



imagine **Dublin 2020**

Our vision for the future of the city



Imagine

Introduction

Since Dublin Chamber of Commerce published its Dublin 2010 Vision some seven years ago, there have been remarkable changes to Dublin.

High quality employment is now a realistic option for most people, the fabric of the city has improved immeasurably, visitors are flocking from overseas countries, and there is a new confidence among young people.

So why the need for a new vision ?

All cities have life cycles. Dublin is emerging from a successful period of growth – but we need to continue and sustain that development. Dublin needs direction. There is much to be done in the areas of transport, tourism and other essential infrastructure. We need to build on our strengths in knowledge-based employment, and to tap the resource of our schools and colleges. We need an urban governance structure to deliver that strategy.

Dublin Chamber of Commerce has taken this initiative in order to set an agenda for a new and improved city. Our working group included a cross section of interests from business, development agencies, property and consultants groups, with great assistance from the Futures Academy at DIT. We identified key themes and policy measures to make Dublin a knowledge city, that is internationally competitive. We set out proposals for a governance and political leadership structure that a major European capital needs if it is to work effectively.

I would like to thank the members of the working group for their contribution to this report. Special thanks to John Ratcliffe of the DIT Futures Academy for his strategic direction and to Clive Brownlee, outgoing Chamber President, for his tremendous support.

David Pierce
President
Dublin Chamber of Commerce
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Imagine a great European city with its own distinct cultural identity that creates excellent conditions for living in, working in and enjoying.

Imagine people, who love and celebrate their city and accept others' customs, identities and collective and personal histories.

Imagine government, business groups and the community engaged in collective thinking, talking, planning and acting to ensure their city's harmonious growth.

Imagine a connected and accessible city, where quality education, medical and business services are within reach of all.

Imagine a city that attracts highly skilled labour and that encourages and promotes research, enterprise and an entrepreneurial culture, a city that is driven by creativity, imagination and innovation.

Imagine clean, green and vibrant streets, where everybody feels safe and a friendly urban space supports development of community ties.

Imagine an efficient transport system that serves the needs of all; waste is reduced, reused and recycled, and energy and water supply services meet the highest standards.

Imagine! This could be Dublin in 20 years time!

Knowledge



Imagine a Knowledge City

Dublin 2020 is a "knowledge city" that generates, attracts and retains high quality skills.

Dublin's education strengths come from its people. Nobody leaves the learning cycle, but everybody develops their personal, professional and civic abilities continuously. This is because education and learning is available to everybody. Creative and innovative thinking is a natural part of living in Dublin.

Dublin has the capacity to create new knowledge in a culture of research activity excellence. Universities of the highest international standards attract talented young people from all over the world and generate active and highly skilled people in the workforce. The national policy is to support connections between different knowledge clusters in the city. The third level institutions collaborate with each other in order to fulfil market needs and educational aspirations of students. The strong links with business allow for the development of R&D centres of excellence, which form an important sector of the city's economy.

This creates a business environment, which is both collaborative and competitive. The value of small indigenous companies is well recognised and entrepreneurship is highly promoted and supported.

Well-developed physical infrastructure and a high quality living environment sustain merging of knowledge, society and commercial activities in Dublin. Connectivity, an essential feature of the city, is facilitated by broadband services that are accessible equally for organisations and individuals at all rungs of the economic ladder. Everybody has access to Internet services and training in basic computer literacy. Community groups receive support for training activities and computer equipment.

What is needed

New industry sectors based on knowledge clusters

Low cost access to advanced communications networks

Universities and third level colleges to be developed as centres of excellence for new business

A developed policy framework for R&D involving business, government and the education sector

Continued investment in skills upgrading

Promote Dublin as a centre for knowledge tourism

Imagine an Aircraft Mechanic in 2020

Imagine a young man who moved to Ireland from Eastern Europe as a boy and now runs his own aircraft maintenance business, specialising in high spec engine maintenance for private planes.

