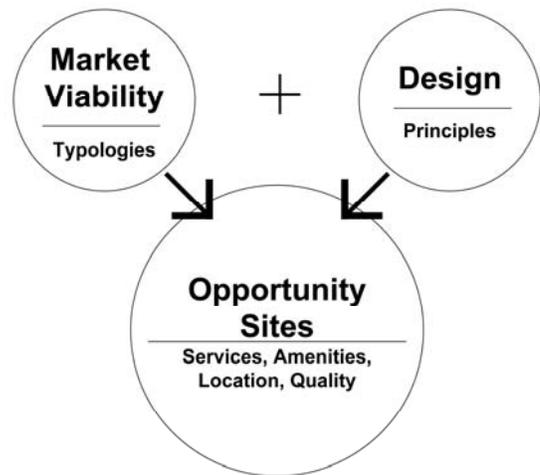
Meeting 1: Vision – The initial kick-off meeting for the CDTF included a general overview of commercial development in Dublin provided by city staff and facilitated by the consultant team. The meeting helped to introduce all participants to the planning process and generate an initial assessment of assets, issues and opportunities for commercial development in the City of Dublin. **Marnie Delgado**, Senior Planner, provided background information about current development activity and anticipated build out of the community. **Linda Smith**, Assistant City Manager provided background information on the City's current economic development programs and incentives to attract and retain business in Dublin.

Meeting 2: Market Viability – **Michael Berne** of MJB Consulting, a national expert on the economics of retail and commercial activities, gave a presentation on market considerations, market demand, and different typologies of retail development to the CDTF. The presentation served as a means of educating CDTF members on general assumptions and basic concepts for the current retail market. The meeting's follow up discussion gave members an opportunity to ask market-specific questions for Dublin and led to further refinements to the CDTF's overall vision for future commercial development.

Meeting 3: Design Principles – An overview of design principles was presented by **Chris Beynon** of MIG at the third meeting, building upon the viable retail typologies identified in the previous meeting. CDTF members were introduced to key design aspects such as, range of uses, site configuration, building design, circulation, access, materials, and textures. The CDTF was informed that all of these considerations help to define the character of a place and can have a big impact on the long-term economic success of development. Through an interactive **community design survey** during the meeting, the CDTF was asked to identify desirable elements of design that they would like to see with future commercial development in Dublin.

As a follow-up to the content presented to the CDTF during the first three meetings – existing conditions, market viability, and design principles – the Project Team issued a **homework assignment** for CDTF members to complete prior to the fourth meeting. The homework assignment asked CDTF members to assess each of the five opportunity sites for the following criteria:

1. Overall desirability for commercial development
2. Preferred retail typology
3. Preferred use types
4. Desired design elements



Meeting 4: Desirability of Opportunity Sites – Findings from the homework assignment were crafted into an initial list of preliminary recommendations and presented to the CDTF during the fourth meeting. These findings and other outstanding questions were part of an “open discussion” period of the meeting which led to a reassessment of desirability and use types and design principles for each of the opportunity sites.

An overview of existing direct and indirect economic development programs and incentives was also presented to the CDTF at Meeting 4 by **Lori Taylor**, Economic Development Director, and **Hazel Wetherford**, Senior Administrative Analyst for the City. CDTF members were asked how they would encourage developers, property owners, restaurants, retailers, and institutional investors to locate and invest in the City of Dublin. They were also asked how they would encourage shoppers, diners and visitors to choose Dublin over other areas in the region. Various recommendations were generated during an open discussion of both questions.

Meeting 5: CDTF Key Recommendations Review –The Summary and Key Recommendations Report was prepared based on feedback received from the CDTF. Prior to Meeting 5, a draft form of the report was provided to CDTF members to review and consider any revisions to the report. The revisions and a final review with the CDTF were facilitated during Meeting 5 to ensure that the recommendations represented the feedback from the CDTF.

II. Preliminary Recommendations

The following is a compilation of recommendations derived from the entire planning process for the City of Dublin Commercial Development Task Force (CDTF). The recommendations are organized based on the three part charge posed to the CDTF including desirability of commercial sites, design principles, and economic development incentives.

A. Desirability of Commercial Sites

A1. GENERAL

- A1-1. Strong consideration should be given to site adjacencies including development type, intensity, mass/scale, uses, interface and connectivity.
- A1-2. The construction timing for the residential portion of a mixed use project should be tied to construction of the commercial portion of the development.
- A1-3. The City Council should approach development strategies with a long-term vision.
- A1-4. Create commercial experiences that are unique to Dublin and help to create a sense of place and identity.
- A1-5. Traffic flow patterns should be considered within and around any future development.

A2. DOWNTOWN DUBLIN

- A2-1. Retail commercial intensification is critical to the downtown and should be a key component of revitalizing the area.
- A2-2. Mixed use in the retail core of the Downtown should have a significant focus on retail uses.
- A2-3. Additional residential units are supported so long as additional commercial development occurs in the Downtown as a whole.
- A2-4. Mixed-use projects should include a significant commercial component, particularly in the Retail District.
- A2-5. Use additional residential development to leverage opportunities for commercial development.
- A2-6. A key opportunity site for commercial/mixed use intensification is the Burlington Coat Factory parcel at the northwest corner of Dublin Boulevard and Golden Gate Drive.
- A2-7. The area south of Dublin Boulevard should, wherever possible, contain a mix of uses and not be just residential.

