

# Community Events Roadmap

City of Dublin



**YARD  
& CO.**

[ May 19, 2025 ]

## **Acknowledgments**

We acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of the individuals and stakeholders whose insights, expertise, and collaboration informed the development of this report. Their input was instrumental in shaping the analysis and recommendations presented herein.

### **CITY OF DUBLIN**

#### **MAYOR & COUNCIL MEMBERS**

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Vice Mayor Christina Alutto

Council Member Cathy De Rosa

Council Member Jane Fox

Council Member Andy Keeler

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<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Background.....	3
Process.....	4
 <b>RESEARCH &amp; ENGAGEMENT .....</b>	 <b>7</b>
Stakeholder Interviews .....	8
Survey.....	9
Benchmarking.....	13
Dublin Events Ecosystem .....	16
City-Run Events .....	18
Permitting Process Assessment .....	34
Key Places .....	36
Tools in the Toolbox.....	40
 <b>A VISION FOR EVENTS .....</b>	 <b>43</b>
Goals.....	45
The Why .....	46
The Where .....	52
The Who .....	66
The How .....	70
 <b>APPENDIX.....</b>	 <b>81</b>



# Introduction

## PROJECT PURPOSE

The City of Dublin has developed a Local and Regional Community Events Program and management Roadmap to guide decision-making and actions to meet its goal of being a Global Destination of Choice.

This Roadmap establishes the vision for the next generation of community events for the City of Dublin. It serves as a strategic plan - defining goals and desired outcomes and outlining the major steps and milestones needed to reach it, as well as, a communication tool, articulating the strategic thinking - the why - behind both the goal and the plan for getting there.









# Background

The City of Dublin is known as an excellent place to live and work in central Ohio. In addition to its success as the 2nd largest employment center in the Columbus region, Dublin has world-class parks and shared-use paths, superior public education, and is widely celebrated for its community events.

In 1988, the City instituted the Hotel/Motel Tax, which funded the Convention and Visitor Bureau and established a fund for events, specifically festivals. The first staff person was hired to be the public information and event coordinator in 1990. For over three decades, hosting events has been part of the City's identity, and something it has consistently done exceptionally well. This is perhaps best illustrated by the Dublin Irish Festival (DIF), which began as a small neighborhood gathering on a tennis court and has grown into one of the world's largest and most respected Irish festivals. In addition to DIF, the City's Community Events Division produces four other major events - St. Patrick's Day Parade, Independence Day Celebration, Halloween Spooktacular, and Holiday Tree Lighting - along with numerous smaller events throughout the year. This robust events program has developed naturally and steadily over time.

As part of a strategic planning process in 2022, the City established a strategic goal to formalize its event strategy, Goal #4: Develop Dublin's "Destination of Choice" Next-Generation Community Events Vision. In 2024, the City hired Yard & Co. (Yard) to develop a local and regional community events program and management roadmap that would "leverage Dublin parks and facilities to create a connected, comprehensive, and fiscally sustainable vision that drives vitality, engagement, and entertainment."

96%

**of residents were satisfied with the City's events and activities, according to a 2022 Community Attitude Survey conducted by the City of Dublin.**

# Process

This roadmap project began in the summer of 2024 and concluded in the spring of 2025. The consultant team, Yard, used a three-stage approach - Explore, Test, Build - in close collaboration with the City of Dublin to develop the Community Events Roadmap.

In the Explore stage, the team gathered data and assessed current conditions. They reviewed key planning documents such as the Dublin Strategic Framework, conducted interviews with stakeholders, surveyed the community, and attended events and popular gathering spaces to better understand the existing event landscape.

During the Test stage, the focus shifted to shaping a strategy to enhance Dublin's community events program. Yard synthesized findings to identify areas for improvement, benchmarked against peer cities, analyzed the financial performance of signature events, and developed recommendations to improve event quality, sustainability, and community impact. This phase included two work sessions with City Council and concluded with the draft Roadmap.

In the final Build stage, Yard refined the Roadmap based on feedback from City leadership and stakeholders, ensuring it aligned with the community's goals and long-term vision.



## SCHEDULE



### EXPLORE

**JUL - SEP 2024**

- Project kick-off
- Research community context
- Examine current event management and permitting program
- Observe event management at Dublin Irish Festival
- Interview key stakeholders and City staff
- Survey community members
- Summary of Understanding



### TEST

**OCT 2024 - APR 2025**

- Conduct benchmarking
- Evaluate models for event management
- Conduct Operations Audit
- Develop shared vision for the future of community events
- Integrate key stakeholder feedback
- Formulate actionable recommendations
- Present preliminary recommendations and benchmarking to City Council
- Draft Events Roadmap



### BUILD

**MAY - JUN 2025**

- Present draft Community Events Roadmap to City Council
- Prepare Final Community Events Roadmap
- Deliver digital files







# Research & Engagement

35

## STAKEHOLDERS

including elected officials, City staff, leaders of local associations and cultural organizations, and event organizers

50+

## PLANNING & OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS & REPORTS REVIEWED

125+

## SURVEY RESPONSES

were collected in-person and online.

Comprehensive research and engagement were central to the development of the Community Events Roadmap, ensuring that recommendations were grounded in both data and community insight. The consultant team conducted an in-depth review of over 50 planning and operational documents, analyzed financial statements, interviewed 35 key stakeholders - including elected officials, City staff, community leaders, and event organizers - and conducted field research at major events like the Dublin Irish Festival. Public feedback was gathered through multiple channels, including a pop-up booth at the Dublin Market, an online survey with over 125 responses, and outreach at the Fall Neighborhood Leadership Meeting. This rigorous research and engagement process provided a strong foundation for a roadmap that is both strategic and community-driven.



# Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholders interviewed for the Roadmap project included elected officials, city staff, local associations, and cultural organizations. Their insights helped identify community needs and preferences, as well as gaps in the current event offerings and opportunities for improvement and collaboration. This step in the community context research ensured that future events are relevant, inclusive, and aligned with efforts to enhance the overall quality of life in Dublin.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW SNAPSHOT

- Events are important because they build a sense of community and improve residents' quality of life. A secondary, but still important component, is that events affect the reputation of the city as a place attractive to visitors and business.
- Events organized by the City should predominantly serve residents. The exception to that rule is Dublin Irish Festival, which by nature has outgrown being a typical signature City-run event.
- There is a desire to encourage the growth of existing cultural events and support the establishment of more cultural events as such events contribute to Dublin's goal of being a Global City of Choice.
- There is general agreement that Riverside Crossing Park, Coffman Park, and Scioto Park would benefit from increased programming and infrastructure investments.
- When asked about the future, there is excitement around the potential of redevelopment projects in the West Innovation District and Metro Center.

**FULL LIST OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS**

# Survey

Yard staffed a pop-up engagement booth at the Dublin Market to collect community input for the Events Roadmap. Following the pop-up, an online survey was launched and promoted via the City of Dublin's newsletter subscriber list and social media pages. City staff also presented the Events Roadmap project and collected resident feedback via a survey at the Fall Neighborhood Leadership Meeting. Over 125 community members provided their input on the future direction of community events.

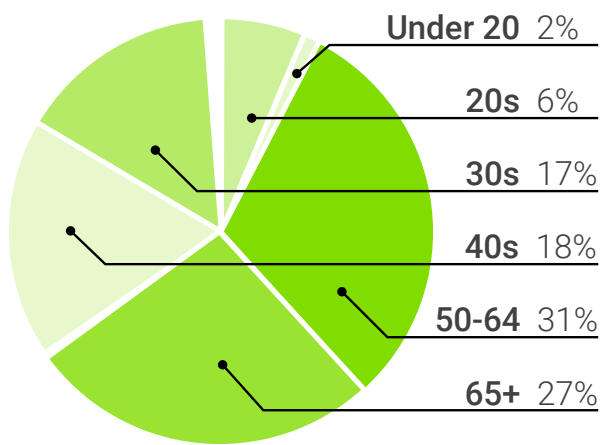
## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW SNAPSHOT

- While survey respondents identified Dublin Irish Festival, Independence Day Celebration, and Dublin Market as their favorite three events in Dublin, they also stressed the importance of and desire for more small events that serve the local community, suggesting there should be a balance between large and small events.
- Respondents generally expressed appreciation for the quality and variety of events in Dublin, but welcomed more diverse events, such as arts and crafts fairs, food festivals, holiday markets, and music events.
- Respondents believe events are important for building community and connections, to foster a sense of pride, to engage and learn about different cultures, to promote vibrancy, socialization and well-being, and to generate positive public relations.
- Preferred locations for community events are Bridge Park, Coffman Park, Riverside Crossing Park, Historic Dublin, and Scioto Park.
- Affordability, inclusivity, and accessibility were commonly brought up concerns. As were traffic congestion, parking, and noise.

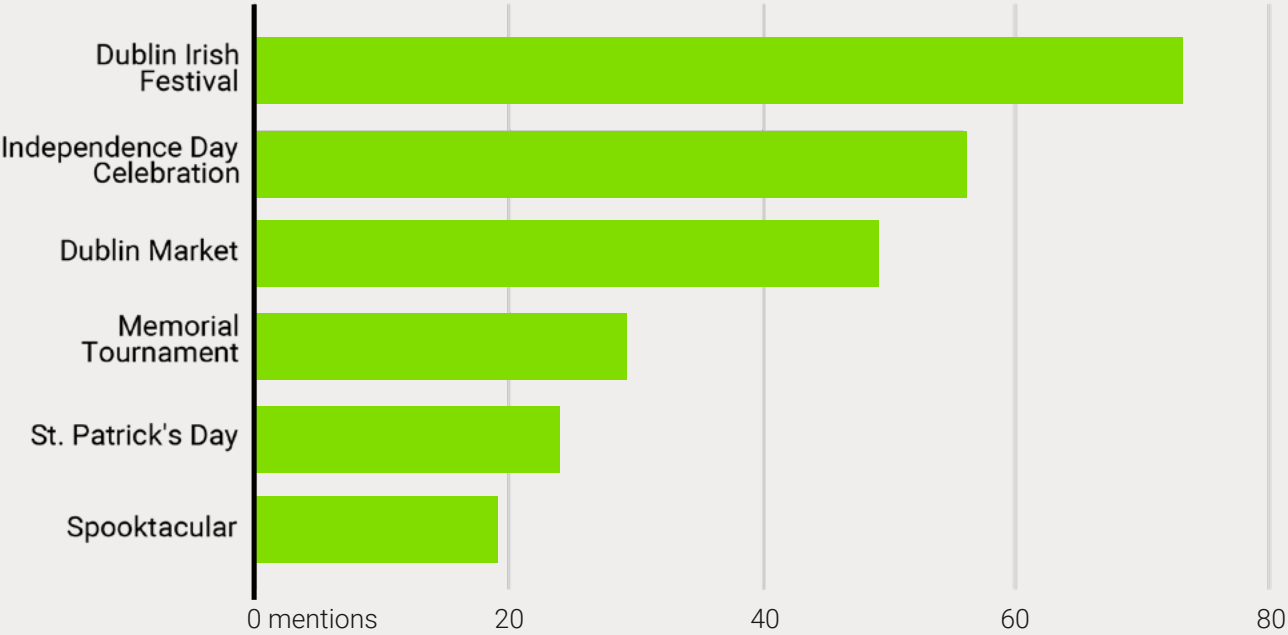
### RESPONDENT RELATIONSHIP WITH DUBLIN



### RESPONDENT LIFE STAGE

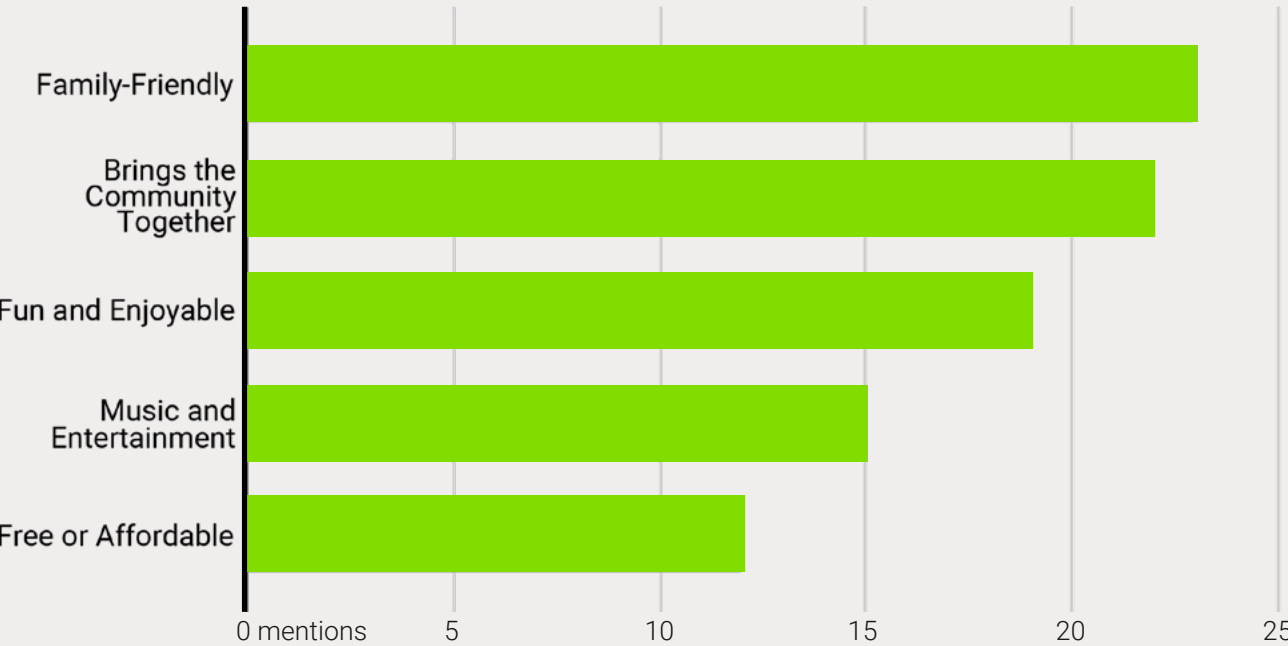


## Favorite Events



The most popular events in Dublin are the Irish Festival, Independence Day Celebration, and Dublin Market.