His progress through the Irish education system is likely to have included an apprenticeship in mechanics, possibly followed by a degree course in avionics. A post graduate business course, available in many of the third level colleges, would have allowed him to develop his technical knowledge into a more practical business opportunity – in this case, a first business catering exclusively for the maintenance of executive cars, but developing into the more specialist area of servicing aircraft engines.

A not unlikely scenario, with Ireland's rapidly expanding international business leading to more companies making use of the smaller airports close to Dublin, and with technology creating a new generation of Concord engines to apply supersonic power thrusts to smaller planes.

This business will be in a clinically clean workshop off the M50, allowing fast access to Dublin Airport and the smaller airports catering for private planes. Computer diagnostic tools and robotic arms will do most of the intricate repair work. Perhaps the next step is to establish an international franchise specialising in supersonic engine diagnostics and repair.

This young man may also face the dilemma of combining work and social activities. An early career as a star GAA player at minor level may now have led him into the senior ranks. Could he be the first native Czech footballer to win an All Ireland medal with Dublin? He may well even be thinking of taking leave from his business and becoming a professional GAA player.



Working



A City That Works

Dublin 2020 is a modern dynamic city – a city that works.

The city has an integrated comprehensive transport system, thanks to the speedy implementation of the DTO Platform for Change strategy. Accountable and fast public transport competes successfully with private car and it is the favourite form of transit in the city. The metro is the most efficient and widely used part of the network, and complements the carrying capacity of buses, LUAS light rail, DART, and the suburban rail network. The multi storey park and rides, attached to the metro and LUAS stations, means that people do not need to take cars into the city. The absence of cars makes the use of bicycles and walking a much more attractive proposition. Dublin is well connected with the rest of the country through the rail network and the national motorway system. The new runway at Dublin Airport now allows the capacity to grow beyond its current level of thirty million passengers ca year.

The Greater Dublin Area Authority ensures that regional growth is planned and managed. Mixed land use principles underpin every new development of the artea based planning authorities. Taller buildings, particularly along the east west axis of the Liffey, now draw on the unparalleled drama of the city coastline in a spectacular way. Exciting living areas with extensive open spaces have been created in rejuvenated parts of the city. City centre living

which supports families and social activities is a favoured alternative to the suburbs and new towns. This is supported by friendly street architecture, green spaces and amenities for children - building a strong community spirit. All new developments are integrated with high capacity public transport links.

The targets for waste management have been achieved, and a mix of recycling and clean incineration coupled with a low level of landfill deal with the problem in an effective way.

The two main stadia at Croke Park and Lansdowne Road are the anchor bases for the Celtic 2020 UEFA European Football Championships, with Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales accommodating the remaining games. Could the home team be the winner again?

What is needed

Delivery of the DTO Platform for Change Strategy

A fast track planning process for major infrastructure projects

Investment in environment and waste management projects

Increased housing densities in the city

Effective use of the public private partnership process

Imagine a recycled entrepreneur

The problems of starting a new business in 2020 may be no different from today – the key to success will still centre around how to turn a good idea into a profitable business.

Consider a man in his mid 50s who is made redundant in 2015, following the decision by another manufacturing company to close its operation in Ireland and relocate to a lower cost destination.

