



THE
PURPOSE
REGION

**100 LEADERS
IDENTIFY OUR
REGION'S
PURPOSE**

Thursday, March 16, 2017

Reeb Avenue Center | Columbus, Ohio



A teal-tinted photograph of a city skyline, likely Columbus, Ohio, featuring several tall buildings and a bridge over a river in the foreground. The image is used as a background for the text.

Central Ohio is booming. Already 2 million residents strong, the population of the Columbus metropolitan area will expand by upwards of a million people over the next 30 years.¹ New technology promises to change how and where we live and get around. In the face of such dramatic change, as the region grows larger and more diverse, and as the digital and physical increasingly merge, we must ask ourselves: what is our region's purpose?

Inspired by the principles of a design hackathon and data from insight2050, the Purpose Region workshop convened 100 bold leaders from across Central Ohio in a vibrant, day-long forum featuring rich discourse, debate, and hands-on collaboration. Together, we explored tangible steps to address critical issues that affect the quality of life for everyone in Central Ohio.

¹ Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), insight2050 Scenario Results Report, February 26, 2015: <http://getinsight2050.org>

**HERE IS WHAT
WE DISCOVERED...**

AGENDA

The Purpose Region began with words of inspiration from “firestarter” speakers, who shared insights, challenges and opportunities about Central Ohio. From there, participants broke into four workshop groups to dive deeper into the issues facing the region.

- 9:00** Registration / Breakfast
- 9:20** Welcome and Opening Remarks
William Murdock, Executive Director, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)
- 9:25** Opening Speaker
Bob Leighty, Executive Director, Parsons Avenue Merchants Association
- 9:30** Firestarter Talks
Meka Pace, Executive Director, Metro Schools
Elizabeth L. Paul, President, Capital University
Ferzan M. Ahmed, Delaware County Administrator
- 10:00** Assignments and Team Formation
Affordable Housing
Environment & Sustainability
Workforce Development & Education
Health & Wellbeing
- 10:15** Break-out Teams | Session One
- 12:00** Lunch Served
- 12:30** Break-out Teams | Session Two
- 3:00** Team Summary Presentations
- 3:55** Closing Remarks

SPEAKERS



Meka Pace
Executive Director, Metro Schools

“In schools here in Ohio, or in other states, students are being educated the exact same way that I was educated 20 years ago. Our world is changing faster than it ever has. So how does the education that we had 20 years ago prepare kids for a world that doesn’t even exist yet?”



Dr. Elizabeth L. Paul
President, Capital University

“Our goal is not to grow to be better than others. Our goal is to be better than ourselves. Our goal is to move into the future so that our world is better than when we came into it.”



Ferzan M. Ahmed
Delaware County Administrator

“If you want to be a purpose region, you have to know your purpose. And you have to know each other’s purpose. Imagine each and every one of you has a small piece of rope. You want to see your power? Tie your ropes together.”



Bob Leighty
Parsons Avenue Merchants Association

“When you talk about purpose, I have to tell you, my work here with the Reeb Avenue Center has been the highlight of my life.”



William Murdock
Executive Director, MORPC

“We don’t always have the time to just sit and talk to people and really reflect on what our region should be, what our purpose is, what’s the purpose of Central Ohio, and what should we be doing to make this a better place. And that’s the opportunity we hope to give you here today.”



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

If everyone deserves a home in our Purpose Region, how and where do we make that happen?

As Central Ohio grows, the demand for housing will increase – and so will the cost. Statistics convey the scope of the problem, but only through role-playing and other hands-on exercises can we gain empathy for the housing challenges people face, then begin working together as a community to address those challenges. To create truly affordable housing, one thing is clear: there's no simple solution, but everyone must play a part.

Workshop Format

- Review past, present and future of affordable housing in Central Ohio
- Identify actions for change
- Role-play fictional personas of Ohioans searching for housing

Top Issues

210,472

Central Ohioans live in poverty. The poverty population has grown at more than 3 times the rate of overall population (2009-2014). Poverty rates have gone up in nearly all suburbs.

↑ 2X

Rents are rising at twice the pace of income.

18,441

evictions were filed in Franklin County in 2015.