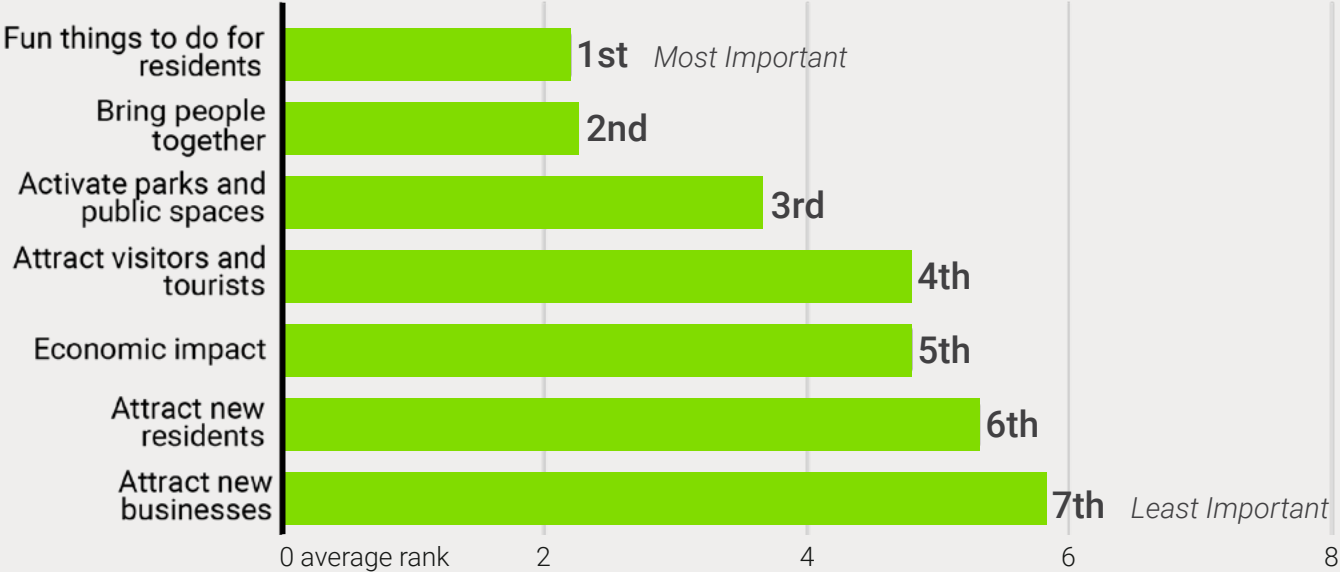
## Favorite Thing About Events



Respondents most value events that are family-friendly and bring the community together.

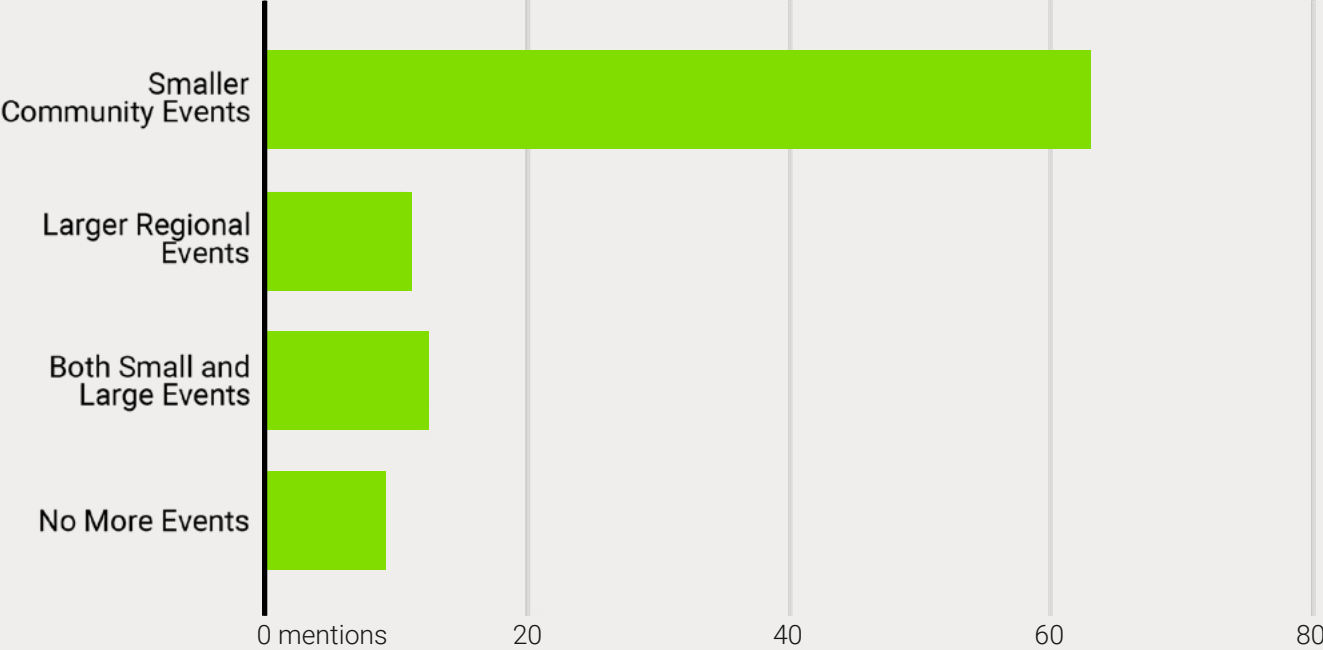


# Why Events Are Important



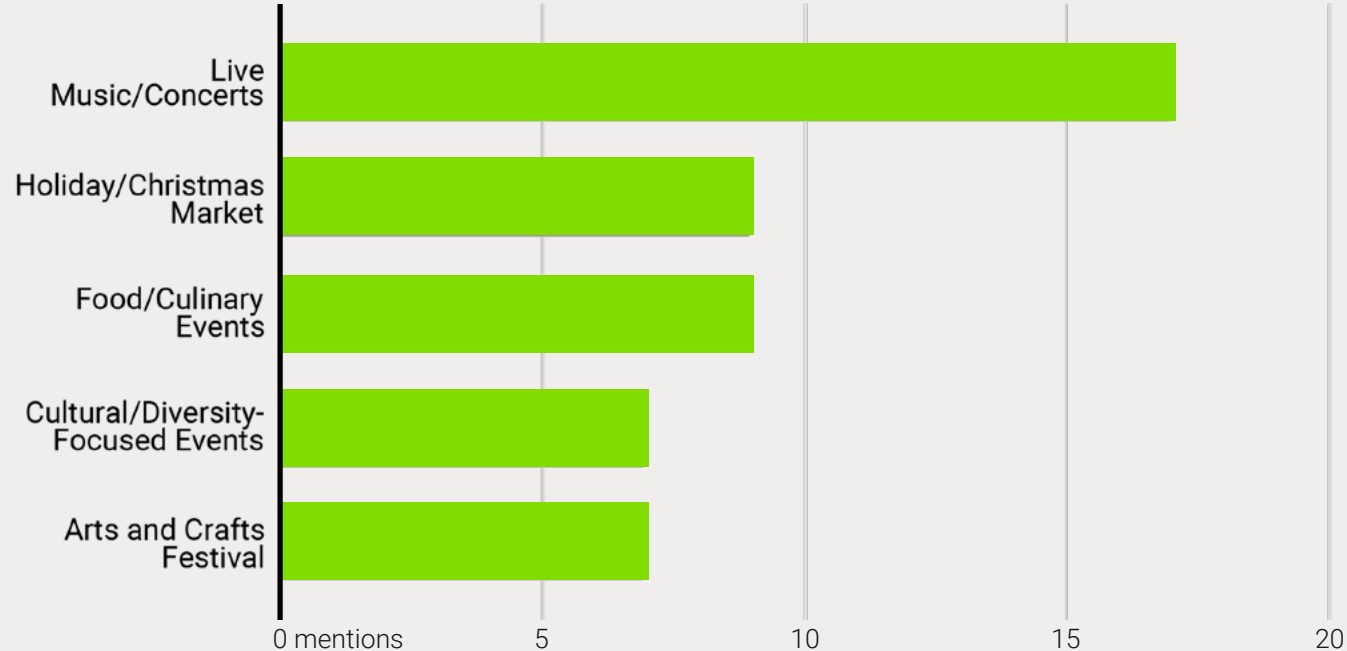
The top reasons why respondents thought events were important were for fun, bringing people together, and activating parks/public spaces.

# Size of Events Wanted



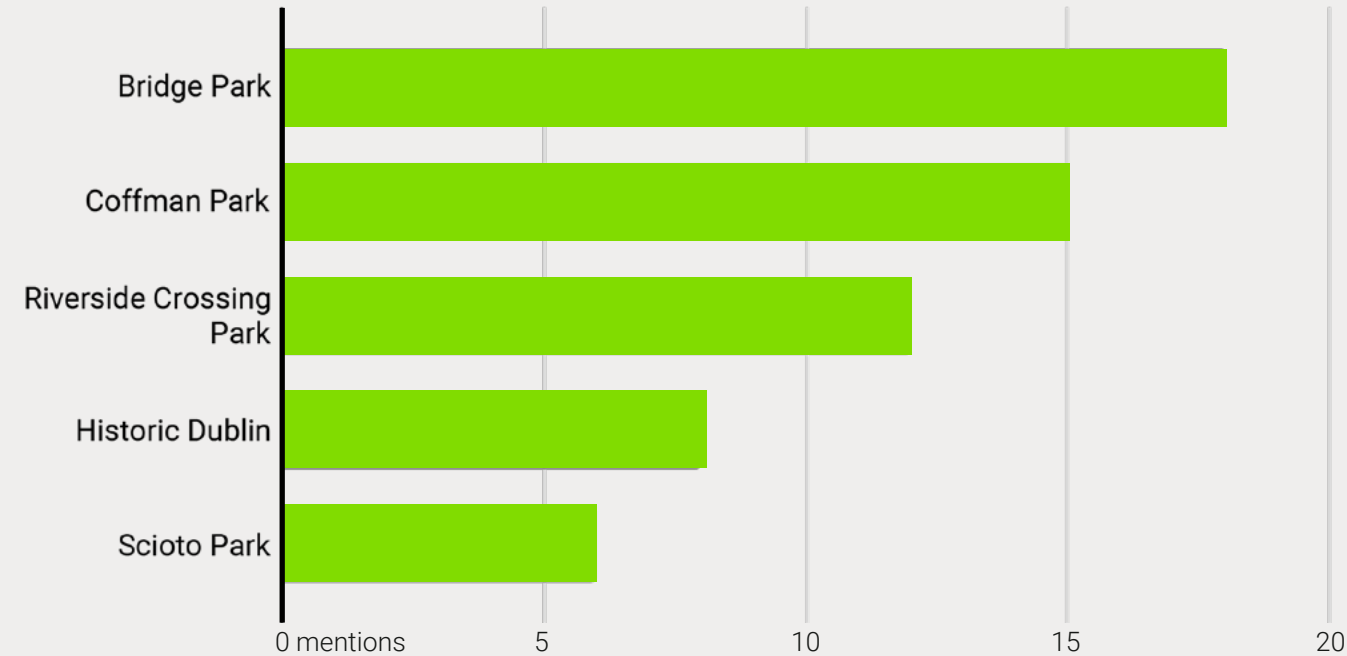
A majority of respondents wanted to see more smaller community events in Dublin.

## Missing Event Types



The types of events respondents most wanted to see added to the schedule were live music/concerts, holiday/Christmas markets, and food/culinary events.

## Suggested Event Locations



The most popular suggestions for where to host events were Bridge Park and Coffman Park, although many (18) respondents were happy with the current locations.

**FULL SURVEY RESULTS**

# Benchmarking

The project team conducted a thorough benchmarking analysis to identify best practices and generate actionable insights aligned with Dublin's aspirations and context. The purpose of this Benchmarking Analysis is to provide a data-driven approach to maximize the City of Dublin's investment in its signature events and community assets, such as Riverside Crossing Park. By comparing Dublin's events and operations to peer cities, we can identify recommendations to ensure the city realizes the highest return on its investment, whether in the form of heightened quality of life for its residents, increased brand recognition, or economic impact in the community.

