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**AEDO Profile: City of Dublin (Ohio) Division of Economic Development**

IEDC’s Accredited Economic Development Organization (AEDO) program recognizes organizational excellence in the areas of internal and external operations, structures, and procedures. This series profiles newly accredited AEDOs, putting some of economic development’s highest-performing organizations in the spotlight.

**AEDO member:** City of Dublin (Ohio) Division of Economic Development

**Accreditation date:** October 14, 2021

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

**Vision statement:** A global city of choice. Vibrant. Innovative. Engaged.

**Geography served:** The City of Dublin is the largest Central Ohio suburb, located in the northwest part of Columbus.

**Population served:** More than 50,000 residents, 70,000 corporate citizens, and 4,300 businesses

**Organizational structure:** The division is governed by and answerable to the Dublin City Council, and reports to the deputy city manager / chief finance and development officer who reports to the city manager.

**Budget:** The division has an operating budget of \$1,551,500. Additionally, the division budgets \$3,000,495 for incentive costs and certain programs such as Dublink(fiber), grants, and other special programs. The division is solely funded by the City of Dublin.

**Strategic focus:** Create distinctive development nodes, streamline processes and make them more predictable, nurture the growth of targeted industry clusters, and foster sustainable partnerships to catalyze value-added collaborations

**Highlighted accomplishments:** The division highlighted five projects successfully completed within the past three years.

- Cardinal Health, which employs 4,800, consolidated multiple office locations into a vacated 400,000-square-foot office building.
- Hagerty Insurance chose Dublin after conducting an 800-city search for a new office location, creating 127 new jobs.
- Quantum Health considered Columbus, Nashville, Dallas, and Phoenix, prior to selecting Dublin. The location will create 1,450 jobs and 500,000 square feet of office space utilization by 2025.
- Renaissance Tech was a 2013 startup in the Dublin Entrepreneurial Center. It has experienced rapid growth and sought assistance in relocating to a larger facility. The new location has enabled the company to grow to 17 employees, with a target of 25.
- Veeva Systems Inc., a cloud-based software for the global life sciences industry headquartered in California, conducted an Ohio search to serve the Midwest market. This project met Dublin's criteria as a target-industry fast-growth company. Through aggressive site location and incentive assistance, the economic development division was able to negotiate an agreement to bring the company to Dublin. Veeva has exceeded all the employment goals put forth in the agreement.

**Q&A with Sara O'Malley and Jenna Goehring, economic development administrators for the City of Dublin:**

**What does the City of Dublin Division of Economic Development do particularly well?**

The City of Dublin Division of Economic Development serves more than 50,000 residents, 70,000 corporate citizens, and 4,300 businesses. Dublin encompasses nearly 25 square miles, including 10 million square feet of commercial space, 2,000 acres of available land, Ohio Job Ready Certified sites, and robust infrastructure.

The city is known as a leader in municipal innovations, including tax increment financing, Dublinlink Transport fiber optics, Wi-Fi deployment, and green initiatives. With a robust strategic plan, economic development initiatives are hyper-focused, solution-oriented, and customer service-driven to propel the success of businesses and the workforce.

### **What unique programs or initiatives does the City of Dublin Division of Economic Development carry out?**

The City of Dublin Division of Economic Development has been effective in executing programs and strategic initiatives through public-private partnerships such as the [Bridge Street District](#), economic development agreements, and economic incentive agreements, to retain and attract businesses and build partnerships with existing and incoming businesses.

The City of Dublin has a [website](#) that serves as a resource hub for businesses. The site features easy access to loan information, workforce development resources, infrastructure and property information, and incentives. Additionally, [Dublink Transport](#), a globally recognized broadband connection program sponsored by the city, is available to businesses at no cost. It connects companies to high-speed data from their office to a local carrier-neutral data center. This has been a highly effective economic development tool for Dublin and an excellent amenity for businesses, saving them time and money. The city has also partnered with SHARE Mobility to offer the [Dublin Connector](#), a last-mile shuttle service from all Central Ohio Transit Authority bus stops in the city to our businesses.

[Bridge Park](#) is the newest and only walkable mixed-use community in downtown Dublin. Spanning more than 30 riverfront acres, the project features housing, restaurants, retail, Class A office space, entertainment venues, hotels, a conference center, and multiple green spaces. Bridge Park connects a series of vibrant neighborhoods via a new urban public street network.

### **What is a challenge facing the City of Dublin, and how does the economic development division work to address it?**

The pandemic in combination with changing workforce dynamics have exposed potential risks of disruptive change. The City of Dublin remains committed to serving our existing industry clusters in the areas of corporate headquarters and managing offices; business services; information technology; medical, biosciences, and healthcare; R&D; logistics; and automotive. Post-pandemic, the medical and life sciences industry is emerging ahead of the others, encompassing most of the economic development projects in the current pipeline.

The city is also promoting and continuing to expand highly digital and connected coworking spaces, innovation hubs, and other community infrastructure. These are attractive to companies in decentralized operations models, and in-demand by workers as local hybrid work options.

Despite the effects of the pandemic, the City of Dublin remains a regional leader in traded-industry jobs and overall employment base.

### **Why did the City of Dublin decide to pursue AEDO accreditation?**

The economic development division has a metrics-based strategy that the team continues to refine to match current and future workplace, job, and economic trends. AEDO accreditation recognizes the team's

leadership in the field. The city pursued accreditation not only as a growth aspiration, but also to bring value as an accredited organization and share best practices with other EDOs in the region.

**What feedback from the AEDO Review Team did you find particularly helpful, and how do you plan to implement their recommendations?**

Constant growth and leadership development are part of the City of Dublin's core values. The review team reiterated the importance of continued training, and a healthy budget line item has been dedicated to upskilling team members through IEDC and OEDA coursework. Salary and benefits will continue to be evaluated as a tool to retain top talent in the city's economic development workforce. Lastly, the recommendation to prioritize regional collaboration was helpful and affirmed several key initiatives, particularly promoting the [Beta District](#) to drive new innovation and development to not only the City of Dublin, but the Central Ohio region.