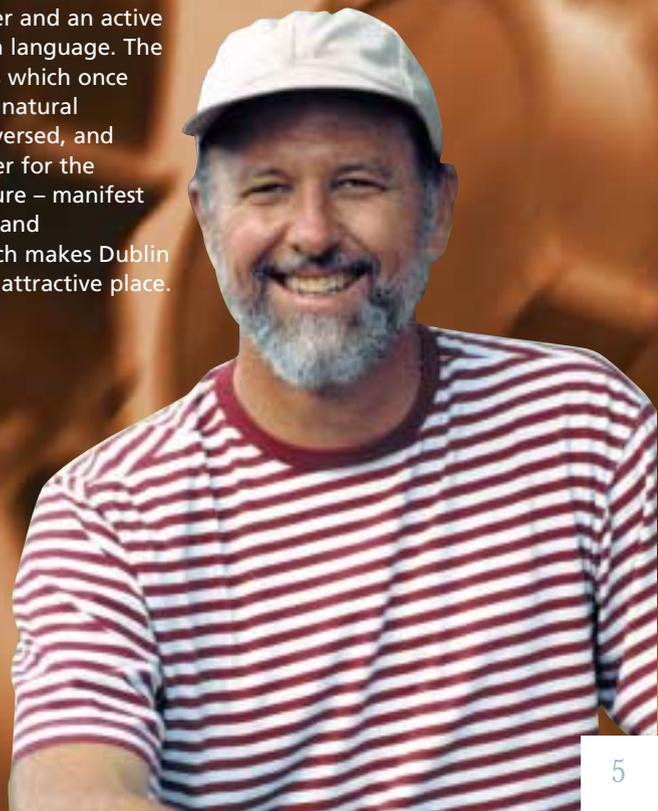
Our successful entrepreneur in 2020 -call him Seamus - drew on the support of the Guinness Enterprise Centre – first to learn the basics of running a business, then to help convert a good idea into a real business.

Recognising the clean and green drive in Dublin towards protection of the environment, Seamus researched the concept of collecting and disposing of small quantities of hazardous waste. By this time, the Dublin Hazardous Waste Company was the leader in the business, but its main sources of supply were coming from the larger industrial and healthcare sectors. The collection of smaller quantities such as used batteries and other chemical products from the household and small business sectors was more problematic in terms of costs and logistics.

Seamus's background in the larger multinational for which he had worked for twenty five years was in logistics. He knew precisely how to schedule smaller collections and deliveries based on just in time principles. He applied that expertise to the collection of hazardous waste – building a strong customer base and a ready customer in the Hazardous Waste Company.

Now in 2020, his business is successful, and employs fifteen people.

Seamus is also a respected traditional singer and story-teller and an active promoter of the Irish language. The globalisation process which once threatened Ireland's natural identity has been reversed, and there is a new hunger for the uniqueness and culture – manifest in music, shopfronts and entertainment - which makes Dublin such a different and attractive place.



European



A Great European City

Dublin 2020 is well known in Europe for its unique cultural identity and character.

Because of its distinct character – combining the best of Irish, European and diverse cultures - it attracts visitors from all over the world. Tourism infrastructure is well developed - hotels, conference facilities, sports, leisure and cultural attractions – which means that Dublin draws on many markets catering for differing needs, tastes and interests. Dublin residents, as much as tourists, love spending time in the outdoor themed parks; museums, well known for the best exhibitions and interactive educational activities; and music venues, famous for their atmosphere and vivacity. All of the top acts include Dublin as a must-do venue.

It is the people of Dublin who define the city's uniqueness. They are open, friendly, and hospitable. Dubliners feel and act as stakeholders in their city. They are proud to be citizens of the city where James Joyce had lived and written. International immigrants, who arrived in Dublin during the "Celtic Tiger" era, created a vibrant multicultural community of Dubliners, who speak English, often with a distinct Dublin accent, but have many different colours of skin, eyes and hair. Elements of their heritage have enriched the traditional Irish culture.

Dubliners celebrate their city. New festivals, celebrating Dublin's tradition, have grown into international events. Bloomsday, Oscar Wilde Day, and the Dublin Bay Festival stand alongside ethnic festivals such as Chinese New Year and attract many tourists as well as giving Dubliners further opportunity to meet and celebrate.

City centre shopping is a pleasure with extensive pedestrianisation, now when cars have been encouraged to stay outside the central business districts. Ireland has long been famous for the strength of its crafts sector and Dublin acts as a showcase for the best that the country has to offer. Specialist quarters for crystal, food, pottery, fabrics and art have all been developed and attract the interest of the most discerning shoppers. The ethnic markets spread around the city are an attractive place for many people.

You come to Dublin to live here and enjoy yourself.