## EVENT MANAGEMENT MODELS

A variety of cities and nonprofit organizations were benchmarked to analyze different approaches to event management. The data collected included information on staffing levels, operating budgets, types of programming offered, and the locations where events are held.

### Entities Benchmarked

- Marketing and Community Relations Department / City of Carmel (Carmel, IN)
- Milwaukee World Festival, Inc. (Milwaukee, WI)
- Lancaster Festival (Lancaster, OH)
- Uptown Westerville, Inc. (Westerville, OH)
- Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau / City of Grapevine (Grapevine, TX)

### Common Themes Uncovered

- Concentrated Investment Enhances Impact - Peer cities often concentrate their event programming and infrastructure investment within a defined district or civic space. This place-based focus allows for consistent event execution, streamlined maintenance, and greater return on capital improvements.
- Events Anchor Civic Identity and Pride - In the cities studied, annual events and festivals are not just recreational activities - they are central to civic identity and cultural expression. Municipal leaders view events as core to their brand and invest accordingly to maintain visibility, relevance, and community connection.
- Events as a Driver of Economic Vitality - Most benchmarked cities intentionally use events to generate foot traffic and support local businesses, particularly in commercial districts. Events are seen as a tool to activate public space and strengthen the local economy by drawing visitors and reinforcing a sense of place.

## SIGNATURE EVENTS

A variety of cities and nonprofit organizations were benchmarked to analyze different approaches to event management. The data collected included information on staffing levels, operating budgets, types of programming offered, and the locations where events are held.

### Cities Benchmarked

- Westerville, OH
- Carmel, IN
- Grapevine, TX
- Southlake, TX
- Cleveland, OH
- Charleston, SC
- Metairie, LA
- Tulsa, OK

### Common Themes Uncovered

- Event Costs Vary Widely Based on Scale and Model - Dublin's net investment in its signature events, particularly the larger ones, is generally higher than that of benchmarked peer cities. Cities that keep event costs lower often do so by partnering with nonprofit organizations, limiting event duration, or leveraging in-kind services.
- Revenue Generation Strategies Are Inconsistent - While some cities rely heavily on sponsorships, admissions, and vendor fees to offset event costs, others keep their events free and absorb most costs internally. Dublin's events lack a unified revenue strategy across the portfolio.
- Location Matters - Events held in walkable, amenity-rich environments - such as retail districts or civic plazas - often require less investment in temporary event infrastructure and offer better integration with local businesses. Dublin's Coffman Park-based events bear the full burden of activation, which can increase costs.
- Staffing Models Influence Quality and Efficiency - Peer cities with dedicated event staff - often organized through nonprofits or public-private partnerships - can deliver high-quality experiences with more flexibility and efficiency. In contrast, cities that rely on general staff may struggle to maintain the same level of consistency.
- Outsourcing and Public-Private Partnerships Are Common - Many peer cities outsource event production to nonprofits or contractors, particularly for large festivals and recurring events. This model can improve cost recovery and operational focus, though it requires clear expectations and oversight.
- Data-Informed Decision Making Is Limited but Growing - Few cities systematically track ROI or community impact metrics beyond attendance or budget. However, there is growing interest in using data to evaluate event performance, justify investments, and guide future planning.



## SIGNATURE RIVERFRONT PARKS

Riverside Crossing Park was benchmarked against comparable high-profile riverfront parks across the Midwest and the nation to gather insights on programming approaches, funding strategies, and governance models.

### Parks Benchmarked

- Waterfront Park (Louisville, KY)
- The RiverFront (Omaha, NE)
- Sawyer Point, Smale Park, Washington Park (Cincinnati, OH)
- RiverScape Park (Dayton, OH)

### Common Themes Uncovered

- **Dedicated Operators Drive Success** - The most consistently active and well-maintained riverfront parks are managed by dedicated operators - often nonprofits, quasi-governmental agencies, or public-private partnerships. These entities provide focused leadership, day-to-day oversight, and long-term strategic planning.
- **Public-Private Funding Models Are Essential** - Sustainable funding often comes from a mix of public investment, philanthropic support, earned income (such as rentals and concessions), and sponsorships. Many successful parks have established endowments or draw-down funds to stabilize operations over time.
- **Activation Requires Staffing and Intentionality** - Frequent and diverse programming, both passive and large-scale, requires a dedicated staff with the time, expertise, and flexibility to curate and manage events. Parks with consistent activation tend to have in-house teams or contracted partners solely focused on programming.
- **Infrastructure Investment Enables Flexibility** - Permanent infrastructure such as power, lighting, water access, and storage greatly enhances a park's ability to support a range of events and rentals. Parks without this infrastructure face higher ongoing costs and logistical barriers.
- **Partnerships Expand Reach and Impact** - Strong relationships with nearby cultural institutions, business districts, and civic groups amplify the reach of programming and create shared value. Successful operators often act as conveners, connecting stakeholders across sectors.
- **Governance Structures Vary, But Clarity Is Key** - While models differ, the most effective parks have clear governance structures that outline roles, responsibilities, and accountability. This clarity allows for nimble decision-making and resilience during political or economic shifts.

**FULL  
BENCHMARKING  
ANALYSIS**

# Dublin Events Ecosystem

Yard utilized the City's Community Event permitting process as a means to analyze the Dublin Events Ecosystem.

Events that require a Community Event permit are defined as: *Any festival, concert, parade, sporting event, public performance or announced public gathering held on a public street, right-of-way or public property. Events in which the public is invited on private property which may affect public safety, health or welfare by their impact on surrounding public or private property may be deemed a community event.*

A private, invitation-only event or small public event on private property would not constitute a community event and would not require a permit unless it would affect public safety, health or welfare. Events that do not require a permit are not captured in this analysis. An example of a public event not requiring a special event permit is the Historic Dublin Summer Music Series.

The analysis of the events ecosystem in Dublin revealed a robust and diverse landscape of events and event organizers.

## Observations

- Bridge Park is well-served by events due to an active developer and anchor tenant who programs a number of recurring events.
- Cultural events are becoming more and more frequent types of permit applications for Riverside Crossing Park.
- Civic organizations and nonprofits play an important role in event programming. The Dublin Arts Council, with its Sundays at Scioto concert series, the Historic Dublin Business Association, with its annual roster of crawls and events, and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, with its Taste of Dublin and other member events, are a few examples of active organizations.
- Charity and sporting events are well-represented, while music and the visual arts are underrepresented in the annual calendar of events.
- There are opportunities to add additional nature and environmentally-focused events to align with the City's Sustainability Framework.
- Community survey responses showed strong support for expanding the Summer Fun Series.
- There are opportunities for events in Historic Dublin to be in conjunction with Bridge Park to create a more holistic "Downtown Dublin" experience.
- The Downtown Dublin Strategic Alliance is a coalition of organizations coordinating marketing and event efforts in the Historic Dublin and Bridge Park districts. There is an opportunity for this group to formalize its strategy around events and have a greater impact.
- There are opportunities to attract professional, for-profit event promoters to fill the gaps in the type and scale of events held in the City.
- The city is missing a comprehensive resource that tells the full story of all the community events happening in the area.

## Number of Events by Month\*



## Number of Events by Location

39	Riverside Crossing Park	02	Emerald Fields	01	Avery Park
35	Bridge Park	02	Street Routes	01	EASE Logistics
11	Coffman Park	02	Muirfield Village Golf Club	01	Columbus Metropolitan Library - Dublin Branch
09	Darree Fields	02	Darby Lot	01	Dublin Veterans Park
08	DCRC Bike Path	02	Metro Center	01	Monterey Park
06	Historic Dublin	02	Dublin Coffman High School	01	Woods of Indian Run
04	Scioto Park	02	Dublin Jerome High School	01	Bogey Bar & Grill
04	Kaltenbach Park	01	The Club at Corazon	01	Hawks Nest
03	Ballantrae Park				

## Number of Events by Organizer

27	Crawford Hoying	07	School (may be mixed with sports)	01	Historic Dublin Business Association
26	City of Dublin	06	North Market	01	Neighborhoods
23	Nonprofit	04	Dublin Arts Council	01	Radio station
20	Sports	04	Businesses	01	Visit Dublin
10	Church	02	Service Orgs. (Kiwanis/Rotary)		
09	Cultural groups				

## Number of Events by Type

31	Market	06	Game/activity (Duck Race)	02	Religious
20	Sports	06	Pets/Animals	01	Bike
17	Run/Walk	06	Music	01	Fair
10	Cultural	05	Parade***	01	Nature
09	Holiday*	04	Movie	01	Talent show
09	Education/outreach	03	Block party		
09	Fitness	03	Car show		

\*These lists include both permitted and City events. Please note that some events take place over multiple days.

\*\*Events that do not require a permit are not captured in this data. An example of such an event is the Historic Dublin Summer Music Series.

\*\*\*St. Patrick's Day and Independence Day are counted twice because they are both a holiday as well as parade event

# City-Run Events

This Roadmap focuses specifically on the City of Dublin's five signature events: the Dublin Irish Festival, Independence Day Celebration, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Halloween Spooktacular, and Holiday Tree Lighting. These events are among the City's most popular, drawing regional audiences and requiring the most complex planning and coordination. While the City hosts a wide variety of events serving diverse purposes and audiences - from volunteer clean-up days to bike rodeos - this report concentrates on the signature events managed by the Community Events Division. These high-profile events represent the core of the City's event programming and serve as the foundation for strategic recommendations moving forward.



## 2024 Snapshot

	Dublin Irish Festival (2023)*	Dublin Irish Festival	Independence Day Celebration	St. Patrick's Day Parade	Halloween Spooktacular	Holiday Tree Lighting
<b>Date</b>	First weekend in August (Fri-Sun)	First weekend in August (Fri-Sun)	July 4th	Saturday prior to St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Thursday & Friday based on school's Day off in October	Last Thursday in November
<b>Location</b>	Coffman Park	Coffman Park	Dublin Coffman High School	Parade Route: Metro Center to Historic Dublin	Coffman Park	Coffman Park
<b>Attendance</b>	78,000	77,000	30,000	9,000	8,500	600
<b>Volunteers</b>	1,100	1,250	152	85	120	12
<b>Sponsorship (cash)</b>	\$308,250	\$333,100	\$44,500	\$7,500	\$12,000	\$0
<b>Ticket Sales</b>	\$815,420	\$683,590	\$45,770	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Other Revenues</b>	\$1,282,523	\$1,125,690	\$102,717	\$3,750	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,406,193</b>	<b>\$2,142,380</b>	<b>\$192,987</b>	<b>\$11,250</b>	<b>\$12,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Direct Expenses</b>	\$2,336,851	\$2,348,234	\$538,404	\$29,310	\$39,837	\$18,056
<b>Labor Expenses</b>	\$518,418	\$584,999	\$171,207	\$67,248	\$39,224	\$23,479
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,855,269</b>	<b>\$2,933,233</b>	<b>\$709,611</b>	<b>\$96,558</b>	<b>\$79,061</b>	<b>\$41,535</b>
<b>Net Cost to City</b>	<b>\$449,076</b>	<b>\$790,883</b>	<b>\$516,624</b>	<b>\$85,308</b>	<b>\$67,061</b>	<b>\$41,535</b>
<b>Satisfaction**</b>	<b>96%</b> Terrific or Good	<b>93%</b> Terrific or Good	<b>86.6%</b> Terrific or Good	<b>92.8%</b> Loved or Liked	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Ranking***</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>#1</b>	<b>#5****</b>	<b>#2</b>	<b>#6</b>	<b>#9</b>

Figures compiled from DIF Annual Report and Event Reports

\*DIF 2024 was affected by inclement weather; 2023 figures are included for comparison under typical (fair weather) conditions

\*\*As reported in post-event surveys

\*\*\*As reported in the Community Survey for the Roadmap project

\*\*\*\*#3 is Dublin Market, #4 is Memorial Tournament







## DUBLIN IRISH FESTIVAL

By far the largest of the events produced by the City's Community Events Division, the Dublin Irish Festival (DIF) is the largest three-day Irish Festival in the world. It started from humble beginnings with a small celebration of Irish culture on a municipal tennis court; the event has grown over the decades into one of the area's top attractions for residents and visitors alike. DIF was just named the Top Cultural Festival by USA Today.

Festival organizers have made meaningful and incremental adjustments to fine tune operations and improve the experience year after year. As such, the festival has been tried and tested.

### Observations

- DIF puts Dublin on the map. It is an important event for community building, identity, and economic development.
- The festival has an experienced and capable staff. Leadership is intentional about cross training and giving team members exposure to multiple areas of work and roles facilitating a cohesive, flexible, and interconnected team.
- DIF requires year-round staff attention and during the festival requires a significant number of City staff creating a strain in staff resources.
- 1,250 volunteers support the operations of DIF annually.
- A majority of corporate sponsors are based/located in Dublin.
- The City engages with several charitable organizations during the Dublin Irish Festival through initiatives like the Sharing O' the Green Program (SOG) and the Sunday Services food drive, generating significant goodwill within the community.