A3. GREEN AT PARK PLACE

- A3-1. This site is ideal for retail commercial development. Mixed use residential is an acceptable component as long as the focus of the project is on a high quality commercial experience.
- A3-2. The site has good access for Dublin residents.
- A3-3. Leverage the prime site location (i.e. visibility and access from I-580 and BART, and proximity to the future Persimmon Place) to create a development with a memorable experience.
- A3-4. The Task Force vision is in line with the proposed project concept for a walkable area with outdoor dining and other lifestyle amenities.

A4. DUBLIN LAND COMPANY (DLC)

DLC - Parcel 1

- A4-1. There is support for the existing land use of General Commercial which allows both office and retail commercial.
- A4-2. There is strong support for office uses at this site which should be a priority over retail.
- A4-3. Office development should and would complement Dublin Corporate Center and Gateway Medical to the west across Tassajara Road.
- A4-4. Do not consider an auto dealership at this location.

DLC - Parcel 2

- A4-5. Create a “main street” lifestyle experience which incorporates a sense of place, walkable, with gathering areas.
- A4-6. Development should complement The Shops at Waterford located to the west across Tassajara Road.
- A4-7. Provide opportunities for retail, restaurant and neighborhood serving uses.
- A4-8. This site provides a prime location for retail uses since it is on the “going home” side of Tassajara Road.

- A4-9. Uses should complement, but not necessarily duplicate, those uses already located at The Shops at Waterford.
- A4-10. Develop this parcel as a neighborhood commercial/lifestyle oriented walkable shopping center.
- A4-11. A mixed-use residential development, similar in orientation to The Shops at Waterford, is supported here if it includes a strong retail component.
- A4-12. The construction timing for the residential portion of a mixed use development should be tied to the construction of any retail component.

DLC - Parcels 3 & 4

- A4-13. These parcels are best suited for medium-density residential.
- A4-14. Residential uses should be considered based on existing adjacent uses and the proximity to Emerald Glen Park.
- A4-15. The construction timing for the residential units should be tied to the construction of a strong retail component on Parcel 2.

A5. PROMENADE

- A5-1. There is support for a combination of commercial and residential development here.
- A5-2. This site requires a strong commercial component.
- A5-3. Commercial development should be walkable with a “main street” feel.
- A5-4. Grafton Street should extend through the site to the north and south.
- A5-5. The commercial component should front on Grafton Street and Dublin Boulevard.
- A5-6. The timing of residential construction should be tied to commercial construction.
- A5-7. There is a preference for horizontal mixed-use but open to vertical mixed-use.

A6. GRAFTON PLAZA

- A6-1. Commercial development should generally mirror the Grafton Station corner.
- A6-2. The timing for residential construction in a mixed use project should be tied to commercial construction .
- A6-3. There is support for the existing Mixed-Use designation.

A7. CHEN PROPERTY

- A7-1. There is strong support for the existing General Commercial land use.
- A7-2. This is a good regional shopping location (i.e. proximity to I-580, Livermore Premium Outlets and Fallon Gateway).
- A7-3. There is support for flex-tech office space here.

B. Design Principles

B1. MATERIALS, TEXTURES AND CHARACTER

- B1-1. Utilize design elements that create a sense of place.
- B1-2. Consider a contemporary design style.
- B1-3. Incorporate quality lighting.
- B1-4. Provide signage and wayfinding elements.

B2. AMENITIES

- B2-1. Provide places for people to gather.
- B2-2. Accommodate areas for interactive “play” such as chess games, shuffle board, etc.
- B2-3. Create event-ready spaces.
- B2-4. Incorporate water features, such as fountains.

B3. CONNECTIVITY, ACCESS, AND SUSTAINABILITY

- B3-1. Design pedestrian-friendly features (i.e., safe pathways with landscaped borders).
- B3-2. Include bicycle-friendly features (i.e., bike lanes, bike racks, and storage).
- B3-3. Utilize drought-tolerant landscaping.
- B3-4. Incorporate solar technology where possible.
- B3-5. Consider low-profile parking garages as an alternative to surface parking.

C. Economic Development Incentives

C1. DEVELOPERS, PROPERTY OWNERS, RESTAURANTS, RETAILERS, AND INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS

- C1-1. Expand the marketing and promotion of Dublin’s assets, such as a prime location, retail desirability, an innovative incentives toolbox for economic development, an educated and talented workforce, a high-achieving educational system, and an appealing residential real estate market.
- C1-2. Attract tech-oriented businesses to locate in Dublin as an alternative to Silicon Valley and as a long-term investment strategy for job creation and growth.
- C1-3. Assist entrepreneurial businesses, particularly with annual sales in the \$5-\$10 million range, to acquire office and flex-tech space to locate and expand in Dublin.
- C1-4. Encourage current property owners to invest in the upkeep and improvement of their properties to help build a positive brand for the Dublin community.
- C1-5. Support a broad mix of tenants in commercial development.
- C1-6. Consider policy strategies that leverage the greatest potential for existing assets, such as the zoning of property near transit, and adaptive reuse of older commercial property for non-traditional uses.
- C1-7. Work with LAVTA to create programs such as a “ride-share” or shuttle service from BART to retail and office uses as an incentive to bring businesses and new jobs to Dublin.

C2. SHOPPERS, DINERS AND VISITORS

- C2-1. Leverage sponsorships by local businesses to create event programming that makes Dublin a destination, such as “free nights”, movie nights, free concerts in the park during the summer, shuttles from BART to the Farmer’s Market and destination retail locations, to use as a marketing strategy for promoting local shops, restaurants, and attractions.
- C2-2. Create retail centers that provide a diversity of shopping and dining options.

APPENDICES

- A. Meeting Notes and Wallgraphics**
- B. PowerPoint Presentations**
- C. Supportive Documents**
- D. Homework Assignment and Summary**