What is needed

Development of festivals based on cultural and historic identity

Increased pedestrianisation and urban space

Area-based development, building on local area strengths

Clean and green concept as part of all new development

Greater concept of "safety" – policing and other measures

Promotion of ethnic diversity as a positive

Imagine an ethnic Garda

Imagine a Garda in 2020 drawn from an overseas ethnic grouping. A Chinese Garda ? Why not ?

China is already one of the world's fastest growing economies and by 2020, interaction between China and Ireland could be as strong as that which exists between Ireland and the USA at present. The Chinese population in Dublin may well be the largest ethnic group, drawn from business, students and regular visitors.

Picture a young Chinese who came to Ireland as an English language student in 2005 and liked Ireland so much that he was determined to stay. He applied for Irish citizenship, which was granted early following the introduction of a points-based Immigration Act.

His career path could have taken him into the new Dublin Traffic Corps, and from there to full membership of the Garda Síochána. An assignment to Community Liaison Work would see him working closely with the Chinese and other ethnic groupings – giving him a role also in policing the various festivals from St. Patrick's Day through to the Chinese New Year.

Perhaps he lives in Dublin's suburbs, commuting by fast rail into the city – or he may like the city nightlife so much that he is considering purchasing an apartment in the fashionable new North Inner City district.



Competitive



A Highly Competitive City

Dublin 2020 is Europe's lead centre for new economy clusters – building on Ireland's highly developed knowledge and skills base.

Dublin's international competitiveness is based on its skills and its positive fiscal system. Together, these create an environment that is pro business and pro competition. This has resulted in an effective and pragmatic mix of public and privately provided goods and services, giving Dubliners a real choice of efficient and competitive providers. The city has successfully cracked its infrastructure deficit and is a highly wired city with one of the highest rates of broadband connections and Wi-Fi locations in the world.

Dublin has an excellent employment environment that provides continuous challenges, competitive rewards and opportunities for skills enhancement. Dublin continues to attract and retain highly skilled labour from within Ireland and overseas. Strong co-operation between business, industry and universities creates constant flows of information, people and skills that meet commercial needs.

The city has become a major international centre for health research and advanced healthcare delivery. Its "health spa centre" provides a range of state of the art healthcare services and treatments, which attracts both service users and providers from all over the world. Forward thinking and the ability to turn disadvantages into opportunities led to the development of a whole new sector in the city's economy with spin-offs and close linkages with the city's excellent education and research institutions.

The strong position the financial services sector gained in 1990s has been sustained and developed. These economic sectors are supported by the high quality education system including all education levels – schools, colleges and universities – that creates indigenous, highly qualified labour, speaking English as a first language.

What is needed

Development of Knowledge based industry clusters

Build on strengths in other sectors – education, healthcare, branded Irish products

Marketing and promotion of Dublin as an international centre of excellence

Maintenance of a positive business environment – taxation and business costs

Imagine a Tallaght Medical Graduate

Tallaght Medical University 2020 - Ireland's leading Medical University and Research Centre, developed through a merger of the former Tallaght Institute of Technology and Tallaght Hospital

Picture one of its graduates. She is currently a Senior Researcher with an Irish precision instrument company specialising in robotic technology in the primary health care services for the elderly. This started as a campus company at Tallaght Medical and, despite most of its manufacturing taking place close to its markets in Asia and Central America, its main research centre is still located close to its original home in Tallaght.

Our senior researcher has recently married and is living with her husband and two children in the Docklands. They prefer to live in Docklands because of its easy accessibility to shops, schools and the many evening entertainment events. She has no difficulty with the forty minute commute by Luas from Docklands to Tallaght, but frequently prefers to cycle or use her power scooter.



Well Governed



A Well Governed City

Dublin 2020 has a strong urban governance system, as befits a major European city. It includes a regional metropolitan structure (Greater Dublin Area Authority) and a county based local services structure.

The metropolitan region (the Greater Dublin Area) is managed by the Greater Dublin Area Authority. Its functions include strategic land-use, planning, transport management and marketing the city for investment. The current local authorities from Dublin and the adjoining counties continue to play an important role in the provision of local services. A directly elected Mayor, who is supported by a Chief Executive for each function, directs the Authority. The strong leadership and power of the Authority to allocate budgets ensures effective implementation of plans and enforcement of policies.