Benchmarking - Dublin Irish Festival

	Dublin, OH (2024)*	Tulsa, OK (2023)	Grapevine, TX (2024)
Event Name	Dublin Irish Festival	Zeeco Tulsa Oktoberfest	Grapefest
Event Producer	City of Dublin	Tulsa Oktoberfest Inc 501(c)3, River Parks Authority, Downie Productions (Cincinnati)	City of Grapevine (CVB)
Claim to Fame	Voted #1 Cultural Festival by USA Today 2025	Voted #1 Oktoberfest by USA Today 2024	Largest wine festival in the Southwest
Format	Three-day festival, Fri-Sun (Aug)	Five-day festival, Wed-Sun (Oct)	Four-day festival, Thurs-Sun (Sept)
Entertainment	8 stages, local/regional/bands from Ireland	11 stages, local/regional/bands from Germany	4 stages, local/touring tribute bands
Midway Rides	No	Yes	Yes
Admission	1-day Gen Adm- \$17/\$20/\$25 Weekend Pass - \$35/\$50	1-day Gen Adm - \$15 Kids under 12 free Free Admission Friday until 4:00pm	Adults - \$10 Kids/Seniors - \$5 Weekend Pass - \$20
VIP Packages	Yes	Yes	No
Experiences	Whiskey Tastings, Darts, Sports, Genealogy, Defenders Den, etc.	Competition Arena	Wine Tastings
Location	Coffman Park	RiverWest Festival Park	Downtown Grapevine (close to Main Street)
Attendance	80,000	60,000 - 70,000	245,000
Revenue	\$2,142,380	\$6,593,478	~\$2,250,000
Expenses	\$2,933,233	\$6,715,611	~\$2,250,000 with \$1m in-kind
Net	(\$790,583)	(\$122,133)	Roughly Break Even
% Revenue Sponsorships	15%	15%	20%
Cashless?	Moving that way	Yes (4 years)	Yes (2 years)
Craft Vendors	Flat fee	Flat fee	% (festival POS)
Food Vendors	Flat fee	% (festival POS)	% (festival POS)
Reserve Funds	No	\$2,213,974	No

\*Inclement weather year

## Areas of Concern

- The scale and complexity of the festival result in high expenses, placing a significant burden on City resources.
- The festival depends on a large number of City staff across departments, which may not be sustainable as other events grow in scale.
- While the festival brings in revenue, benchmarking shows an opportunity to improve cost recovery through revised pricing, concessions, or vendor fees.
- Although the festival has secured sponsorships, there is no comprehensive sponsorship strategy in place to grow or diversify this funding stream.
- Temporary infrastructure - such as staging, power, and amenities - is required each year, increasing setup time and costs.
- As an outdoor, ticketed event, attendance and income can fluctuate significantly depending on weather conditions.
- The festival is largely City-run, whereas many peer festivals are managed by or in partnership with nonprofit organizations, offering greater flexibility and financial insulation.
- Maintaining the festival's national reputation while adapting to evolving audience expectations requires consistent investment and strategic planning.

## 2023 Economic Impact Study by Enigma Research

### ECONOMIC IMPACT | \$12.0 MILLION

- The economic impact is derived from spending by local (\$2.9 M) and non-local (\$7.6 M) attendees and event operations. This estimate includes direct, indirect and induced impact.
- Local residents spent an additional \$2.9 M related to the Festival, including approximately \$1.3 M on food and beverages, this is not included in the economic impact total.

### INCREASE OF IMPACT | 41%

- The 2023 economic impact was a 41% increase over 2018 (\$8.5 M), when the last economic impact study was conducted.

### TAXES GENERATED | \$2.0 MILLION

- This total comprises the compilation of federal (\$0.9 M), state (\$0.6 M) and local (\$0.5 M) taxes generated by the event.

### LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTED | 145

- The equivalent of 145 full-year jobs were supported by the Festival.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

Dublin's Independence Day Celebration is one of the City's largest and most complex annual events, held each year on July 4 at Dublin Coffman High School. The morning program includes a community parade with a Grand Marshal from Metro Center to Historic Dublin and a fishing derby. The evening program includes live entertainment, family-friendly activities, and a large-scale fireworks show. Gates open in the late afternoon, with a full schedule of musical performances, including nationally recognized headliners, leading up to the fireworks display at dusk. Additional features include a Kids Zone, food vendors, VIP table seating, and coordinated logistics for admissions, parking, hospitality, and crowd safety. The event draws a large local and regional audience and is designed to keep residents in town by offering a premier holiday experience in a safe and celebratory environment.

### Observations

- The event features a full-scale production with headliner entertainment, professional staging, and robust infrastructure.
- Strong coordination across departments and contracted partners ensures smooth logistics and safety.
- Pre-sale and on-site ticketing help manage crowd size and partially offset event costs.
- The Kids Zone offers family-friendly activities and draws strong participation.

### Areas of Concern

- The cost of headline entertainment is a major driver of the event's high total budget, making Dublin an outlier among peer cities.
- Despite its scale and visibility, the event does not generate enough sponsorship revenue to offset costs.
- Staffing demands are extensive, requiring significant internal resources across multiple departments.

## Benchmarking - Independence Day

	Dublin, OH (2024)	Westerville, OH (2024)	Carmel, IN (2023)	Southlake, TX (2024)
<b>Event Name</b>	Dublin Independence Day	Westerville Independence Day Celebration	CarmelFest	Southlake Stars & Stripes
<b>Event Producer</b>	City of Dublin	Rotary Club of Westerville 501(c)4	Rotary Club of Carmel 501(c)4	City of Southlake
<b>Format</b>	Parade, music/fest, fireworks	Parade, music/fest, fireworks	2-day carnival; parade/music/fest fireworks	Music/fest, fireworks
<b>Entertainment</b>	National headliner	Local/regional bands	Local bands	Local/regional bands
<b>Admission</b>	\$5/\$10; Tables \$200 Kidzone \$7/\$10	Free	Free admission; Carnival rides \$3	Free
<b>Location</b>	Coffman High School	Westerville Sports Complex	Civic Square	South Town Square
<b>Desired ROI</b>		Revenue for Org	Revenue for Org	Foot traffic to merchants
<b>City Contribution</b>	All production	Fireworks Police in-kind	\$90k Fireworks \$30k staff in-kind	All production
<b>Attendance</b>	24,000	10,000	45,000+	30,000
<b>Revenue</b>	\$192,987	\$102,965	\$256,336	\$30,000
<b>Direct Costs</b>	\$538,404	\$83,150	\$202,292	\$90,000
<b>Net Before Labor</b>	<b>(\$345,417)</b>	<b>\$19,815</b>	<b>\$54,044</b>	<b>(\$60,000)</b>
<b>% Revenue Sponsors</b>	23%	N/A	35%	N/A
<b>Bands</b>	\$172,889	N/A	\$20,000	N/A
<b>Staging &amp; Lighting</b>	\$139,941	N/A	\$50,000	N/A

Commonality

Outlier

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

The St. Patrick's Day Parade is one of Dublin's most iconic events and a core part of the City's cultural identity. Held annually on the Saturday before St. Patrick's Day, the parade begins in Metro Center and proceeds through Historic Dublin, drawing an estimated 20,000 spectators. The event features a diverse mix of parade units, including marching bands, floats, community groups, specialty vehicles, and high-profile guests. Key traditions include the selection of a Grand Leprechaun and a post-parade luncheon honoring this year's honoree. The event is tightly coordinated with partners such as the Dublin Lions Club, which hosts a community pancake breakfast. The parade is designed to celebrate both Dublin's Irish namesake and its local civic pride, creating a festive and welcoming experience for residents and visitors alike.

### Observations

- The event enjoys high attendance and strong brand recognition both locally and regionally.
- The parade route links two key districts - Metro Center and Historic Dublin - creating an opportunity for broader activation.
- The Grand Leprechaun tradition adds a unique and locally meaningful dimension to the event.
- Parade unit categories and standards have been formalized to ensure quality, safety, and entertainment value.
- The event is well-organized and heavily reliant on City staff and volunteer coordination, with clear operational planning.
- Sponsorship and partnership opportunities are available, but modestly developed.

### Areas of Concern

- The parade is resource-intensive, with limited cost recovery through sponsorships or earned income.
- The route and infrastructure require significant traffic control, staging, and volunteer management.
- Parade growth is constrained by a 110-unit cap, limiting future expansion.
- Despite its size and visibility, the event lacks a comprehensive sponsorship strategy to enhance funding and exposure.



## Benchmarking - St. Patrick's Day Parade

	Dublin, OH (2024)	Cleveland, OH (2022)	Charleston, SC (2023)	Metairie, LA (2022)
<b>Event Producer</b>	City of Dublin	Saint Patrick's Day Parade Committee 501(c)3	Charleston St Patrick's Day Parade Committee Inc	St Patrick' Parade Committee of Jefferson 501(c)4
<b>Revenue</b>	\$11,250	\$40,390	\$39,813	\$124,528
<b>Direct Parade Costs</b>	\$29,310	\$27,416	\$29,662	\$36,029
<b>Banquet Costs</b>	-	\$10,850	-	\$18,367
<b>Other Costs</b>	-	\$4,334	-	\$59,824
<b>Net Before Labor</b>	<b>(\$18,060)</b>	<b>(\$2,210)</b>	<b>\$10,151</b>	<b>\$10,308</b>

Commonality

Outlier

## HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR

Halloween Spooktacular is a long-running, family-focused celebration held over two days at Coffman Park. The event features trick-or-treating, live performances, animal encounters, inflatables, crafts, games, food vendors, and roaming characters. It includes both day and evening programming, with a sensory-friendly timeslot built into Friday's schedule to increase accessibility. Trunk or Treat remains a core attraction, drawing thousands of participants and allowing local organizations to engage with the community. Held in mid-October, Spooktacular has grown in scale over time, now spanning a significant footprint and requiring extensive coordination across multiple City departments and partners.

### Observations

- Spooktacular offers a wide range of activities for all ages, with strong appeal to families and young children.
- The two-day format (started during COVID) has helped accommodate larger crowds.
- Community participation is high, with local organizations involved through Trunk or Treat and activity booths.
- The event demonstrates strong logistical planning and collaboration across City departments.
- A variety of contracted entertainers and performers create a lively and festive atmosphere.

### Areas of Concern

- The event's location in Coffman Park does not capitalize on foot traffic or business activity, limiting its economic impact.
- The event is resource-intensive, requiring significant staff time, coordination, and physical infrastructure.
- The event's growing scale may be approaching the limits of staff capacity without additional support.
- As of 2024 it does generate some sponsorship dollars, but not quite enough for the net investment to be in scale with peer cities.
- Limited infrastructure in Coffman Park (e.g., lighting, power) necessitates temporary solutions and adds complexity.

## Benchmarking - Halloween Spooktacular

	Dublin, OH (2024)	Westerville, OH (2024)	Carmel, IN (2023)	Grapevine, TX (2024)
<b>Event Name</b>	Halloween Spooktacular	Great Westerville Pumpkin Glow	The Arts in Autumn	Butterfly Flutterby
<b>Event Producer</b>	City of Dublin	City of Westerville	City of Carmel	Grapevine CVB (City)
<b>Location</b>	Coffman Park	Heritage Park	Midtown Plaza, Indiana Design Center	Grapevine Botanical Gardens at Heritage Park
<b>Format</b>	Two-day coinciding with a Friday off school for students	Four-day festival pumpkin themed displays, food trucks, and fall themed entertainment and attractions	One Saturday in mid-October, 2:00 - 6:00p Kid-centric fall themed crafts, costume contest	One Saturday in October, 10:00a - 2:00p Kid-centric Monarch butterfly migration fest
<b>Admission</b>	Free	\$15 adults \$12 youth/senior	Free	Free
<b>Attendance</b>	8,550	10,000-14,000	3,000+	3,500
<b>Revenue</b>	\$12,000	\$140,000	\$1,000	N/A
<b>Direct Costs</b>	\$39,837	\$132,000	\$14,000	N/A
<b>Net Before Labor</b>	<b>(\$27,837)</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>(\$13,000)</b>	<b>Nominal net costs thanks to in-kind support</b>
<b>Staffing/Labor Costs</b>	\$73,333*	\$16,000*	~\$10,000*	N/A
<b>Total Net</b>	(\$45,170)	(\$8,000)	(\$23,000)	N/A

\*Overtime only

## HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING

The Dublin Holiday Tree Lighting is a long-standing community tradition held each year on the Thursday after Thanksgiving to kick off the winter season. The event takes place in Coffman Park. The main attraction is the tree lighting ceremony, but the event features a variety of family-friendly activities including performances by local choirs and dance groups, roaming characters, games, inflatables, food vendors, and photo opportunities with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Additional attractions include a trackless train, ice sculpting, fire performers, and live entertainment. The event is designed to bring the community together in a festive atmosphere in the spirit of celebration.

### Observations

- The event includes a broad mix of activities appealing to families and children.
- Local performers, such as school choirs and dance groups, are well-integrated into the program.
- Santa's arrival and the tree lighting serve as the centerpiece of the event, creating a clear focal moment.
- A wide range of staff and departments are involved in logistics and execution, indicating strong internal coordination.
- The use of professional entertainment (e.g., stilt walkers, fire performers) enhances the spectacle and adds energy.

### Areas of Concern

- The event's location in Coffman Park does not capitalize on foot traffic or business activity, limiting its economic impact.
- The event is resource-intensive, requiring significant staff time, coordination, and physical infrastructure.
- The event's growing scale may be approaching the limits of staff capacity without additional support.
- As of 2024 it does generate some sponsorship dollars, but not quite enough for the net investment to be in scale with peer cities.
- Limited infrastructure in Coffman Park (e.g., lighting, power) necessitates temporary solutions and adds complexity.

## Benchmarking - Holiday Tree Lighting

	Dublin, OH (2024)	Westerville, OH	Carmel, IN	Southlake, TX (2024)
<b>Event Name</b>	Holiday Tree Lighting	Holiday Parade of Lights and Tree Lighting	Holidays in Carmel Kick-Off by Allied Solutions	Home for the Holidays
<b>Event Producer</b>	City of Dublin	City of Westerville	Carmel Christkindlmarkt 501(c)3	City of Southlake
<b>Format</b>	Thurs evening in late November or early December Two-hour event	Fri night in early December; Parade @ 6:30p, tree lighting by Santa @ 7:00p; Free cookies & hot chocolate	Sat before Thanksgiving; Opening day of Christkindlmarkt	Sat before Thanksgiving; Photos with Santa, "snow" hill rides, crafts, etc. Tree lighting with small fireworks
<b>Entertainment</b>	Local organizations	Mini parade of City vehicles	Local school groups	Local school groups
<b>Admission</b>	Free	Free	Free	Free
<b>Location</b>	Coffman Park	Uptown Westerville (downtown/ Main Street)	Civic Square / Carter Green (civic/festival green space)	South Town Square (downtown-style shopping district)
<b>Desired ROI</b>		Foot traffic to merchants	Foot traffic to market vendors	Foot traffic to merchants
<b>City Contribution</b>	All production	All production	Minimal; Pay for Santa and in-kind staffing	All production
<b>Attendance</b>	1,500	2,000	8,000 - 10,000	10,000
<b>Revenue</b>	0	0	0	\$20,000
<b>Direct Costs</b>	\$18,056	\$15,000	\$1,500	\$45,000
<b>Net Before Labor</b>	<b>(\$18,056)</b>	<b>(\$15,000)</b>	<b>(\$1,500)</b>	<b>(\$25,000)</b>

Commonality







## OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to event-specific insights, the engagement and research process surfaced a range of broader feedback related to how Dublin manages its events overall. This input, while not tied to any one event, reflects important perspectives on the City's event management model, operational efficiency, and long-term financial sustainability.

- There is a desire to reduce the burden on Community Events staff, especially as it relates to Dublin Irish Festival, and an openness to explore potential management models that incorporate third parties.
- There is a concern that incorporating third-party event managers could equate to a loss of quality control and potentially the loss of the personal touch that the City of Dublin has worked so hard to maintain with its residents.
- There is interest in a decision-making framework that assists the City in vetting ideas for new events.
- There is a desire for current City-run events to improve efficiency as a way to become more financially sustainable.
- It is preferable that new events would be both financially and operationally self-sufficient and not run by the City.

# Permitting Process Assessment

To assess the City's event permitting process, Yard undertook a research-driven approach that combined document analysis with stakeholder interviews. The team began by reviewing relevant policies, procedures, and application materials to understand the structure and intent of the current permitting framework. This was followed by interviews with City staff involved in permit coordination, as well as event organizers who regularly use the system. These qualitative insights provided a deeper understanding of how the process functions in practice, including its strengths and areas for improvement. By pairing policy analysis with firsthand user experiences, the research identified key opportunities to enhance clarity, streamline approvals, and strengthen communication throughout the permitting process.

## OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK

Event organizers consistently described City of Dublin staff as knowledgeable, helpful, and eager to support. The application itself is seen as fair, simple, and easy to complete - typically requiring around 30 minutes. Organizers appreciated the logical structure of the form but suggested that pre-populating previous year's information could save time and reduce errors.

Multiple organizers noted that automated features could greatly improve the process. Examples include notifications for additional permit requirements (e.g., fireworks, inflatables), automated confirmation emails with a PDF copy of the submission, and early alerts about scheduling conflicts. Currently, applicants don't receive confirmation about date and location availability until the Events Review Committee meets, which often feels too close to the event date. Some organizers must request conditional permits to proceed with other required applications, introducing uncertainty and delay.

Stakeholders expressed interest in a more transparent and collaborative process, such as an online portal where applicants and City staff can track progress, exchange information, and manage deadlines - similar to what the City of Columbus offers. Communication gaps between submission and approval were a recurring concern.

Feedback about the Events Review Committee was mixed. While some organizers valued the in-person format, others preferred a virtual meeting option. A common sentiment was that walking through the application line by line felt redundant. Organizers also wished for more clarity about which amenities are included in facility reservations.

Finally, the availability of a designated walking path for events was seen as a valuable asset - simple, cost-effective, and consistently delivering a good experience.

# SWOT ANALYSIS

## Strengths

Staff are knowledgeable, responsive, and genuinely supportive of event organizers

Application is clear, user-friendly, and efficient to complete

Existing process maintains fairness and consistency across applicants

Designated walking path provides a low-cost, high-quality venue option

## Weaknesses

Lack of automation creates unnecessary manual steps and delays

Applicants don't receive immediate confirmation or scheduling validation

Communication between submission and approval is limited, leaving organizers in the dark

Review committee meetings may feel redundant or inconvenient to some participants

Unclear details about amenities tied to facility use can cause confusion

## Opportunities

Implement an online portal to streamline communication, tracking, and transparency

Automate key tasks: confirmation emails, conflict detection, conditional permit issuance

Allow for virtual attendance at Events Review Committee meetings

Provide summary notes and deadlines after committee reviews to increase accountability

Clarify and publish amenity inclusions with facility reservations

## Threats

Delays in approval may hinder planning or discourage future applicants

Perceived opacity in the process may reduce trust and increase staff workload due to follow-ups

Manual, staff-dependent processes may be difficult to sustain as demand for events grows

Lack of modernized tools may deter newer or smaller organizations from participating

# Key Places

Dublin is home to a rich network of vibrant and well-loved places, many of which play a key role in the City's event programming. Currently, three parks - Riverside Crossing Park, Coffman Park, and Scioto Park - serve as primary venues for community events, offering a mix of natural beauty, flexible space, and existing infrastructure. In addition to these parks, Downtown Dublin - which includes both Historic Dublin and Bridge Park - stands out as a major destination district. These two areas each have a distinct character and host their own diverse lineups of events, attracting both residents and regional visitors. Looking ahead, the West Innovation District and Metro Center are poised for significant development and reinvestment, and transformation becoming destination districts in their own right.

## RIVERSIDE CROSSING PARK

Riverside Crossing Park is a 36-acre municipal park spanning both the east and west banks of the Scioto River in Downtown Dublin. It offers a variety of amenities, including plazas, restrooms, seating areas, a water feature, public Wi-Fi, and access to electrical power. One of its most prominent features is the Dublin Link Bridge, which connects Historic Dublin and Bridge Park, enhancing walkability between the two districts. Recognized as a destination for both residents and visitors, the park has become a popular spot for relaxation, scenic views, and hosting gatherings, activities, and events.



## COFFMAN PARK

Coffman Park is a 105-acre municipal park located just west of Interstate 270. It may be most notable as the location of the Dublin Irish Festival, but it is also home to year-round events including many of the area's charity walks. Located on the grounds are the Development Building and the Dublin Community Recreation Center..

Park amenities include tennis and pickleball courts, a basketball court, playgrounds, shelter houses, a pavilion, and an amphitheater. The park's shelter houses and pavilions are in high demand with many being reserved 12 months in advance. With its many large green spaces, a common sentiment is that it could be used more often for community events. It is also widely understood that investments in infrastructure could make the park more attractive to outside event organizers while also making logistics for Dublin Irish Festival easier.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan calls for an update to the Coffman Park Master Plan in the near future.







## SCIOTO PARK

Scioto Park is a 14-acre municipal park located approximately one mile north of Riverside Crossing Park on Riverside Drive. It is located on the Scioto River and offers access to the river, hiking trails, a winter sledding hill, shelter houses, public restrooms, a volleyball court, and playground.

Unique to this park is a large monument to Chief Leatherlips and an outdoor amphitheater. The amphitheater is programmed four times per summer with the popular Dublin Art Council's Sundays at Scioto free concert series. One of the park's challenges is its limited parking capacity and lack of accessibility from the shared-use path.



## DOWNTOWN DUBLIN

**Historic Dublin** is known for its well-preserved buildings and picturesque streets. It is home to boutiques, restaurants, trail events, and a newly redeveloped branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library. Historic Dublin is connected to Bridge Park by way of Riverside Crossing Park and the impressive Dublin Link pedestrian bridge.

**Bridge Park** is a modern, upscale mixed-use development anchoring the east side of Dublin. It blends residential, hotels, commercial, and recreational spaces (including several pocket parks and Tuller Square Park). Bridge Park draws visitors from around the region for dining, entertainment, and events. The weekly and annual outdoor events that take place on the streets range from a car show to an outdoor concert series to seasonal farmer's and makers' markets. The developer of Bridge Park intends to continue to build out phases of the project to the eastern border of Dublin.





## WEST INNOVATION DISTRICT

The West Innovation District comprises over 1,000 acres of primarily greenfield land strategically located adjacent to Darree Fields, SportsOhio complex, and The Ohio University campus. The District envisions areas of vibrant, mixed-use where people can live, work, play and stay. Its proximity to the new highway exit positions it as a regional hub for sports tournament tourism, while also supporting year-round activity through a mix of employment, education, and leisure opportunities. The goal is to create a sustainable and connected community that attracts visitors and supports the daily needs of residents, students, and employees alike.



## METRO CENTER

Originally developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Metro Center was Dublin's first suburban office park - designed for convenience, car access, and abundant free parking. While this model supported decades of success, shifting market preferences and workplace expectations have made it harder for traditional suburban office districts to compete with more dynamic, amenity-rich environments. Recognizing the need for reinvention, Dublin City Council adopted a Revitalization Plan in December 2024 to reimagine Metro Center as a walkable, mixed-use district that blends development with nature. The plan envisions a future where a vibrant waterway park, innovative office spaces, diverse housing options, and thoughtful placemaking come together to create a district that supports modern work and lifestyle patterns. As this transformation unfolds, Metro Center is positioned to become a hub of creativity, connectivity, and community within Dublin's evolving urban fabric.

# Tools in the Toolbox

The City has a number of tools that can be utilized to support community event goals.

## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION

A Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) is a not-for-profit corporation authorized by the State of Ohio Legislature to advance, encourage, and promote a community's industrial, economic, commercial, and civic development. The Dublin CIC Strategic Plan prioritizes real estate acquisition and redevelopment (specifically calling out Metro Center and West Innovation District) and implementing the Commercial Façade Improvement Program. Although the current Strategic Plan does not include support for community events, there is potential to explore the CIC's involvement in such initiatives in the future.

## HOTEL/MOTEL TAX GRANT

The City of Dublin collects a 6% tax on all hotel and motel stays, generating revenue that is strategically reinvested into the community to support initiatives focused on cultural enrichment, tourism, economic vitality, and quality of life. Each year, City Council allocates the greater of \$225,000 or 6.5% of the previous year's hotel/motel tax revenue to the Hotel/Motel Tax Grant Program. Applying for grant funds is a competitive process that involves submitting a formal application and attending a grant review meeting with the City's Finance Committee to evaluate alignment with funding priorities and potential community impact.



## CITY SPONSORSHIP OF EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

The City of Dublin provides sponsorship support for events and programs that align with its broader goals around community building, cultural enrichment, and economic development. These sponsorships are intended to amplify initiatives that foster civic pride, enhance quality of life, attract visitors, and contribute to the vitality of Dublin's neighborhoods and business districts. Unlike grant programs that require formal applications, the City does not currently have a standardized application process for sponsorship funding. Instead, decisions about sponsorship support are made at the discretion of City administration, often based on alignment with strategic priorities, the potential community impact of the proposed event or program, and available budgetary resources. This flexible approach allows the City to remain responsive to emerging opportunities and support a diverse range of initiatives.

## NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY PACKAGES

The City of Dublin rents block party packages to Dublin civic and homeowners associations to support community building among residents. These packages include: tents, chairs, tables, trash bins, sandwich boards, barricades, and sound system - providing everything needed to host a successful neighborhood gathering. The program has proven to be popular, with the packages often booked well in advance during peak seasons, reflecting strong community interest in local connection and celebration.







# A Vision for Events

While the City of Dublin has significantly grown their roster of events over time, there has not yet been a long-term vision established for the future of programming and activation. A comprehensive strategy must consider all aspects of impact and return on investment (ROI). To achieve this, the Events Roadmap must address the “why”, “where”, “who”, and “how” as part of its future decision-making framework.