The GDAA has a transparent land use and regional planning system, which allows the public and elected representatives to monitor the way in which land use and zoning takes place. The voice of different sectors, such as business, community groups and environmental organisations are heard and taken into account in the formulation of long term regional planning. Together with a clear and competent communication of central government plans and decisions for the Dublin region, this creates public trust and community participation in the planning processes.

Transport plans are aligned with new and expanded residential and commercial developments, within the regional planning process. The Authority's functions in transport planning and allocation of budgets to transport providers ensures that an integrated transport system is provided. The Authority's transport regulatory function allows for the provision of services on a competitive and efficient basis. There are no transport monopolies.

Business and economic development groups support the Authority's work in marketing and promoting Dublin as an investment location – identifying Dublin's strengths and advantages in new economy clusters.

As part of its long-term planning remit, the Authority supports a Futures Planning Forum, which brings together representatives of all sectors in the city to discuss and debate the future. A dedicated research institute conducts studies about possible future change and its implications for the city.

What is needed

Establishment of a Greater Dublin Area Authority (GDAA);

GDAA to have responsibility for transport management, land use and planning and inward investment marketing for the Dublin metropolitan area;

GDAA to be headed by a directly elected Mayor with responsibility for those key functions;

Current local authorities to continue in existence, with responsibility for delivery of local services

Imagine a Mayor for Dublin

Imagine a native Dubliner, with direct experience of the Irish and American political systems, now in her second term as Mayor of Greater Dublin.

Dublin's Mayor was first elected in 2013 and re-elected with an increased majority in the 2018 election.

A native of Dublin's inner city, her background included a degree in Politics and Economics from an American university, part-time membership of a Police Cadet Force in a US city, and an active role as a campaigner with leading politicians in Mayor and Presidential Elections in the USA.

A return to Ireland saw her elected first as a City Councillor, then as an assigned political representative to the fledgling Greater Dublin Area Authority, and then elected as the first Mayor to head up the new Authority – with the aim of making it the driving force behind Dublin's status as Europe's most progressive city.

Imagine the Mayor's daily schedule. Her busy day can include items such as the budget allocation for the next five years investment in transport, meetings with the Transport Regulator on reviews of the bus route tendering system, and possible amendments to the regional housing density regulations. Much of her time is spent with incoming delegations from other international cities, whose main question is generally "How did Dublin become such an international success?"



What if we don't ...?

So what happens if the vision is not adopted ?

There is an implicit assumption in many Government strategies that Dublin can look after itself. This thinking is copperfastened by a view that Dublin has grown disproportionately to the rest of Ireland, that an undue proportion of public investment has gone into the Dublin region, and that public policy should seek to arrest the scale of development in Dublin. This view fails to recognise the role of cities in general as the engines of regional and national growth and leads to a lack of strategic direction for fast growth cities such as Dublin.

While this view holds sway, the dangers to Dublin's future development are significant. The downside scenario emerging from this could well be as follows:

- Critical infrastructure in areas of transport, communications, environment and tourism are not delivered, or arrive at a very late stage.
- In the meantime, Ireland's competitors are rapidly developing their infrastructure, and Ireland falls further behind in competitiveness.
- This erosion of competitiveness leads to a loss of major investment and jobs to other cities and countries.
- There are no new economy industries to replace the previous generation of jobs.
- The lack of regional spatial planning and transport management leads to further sprawl, and Dublin's quality of life diminishes further.
- Dublin's tourism attractiveness and "buzz" wears off. Mobile tourists move to newer and different locations.
- Dublin becomes peripheral – at the edge of an enlarged Europe spreading eastwards from the centre.

Is this a realistic scenario? In the course of preparation of this work, many of those consulted said that this downside scenario was the more realistic one, in the absence of a vision and strategy for Dublin.

The message is clear – Dublin needs to adopt a vision. We cannot afford not to!



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