# Goals

## THE WHO | Re-Establish The Why

There are many reasons to host an event and there are many ways to measure an event's ROI, but for the City of Dublin it is critical to define the "Why" for events that utilize public dollars and resources. This "Why" can help define success and decision-making for current and future community events.

## THE WHERE | Be More Intentional About Places and Spaces

Dublin is rich in high quality parks and destination districts that provide numerous amenities and create great experiences for residents and visitors alike. These places are as diverse as the people who live in and visit Dublin and as such the programming in these spaces should be intentional when it comes to attitude, audience, event frequency and much more.

## THE WHO | Expand and Diversify Operators

With a variety of permitted programming and city-organized events happening throughout the city, it will be critical to have an efficient, streamlined and partnership-driven approach that helps make smarter decisions about events and their impact.

## THE HOW | Align Inner Workings to Meet New Goals

With a clear purpose and direction provided for why, where, and who invests energy in event programming, the City will have to adjust its own internal processes and procedures to better align its inner workings to meet the opportunities and challenges ahead.

# The Why

Community events create memories that last a lifetime. Sitting and watching a parade as a young child can ingrain a sense of community pride and happiness in you that lasts your entire life. Shared memories with friends, family members and neighbors can make you never want to leave a place and help you understand that you are part of something larger than yourself.

The City of Dublin has consistently placed a strong emphasis on fostering a sense of community and enhancing the quality of life for citizens. Building a great place to raise a family and grow old will also inherently create a community that people want to visit and do business in.

## THE WHY STATEMENT

**OUR WHY: Create a vibrant and connected community while enhancing the quality of life for residents.**

As part of the City's long-term vision for events, "Why" considerations could include whether proposed or existing programming:

- Builds local pride
- Creates social connections between neighbors
- Builds connections between the City and residents
- Creates lifelong memories
- Supports resident health and wellness
- Provides a variety of entertainment options
- Activates vibrant public space, recreational areas, and commercial amenities
- Provides year-round gathering opportunities
- Creates experiences that are authentic to Dublin
- Preserves Dublin's brand and reflects the community's values

FOCUS



Tourism



Economic Development + Growth



Brand Identity/Marketing



OUTCOMES



## BENEFITS

While building community and increasing the quality of life for residents is the primary “Why” for hosting events, there are related outcomes that will positively impact the city. These items should also be considered when making decisions about programming.

### Tourism

More and more people seek destinations that offer a diverse range of experiential opportunities. It is important that these places do not feel like the traditional “tourist trap”, but instead feel comfortable, safe and authentic. The success of Bridge Park and Dublin’s Historic District has begun to prove that events can boost tourism, which in turn expands the City’s tax base and enhances residents’ quality of life. As part of the City’s long-term vision for events, the following considerations should be taken into account when thinking about positive impacts related to tourism:

- Design and build places that are conducive to people, activity, programming and events
- Use programming to create a mix of everyday experiences and larger special events
- Embrace winter activities as a way to increase hotel stays and generate tax revenue



## Economic Development and Growth

We are living through a time of significant change in how we work and shop. With the right intentionality, economic development can be an outcome of events. Thoughtfully curated programming can help draw people back into areas once viewed as single-use office districts. Creating engaging experiences can help retain residents' spending power within the city rather than losing it to online retailers. Strategically producing events that involve, support, and highlight local businesses in situ can generate revenue in ways that would not be possible without event-related foot traffic. As part of the City's long-term vision for events, the following considerations should be taken into account to support economic development and growth:

- Continue building multimodal connections between districts and destinations, enabling employees to experience all parts of Dublin throughout the day
- Curate programming that retains the spending power of office employees within the city
- Be intentional about supporting local businesses through the event strategy



## Brand Identity and Marketing

Dublin has been, and continues to be, a city that stays true to its brand promise. There is an expectation of a high-quality and well-managed experience for residents, businesses and visitors alike. Events should be as representative of this brand as other services and should be one of the most visible megaphones of Dublin's strong brand message. As part of the City's long-term vision for events, the following considerations should be taken into account when thinking about positive impacts related to brand identity and marketing:

- Embrace modern trends and technology while staying connected to history and tradition
- Connect and curate events to reflect the character of each place and neighborhood
- Convey a hyper-local feel while appealing to a global audience
- Aim for zero waste per the City's Sustainability Framework



## DEFINING ROI

Generating revenues that support and sustain operations is critically important, but the return on investment from events is not strictly monetary. When defining the ROI of an event, the City must ensure that public dollars are being used responsibly and efficiently, but cash profit should not drive all decision-making. Programming is an investment in the community and therefore there are broader and even more impactful ROIs than just the bottom line of each event. Below are five types of return that the City should be considering as they make decisions about programming.

### Direct

The City should continue to develop profit & loss statements for all City-led events, comparing event revenues to the production expenses, including staff hours. While there are likely to be very few events, if any, that generate a direct profit, these events may be considered acceptable “loss leaders” when evaluated by the other four types of return.

### Indirect

When programmed intentionally, events can generate economic benefits that spill over into the surrounding community. The City should calculate related spending that occurs because of the event, including increases in hotel stays and spending at local businesses. This hyper-localized analysis of economic impact provides a strong rationale to either keep or stop producing an event. If an event actually detracts from local businesses’ sales, it should be creating a larger ROI within one of the four other categories.

### Reputation

Events help shape people’s perceptions about the communities in which they are held, positioning the city as a place attractive to visitors, businesses, and prospective residents. Many, if not most, people seek places that offer a variety of entertainment options and leisure activities when choosing where to live, visit, or set up a business. In effect, a lively event calendar serves in part as a recruiting tool for attracting talent and investment to a city.



## Affinity

There is perhaps no talent more worthy of attracting than the homegrown talent that already exists in a community. Helping residents feel connected to their community through the power of local events is the type of soft ROI often overlooked when crunching numbers. The core memories created with family, friends, and loved ones is a powerful force in retaining residents across generations. The pull of these experiences isn't an anchor so much as a healthy root system that allows residents to grow and blossom where they live.

## Growth

Events have long been a tool for generating foot traffic that sustains and grows destination districts. When created with intentionality, events reflect and amplify a district's character, inviting people to experience an authentic sense of place. As entrepreneurs and small businesses seek new locations, the spotlight created by events showcase destination districts as ideal fits based on culture, vibrancy, and overall feel.



# The Where

Intention around places and spaces should be taken into account to ensure a diversity of experiences around the city. Events, when done with intentionality, can build new audiences, solve problems for districts and shape future phases of growth.

The programming strategies listed ahead are aimed at intentionally providing distinct experiences in Dublin's current and future destination districts and parks.

*The following terms will be used to describe the characteristics of events in the coming pages.*

## Event Frequency

### ANNUAL

Occurs once a year, often tied to a specific date or season.

### SEASONAL

Happening at regular intervals throughout a specific season or time of year.

### REGULAR

Taking place on a consistent, ongoing schedule, such as weekly or monthly.

## Event Sizes

### SMALL

#### **0 - 1,000 Attendees**

Fosters a close-knit atmosphere

### MEDIUM

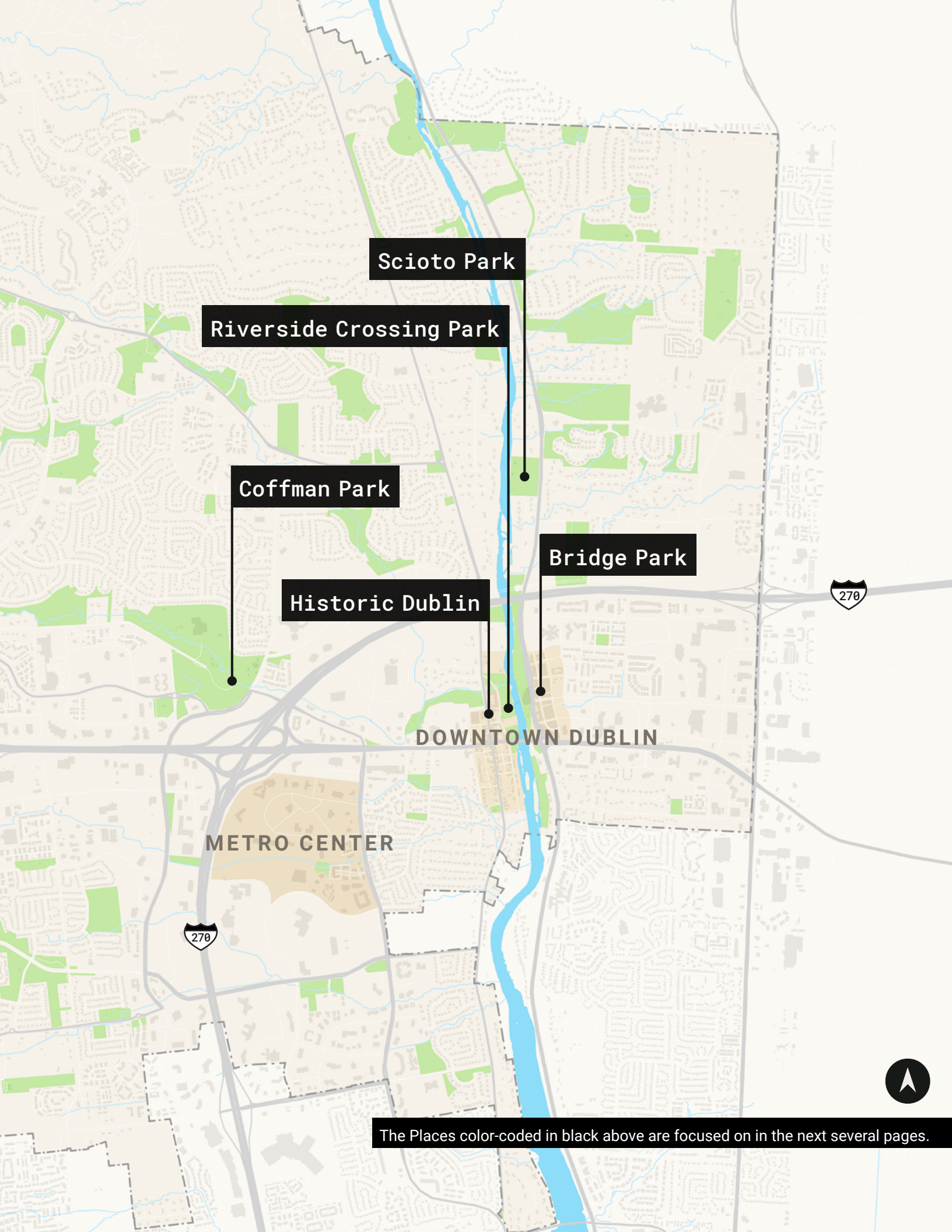
#### **1,000 - 10,000 Attendees**

Balances intimacy and reach

### LARGE

#### **10,000+ Attendees**

Encourages high energy and spectacle



Scioto Park

Riverside Crossing Park

Coffman Park

Bridge Park

Historic Dublin

DOWNTOWN DUBLIN

METRO CENTER

The Places color-coded in black above are focused on in the next several pages.

## HISTORIC DUBLIN

### Purpose

- Home to large-scale events
- Home to smaller resident-focused events
- A park that belongs to the people of Dublin, but is open to the region and country from time-to-time
- Promotes physical/mental health and well-being

### Audience

- Local residents
- Regional visitors
- National visitors

### Attitude

- A mixture of experiences
- Peaceful, surprising
- Encourages exploration

### Event Frequency

ANNUAL

SEASONAL

REGULAR

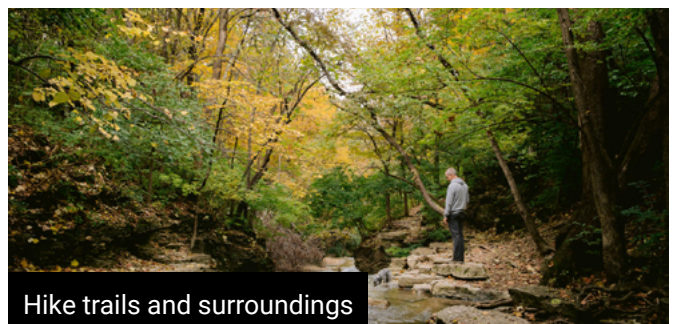
### Event Sizes

SMALL

MEDIUM

LARGE

### Historic Dublin Spaces





## Historic Dublin's Current Events



Fairy Door Trail



Parades



Walking Tours



West Plaza Block Party



Darby Lot Rotary Car Show



Summer Music Series

## Historic Dublin Event Ideas



Educational Nature Tours



First Fridays



Sidewalk Sales



Street Party



## RIVERSIDE CROSSING PARK

### Purpose

- Showcase Dublin's diversity
- Recruit medium-sized events to Dublin (1,000+ people)
- Bring visitors to the riverfront
- Differentiate from Bridge Park and Historic Dublin and connect the two
- Embrace retail and the arts

### Audience

- Regional visitors
- Bridge Park residents and visitors
- Historic Downtown residents and visitors

### Attitude

- Vibrant and energetic
- A place for all people
- Colorful
- Interactive
- Resident-organized

### Event Frequency

ANNUAL

SEASONAL

REGULAR

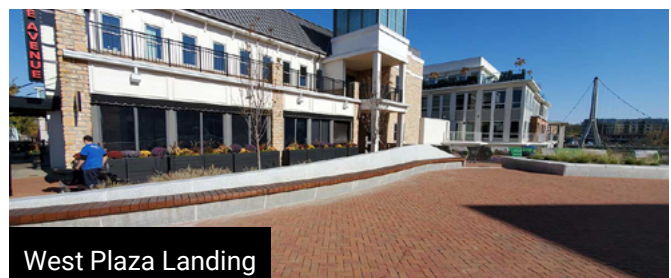
### Event Sizes

SMALL

MEDIUM

LARGE

### Riverside Crossing Spaces



## RIVERSIDE CROSSING PARK'S CURRENT EVENTS



Ice Rink



JASCO Obon Festival



International Yoga Day



Columbus Duck Race



Summer Fun Series

## RIVERSIDE CROSSING PARK EVENT IDEAS



Live Sports Viewing



Holiday Market



Makers Market



Art Market/Art Walk



Concerts



Light Up the Night



## BRIDGE PARK

### Purpose

- Build demand for future development phases
- Support existing businesses
- Recruit future businesses
- Continue to be a regional draw
- Provide amenities for residents

### Audience

- Bridge Park residents
- Regional visitors
- National visitors
- Future commercial tenants

### Attitude

- Active
- Trendy
- Always evolving
- Always a reason to come

### Event Frequency

ANNUAL

SEASONAL

REGULAR

### Event Sizes

SMALL

MEDIUM

LARGE

### Bridge Park Spaces



## BRIDGE PARK'S CURRENT EVENTS



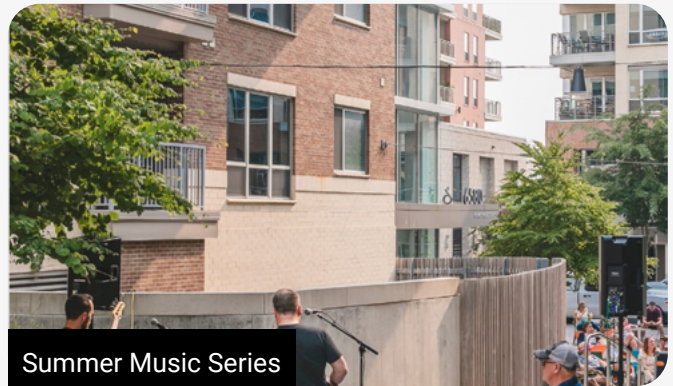
Markets



Fore!Fest



Boo and Brew



Summer Music Series

## BRIDGE PARK EVENT IDEAS



Live Music



Fashion Shows



Taste of Bridge Park



# COFFMAN PARK

## Purpose

- Home to large-scale events
- Home to smaller resident-focused events
- A park that belongs to the people of Dublin, but is open to the region and country from time-to-time
- Promotes physical/mental health and well-being

## Audience

- Local residents
- Regional visitors
- National visitors

## Attitude

- A mixture of experiences
- Peaceful, surprising
- Encourages exploration

## Event Frequency

- ANNUAL
- SEASONAL
- REGULAR

## Event Sizes

- SMALL
- MEDIUM
- LARGE

## Coffman Spaces





## COFFMAN PARK 'S CURRENT EVENTS



Dublin Irish Festival



Spooktacular



Walk/Runs



Tree Lighting

## COFFMAN PARK EVENT IDEAS



Music Festivals



Cultural Festivals



Symphony



# SCIOTO PARK

## Purpose

- Resident and family entertainment
- Performance art
- Resident parties and gatherings

## Audience

- Local families
- Local and regional art supporters

## Attitude

- Relaxed
- Interactive
- Hidden
- Surprising

## Event Frequency

ANNUAL

SEASONAL

REGULAR

## Event Sizes

SMALL

MEDIUM

LARGE

## Scioto Park Spaces





## SCIOTO PARK 'S CURRENT EVENTS



Sundays at Scioto

## SCIOTO PARK EVENT IDEAS



Theater/Plays



Dance Groups



River Float



## FUTURE DESTINATION DISTRICTS

The West Innovation District and Metro Center are slated for significant reinvestment and hold great potential to become Dublin's next premier destination districts. As these areas develop, implementing a strategic and intentional event programming approach will be key to shaping their identity, activating public spaces, and drawing community engagement early in their transformation. Events in these districts should complement Dublin's broader events ecosystem - aligning with the City's goals for community building and economic vitality - while offering distinct experiences that set them apart from other destinations like Downtown Dublin. By coordinating programming across districts while allowing each area to showcase its unique character, the City can create a cohesive, citywide event strategy that strengthens Dublin's overall brand and supports diverse community needs.



# The Who

As Dublin continues to grow and evolve, so too must the structure behind its community events. This roadmap recommends an operating model that preserves the strengths of the current Events Division while expanding capacity through partnerships, outsourcing, and strategic alignment with broader community goals. This approach ensures that Dublin's events remain high-quality, safe, inclusive, and aligned with the City's brand - while allowing for sustainable growth and innovation.

## PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN THE CORE

The City of Dublin's Events Division has successfully built and maintained a portfolio of beloved signature events, including the Dublin Irish Festival, Independence Day Celebration, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Halloween Spooktacular, and Holiday Tree Lighting. These events are widely recognized for their high quality and ability to deliver on the City's brand promise. As such, the Roadmap recommends keeping the existing Events Division intact and retaining full in-house production of these signature events. This ensures continuity, maintains quality control, and preserves the institutional knowledge that makes these complex events successful year after year.

However, as new event concepts emerge, the City must be realistic about its internal capacity. If no additional staffing or support structures are added, the number of signature events produced by the Events Division should not increase. Stretching existing resources too thin could compromise the quality and safety that Dublin residents and visitors have come to expect.

## EXPAND CAPACITY THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTSOURCING

To grow Dublin's event ecosystem sustainably, the City should look beyond internal resources and activate the expertise of external partners. For future events - such as the proposed Holiday Market, a new Art Festival, or year-round programming at Riverside Crossing Park - the City should consider outsourcing production to outside organizations with the experience and capacity to meet Dublin's high standards. These partners should be held to clear expectations regarding quality, safety, and alignment with the City's brand and community values.

Additionally, the City should establish a nonprofit organization dedicated to fundraising for community events. This nonprofit could serve as a conduit for securing grants, donations, and sponsorships that support both existing and new events, providing a much-needed financial backstop that reduces reliance on City operating budgets alone. The nonprofit should hold the DIF Reserve Fund described later in this report.



## RIVERSIDE CROSSING PARK ACTIVATOR/OPERATOR

Riverside Crossing Park is Dublin's signature public space, an iconic, highly celebrated destination that serves as a central gathering place for residents and visitors alike. Given its importance to the City's identity and civic life, the park should receive dedicated attention and resources to ensure its long-term vibrancy. To support this vision, we recommend the City pursue a public-private partnership and hire an outside Activator/Operator for the park.

This partner would be responsible for day-to-day activation and programming - ranging from passive experiences like plein air painting to active experiences like events and festivals - while also maximizing revenue from rentals, concessions, and sponsorships. It would lead strategic partnerships with nearby districts and stakeholders to ensure programming is integrated and impactful.

This Activator/Operator model offers several benefits, including focused oversight, potential access to private funding and grants, and the potential to attract new audiences through innovative approaches. Outsourcing comes with trade-offs such as reduced direct control and the need for ongoing City supervision and funding.

To explore the feasibility of this model, the City's best next step is to issue a Request for Information (RFI). An RFI offers a low-risk, high-value opportunity to gather feedback from potential partners, assess market readiness, and better understand the capabilities of firms experienced in public space activation. It also allows the City to test assumptions, clarify risks and opportunities, and shape a more informed and strategic Request for Proposals (RFP) in the future, one that reflects real-world insights and increases the likelihood of a successful, long-term partnership.



## BUILD AN INTEGRATED EVENTS ECOSYSTEM

Dublin's future success in events will depend not only on how individual events are produced, but also on how the entire event ecosystem functions. Developers of key districts - such as Metro Center and the West Innovation District - should be recruited and selected in part based on their ability and willingness to produce high-quality events under models similar to those used by Bridge Park. These developers should not act in isolation; rather, they should be collaborative partners in a citywide events strategy that promotes shared success and avoids duplication.

### A STRATEGY FOR NEW DISTRICTS

The City has organically developed a unique partnership for events and programming in Bridge Park with developer, Crawford Hoying. Over time, the developer has proven itself a capable and trustworthy event operator and as such has earned certain oversight and management authority over events in the area, including being able to set out their own road barricades and use their own security personnel. This partnership should continue, and as new destination districts come online, the City should strive to partner with those developers in a similar manner.

The City should leverage the expertise of the Dublin Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) to recruit, vet, and select the best development partner and negotiate commitments from the developer to ensure events in the district are financially and operationally self-sufficient. This strategy prevents the Community Events Division from having to plan and operate more events and averts burdening City departmental resources (Police, Department of Public Services, etc.).

The Community Events Division should provide guidance to the CIC and the developer regarding the type and cadence of events that should take place in new destination districts. This helps build a cohesive and complementary programming strategy that sets each destination district apart while also preventing the districts from competing against one another or oversaturating the market.

To support this integrated approach, the City should formalize its relationships with funded organizations. Whether through sponsorships, grants, or direct allocations, any financial support provided should be clearly tied to specific event goals, performance expectations, and brand alignment. In certain cases, creating fee-for-service agreements may be more appropriate - particularly when an organization is delivering programming on behalf of the City.

The City currently financially supports a number of partner organizations, including Visit Dublin, Dublin Chamber of Commerce, Historic Dublin Business Association, Dublin Arts Council and the Crawford Hoying Foundation with grant funding from the Hotel/Motel Tax Grant and/or City Sponsorship. The City should formalize these partnerships so the events produced by these organizations better align with the City's Strategic Framework, Events Roadmap and subsequent plans.

#### **Tie grant and sponsorship awards to Roadmap objectives.**

- While Yard is aware the Hotel/Motel Grant scoring was recently changed, adjusting the scoring and/or awarding criteria so grant applications and sponsorships more directly correlate with important city goals and aspirations. Event operators that demonstrate alignment with the Roadmap's objectives for place, audience, attitude, frequency, size, and event type receive higher scores. This incentive/reward model funds event operators who best align with the City's goals.

#### **Educate event organizers about the Events Roadmap and ask for their cooperation and partnership.**

- Coordinate conversations with key strategic partners who are funded by grants and sponsorships. Inform organizations of the changes made to the grant application scoring criteria. When possible, the City should come to the meeting with specific thoughts on how the organization can help the City accomplish its goals.
- Prioritize conversations with the organizations who are members of the Downtown Dublin Strategic Alliance, which geographically encompasses Bridge Park, Riverside Crossing Park, and Historic Dublin. With a slightly different mandate, this group could provide a cohesive and coordinated experience in Downtown Dublin as outlined in the Roadmap.
- Communicate the objectives outlined in the Roadmap and gaps in programming the City is trying to fill to new event organizers who apply for grant funding.

#### **THE DUBLIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

The Dublin Community Foundation may be a potential resource for funding capacity building and strategic planning for members of this group and the group as a whole.

*"We foster a cooperative environment among local nonprofits and encourage them to focus on making a positive impact without duplicating each other's efforts."*

The future of Dublin's community events lies in a balanced, flexible operating model that leverages the strengths of the existing Events Division while activating new partners and funding tools. By preserving core events, outsourcing thoughtfully, aligning funding with goals, and expanding the City's network of collaborators, Dublin can sustain its reputation for excellence while fostering a more inclusive, dynamic, and financially resilient event landscape.

# The How

The “How” refers to the internal strategies and structural adjustments necessary to support the City’s long-term goals for community events. While previous sections addressed what types of events should be prioritized and where they should take place, this section explores the behind-the-scenes work required to make those goals achievable. From right-sizing the City’s investment in its signature events to re-centering efforts on serving Dublin’s residents and businesses, these recommendations aim to strengthen internal alignment, improve operational efficiency, and ensure that the City’s event programming remains sustainable, strategic, and community-driven.

## SIGNATURE EVENT OPERATIONS

This subsection outlines recommendations to optimize the planning, funding, and delivery of Dublin’s signature events in 2026. It focuses on ensuring these high-profile events remain sustainable and impactful, while aligning with community expectations and available resources.

### Holiday Tree Lighting

The Holiday Tree Lighting is a well-loved community tradition with opportunity for growth. The current investment in the Holiday Tree Lighting event compares favorably with peer cities, but Dublin is missing the benefit its peer cities enjoy from hosting their event in a retail shopping destination or seasonal holiday market. The Events Division should move the Tree Lighting ceremony to the new Dublin Holiday Market once it is established.

#### ACTION ITEMS

- Continue investing in the Holiday Tree Lighting at the current level.
- Explore ways to coordinate/combine efforts with the future Holiday Market to create an enhanced experience for attendees and create greater potential for economic impact by providing a boost in foot traffic to vendors.

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### Halloween Spooktacular

Halloween Spooktacular remains a highly attended, family-focused event, but benchmarking showed Dublin’s current model is out of scale in terms of cost and logistics compared to peers. There is opportunity to adjust the format or location to better align with available resources while maintaining the spirit of the event.

#### ACTION ITEMS

- The current level of investment is slightly out of scale - work to bring net costs down.
- Continue growing sponsorship dollars.
- Reduce the scale of the event from two days back down to one day.





## St. Patrick's Day Parade

The St. Patrick's Day Parade is deeply tied to Dublin's identity and compares favorably with peer parades in terms of cost and scale. Benchmarking suggests that with modest adjustments, such as increased sponsorship, the parade could have an even greater community and economic impact.

### ACTION ITEMS

- The current investment is in scale, therefore continue investing at the current level.
- Continue growing sponsorships and in-kind donations to offset costs.
- Continue exploring ways to generate positive economic impact with Downtown Dublin merchants.

## Independence Day Celebration

Dublin's Independence Day Celebration is one of the most resource-intensive events in the City's calendar, with total costs significantly higher than those of comparable events in peer cities. This is largely due to the expense of booking nationally recognized headline entertainment, which is heavily subsidized by the City. While there is broad agreement that Independence Day is a meaningful civic celebration deserving of strong public investment, exploring alternative entertainment approaches may better align with the City's long-term goals and the interests of residents.

### ACTION ITEMS

- Continue with the budget as is.
- Do not increase entertainment costs, consider lower-level national, or booking local or regional acts.
- Bring booking agent before Council during the fall budget process to explain the talent buying process, challenges, opportunities, and budget considerations.

## Dublin Irish Festival

The Dublin Irish Festival is a nationally recognized cultural celebration and a point of pride for the City. Benchmarking against peer festivals revealed shared challenges, particularly around rising costs. As currently constructed, DIF is likely to cost the City of Dublin approximately \$300,000 most years and much more in weather-impacted years. In order to bring the DIF break-even point within reach, the Events Division will need to address both revenue and expenses.

### ACTION ITEMS

- Continue to produce DIF in-house.
- Grow Revenue (goal: \$150,000).
  - Sponsorships are the highest potential growth area.
  - Incremental growth - audience, ticket/beverage prices, vendor fees.
  - Sharing O' The Green Agreement should be adjusted so the City is carrying less financial risk.
- Reduce Expenses (goal: \$150,000).
  - Explore more outsourcing opportunities.
  - Bid services to ensure lowest cost.
  - Continue to move toward cashless event.
  - Fine tune entertainment scheduling.
- Create a Revenue Backstop.
  - Reserve fund - open up grant/gift/sponsorship opportunities not currently available.
  - Reach \$400,000 by DIF 40th anniversary and \$1,000,000 within 7-10 years.

## DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS

Looking beyond Signature Event operations recommendations to those with more departmental relevance, this section provides recommendations and action items for the Events Division.

### **Invest in low cost, high impact community-focused programming**

During the Roadmap process residents voiced a desire for more small events focused on local community-building. The Community Events Division currently manages a popular low cost, high impact event series that could be expanded to meet this desire.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Expand the Summer Fun Series.

---

### **Continue to Support Resident Community Building**

Neighborhood Block Party Packages are a popular resource among civic and homeowner associations and are a low cost (both in the physical product as well as staff time), high impact community building tactic. Dublin should build on this program.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Expand the Neighborhood Block Party Package program by increasing the number of packages available to rent.



## Improve the Community Events Permitting Processes

The Community Events Division is responsible for processing and issuing Community Event permits. To ensure successful events, staff collaborates with leadership from multiple departments and works closely with event organizers to confirm compliance with local regulations, address potential challenges, and prioritize public safety. During the Roadmap process, consultants conducted interviews with event organizers to gather feedback on the permitting experience. Key takeaways were shared with the City, leading to immediate action. As of this document's publication, all suggestions and concerns raised during the interviews have been resolved or are actively being addressed.

### ACTION ITEMS

- Auto-populate past application data
  - **Action:** Events staff previously had researched potential softwares to aid in the permit process. Upon hearing this feedback, Events purchased and will be implementing EProval in 2025 for the 2026 application process, which will auto-populate last year's application info and improve overall efficiency.
- Notification of additional permits (e.g., fireworks, bounce houses)
  - **Action:** Permit text has been updated to highlight when additional permits are needed. EProval will also assist with this.
- Immediate feedback on date/location conflicts
  - **Action:** Applicants now receive an automatic email with conditional approval and a PDF of their application. Conflicts will be addressed within 2 business days.
- Advance planning and conditional permits
  - **Action:** Conditional approval now built into process; reduces need for separate requests. EProval will support this.
- Central communication and tracking portal
  - **Action:** EProval, recently purchased, will serve as the centralized platform for communication and progress tracking.
- Uncertainty and communication gaps
  - **Action:** EProval is expected to improve transparency and communication across all steps.
- Clarity on facility amenities
  - **Action:** Will be clarified further in permit meetings.



- Concerns about fairness if application deadlines are enforced inconsistently
  - **Action:**
    - Applications must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the scheduled event (reduced from 90 days).
    - Applications held on City property that intend to serve alcohol must submit applications within 90 days (reduced from 120 days).
- Virtual vs. in-person permit meetings
  - **Action:**
    - o Tier 1: No permit meeting required.
    - o Tier 2: First-time applicants attend in person (exceptions for travel over 30 minutes); annual event organizers may now call in.
    - o Tier 3: In-person attendance required.
    - o Committee members are encouraged to pre-review applications and skip meetings if not needed.
    - o EProval implementation may eventually eliminate Tier 2 in-person meetings.
- Post-event follow up with event organizers
  - **Action:**
    - o A brief 3-4 question post-event survey will be implemented.
    - o Placer.ai data will be used to estimate attendance for larger events, enabling comparison with organizer-provided numbers.

## CITY OPERATIONS

This section covers topics that are critical to the long-term success of community events but extend beyond the scope of the Events Division alone. These recommendations may involve multiple departments or require citywide coordination to implement effectively.

### Establish a Citywide Sponsorship Strategy

An analysis of Dublin's signature events revealed that, while the Community Events Division has been effective in securing sponsorships, the City lacks a comprehensive, citywide sponsorship strategy. To address this, it is recommended that the City engage a consultant to develop an integrated sponsorship strategy that applies across all departments, programs, and events. This strategy would support the pursuit of sponsorships for a range of initiatives, from community events and recreation programming to capital projects and external partnerships. It should provide a unified framework for identifying prospects, valuing opportunities, managing relationships, and planning for long-term growth. Such a plan would help the City maximize revenue potential, ensure consistent messaging and sponsor value, and equip staff with the tools needed to build stronger, more sustainable sponsor relationships.

### ACTION ITEMS

- Hire a consultant to develop a citywide sponsorship strategy.





## Address Policy Gaps

While events are an excellent way to activate parks and facilities, other activities, such as vending, can also create a vibrant atmosphere and enhance the visitor experience without requiring extensive planning or expense. During the Roadmap process, two potential activities were identified for consideration at or near park facilities through a permitting process: food trucks and art-vending.

At this time, the policy on record for Commercial Activities in parks reads:

*96.24 Commercial Activities:*

*(A) No person in a park shall sell or offer for sale any article, privilege or service without having first obtained a permit from the City Manager or designee.*

*(B) No person in a park shall beg, peddle, or solicit for money, a privilege or a service.*

There are currently no regulations for food trucks in Dublin. Art-vending qualifies as a commercial activity per the definition in Code 96.24, but there are no standard operating procedures for obtaining a special permit from the City Manager.

### ACTION ITEMS

- Develop regulations for food trucks for Dublin, with clear guidelines on how they are permitted to operate within park spaces.
- Establish a process for obtaining a special permit for art-vending.

---

## Expand Community and Audience Engagement

While research during the Roadmap process identified programmatic gaps and opportunities, Dublin is not at a loss of things to do. In fact, the Dublin community is served by a robust annual calendar of events. What is missing is a comprehensive community event calendar that provides a full picture of all that is being offered.

### ACTION ITEMS

- Create a comprehensive community events or “things to do” calendar. It is possible that this is a City initiative or a partnership opportunity with Visit Dublin.

## Make Investments in Permanent Event Infrastructure

The City should examine targeted investments in event-related infrastructure to enhance the functionality and appeal of key venues, particularly Coffman Park. Strategic improvements such as permanent power access, staging, lighting, water hookups, and storage facilities would not only ease logistical challenges for large-scale events like the Dublin Irish Festival, but also make the park more attractive to outside event organizers seeking a well-equipped, flexible venue. By proactively investing in infrastructure, the City can reduce operational burdens over time, improve the overall event experience, and position its public spaces as premier destinations for community and regional programming.

There is a master planning process on deck for Riverside Crossing Park, but not for Coffman Park. While the Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommends a master plan for Coffman Park, it is not included in the current 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

To advance the exploration of infrastructure investments in Coffman Park, the City will have to engage consultants for further guidance.

### ACTION ITEMS

- Continue evaluating capital improvements to Coffman Park to reduce event production costs and improve the appeal of facility rental.

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## Package and Market Cultural Programming

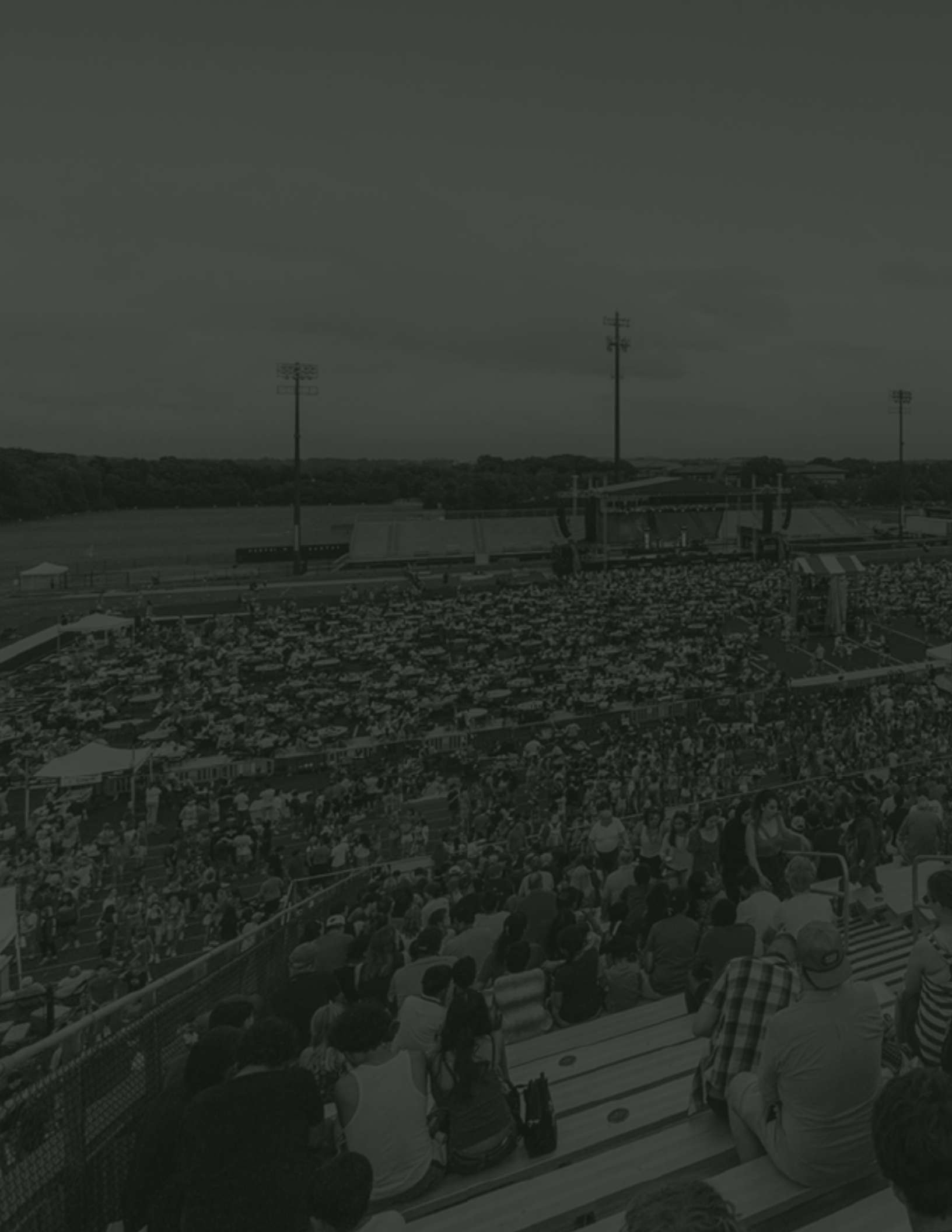
Dublin is a Global City with a rich tapestry of cultures, traditions, and lifestyles that fosters inclusivity and global appeal. This is demonstrated in the number of cultural events that take place, organized by both the City and third parties. The City should build on this.

### ACTION ITEMS

- Package and market cultural events in Dublin under the “Global City” umbrella.









# Appendix

1 - Key Stakeholders

2 - Documents Reviewed

3 - Community Survey

4 - Benchmarking Analysis

5 - How to Attract Event Organizers to Your City Guide

[VISIT THE APPENDIX](#)

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