54,000

of the lowest-income households pay more than half their income on housing. There is only one affordable rental unit for every three renters in poverty.

↑ 64%

increase in the number of homeless families using the shelter system since 2011.

10

The top 10 occupations in the Columbus Region with the most annual openings (except Registered Nurses) don't pay workers enough to afford housing.

17,000+

Central Ohioans are on the application list for a rental subsidy.

Top Provocations

How do the policies of today, such as exclusionary zoning, perpetuate the disparities of the past?

How will increasing numbers of renters interact with homeowners?

What is our commitment to mixed-income neighborhoods?

Policy matters... Are we shaping policy?

How can we desegregate our communities?

How can we shape the actions of the market?

How will diversity and diversification be part of the solution?

More evictions lead to lost jobs than vice versa... How can we better connect jobs to affordable housing?

How can our communities make up for declining federal assistance?

How can we personalize and educate about housing issues?

How are we planning for an aging population?

What opportunities for improvement are we missing?



ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

What are our aspirations for our Purpose Region as an environmentally sustainable place to live, work and play?

Although personal definitions of sustainability vary widely, everyone agrees on the value of a clean environment and a high quality of life. But these aspirations are impacted by a variety of factors, from social equity, to transportation, to land use and planning. We must address all these issues with intention if we are to create a healthy, hospitable region for today and for the future.

Workshop Format

- Define sustainability
- In two groups, identify six to eight top issues and map them on Central Ohio
- In four groups, role-play three of the top issues
- Chart a matrix of “cool” and “likely” sustainable initiatives
- Identify breakout ideas of the day
- Identify most urgent aspirations for Central Ohio

Top Issues

Social Inequality

- Access to housing, healthy food, clean water and air, transit and more is unequally distributed.
- The impacts of poor environmental decisions fall disproportionately on low-income residents.

Alternative Transportation

- The convenience, access and price of transportation alternatives are lacking.
- The true costs of personal vehicles are hidden—many companies subsidize employee parking.

Land Use

- Poor land use decisions inhibit quality of life and access to housing, employment, food, water, transit, smart infrastructure and more.
- Current patterns of development are inefficient and contribute to sprawl.

Long-term Planning

- High upfront costs inhibit a long-term planning perspective.
- A better-educated citizenry is necessary to help shift culture.

Mechanisms for Change

- Regional Collaboration
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Education
- Equitable Incentive Structures
- Accessible, Accurate Data
- Diverse, Inclusive Civic Engagement
- Convenient, Efficient, Accessible, Equitable Transportation

Breakout Ideas

- Create a regional policy founded on the insight2050 initiative.
- Leverage regional impact development fees to achieve equitable development.
- Utilize toll roads to fund sustainable transportation.
- Incorporate community values and sustainability into K-12 education.

Aspirations

- Highlight and connect waterways for entertainment and exercise.
- Build multi-modal transportation to connect jobs, housing and open space.
- Aggregate and analyze data on the natural environment and building efficiency.
- Forge strong relationships between government and private industry.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

How can we design a healthy, vibrant Purpose Region for all ages?

More and more we understand that wellbeing is a byproduct of social determinants. Health is shaped not just in a hospital or emergency room, but in an environment that meets our social, intellectual, spiritual, physical, economic and ecological needs. The more we offer these amenities equally to all ages, races, and income and education levels, the healthier our region will be.

Workshop Format

- Review population health statistics
- Illustrate health and wellness
- Brainstorm how to improve social determinants of health
- Vote on three most important social determinants of health
- In groups based on top three priorities, define goals, strategies and metrics for success

Top Issues

Franklin County is less healthy than the nation as a whole:

Overweight Children

↑ 25%
more than national average

Food Insecurity

↑ 43%
more than national average

Infant Mortality

↑ 33%
more than national average

Emergency Department Visits

↑ 39%
more than national average

* All Central Ohio figures courtesy OhioHealth

Top Priorities

These rates can be improved by addressing the social determinants of health, by:

- Create mixed-use communities that welcome all people.
- Create viable options for alternative transit.
- Provide more options for fresh, healthy food.



Musician Jake Briggs composed this song to illustrate what a healthy Purpose Region might look like in 2050:

“When I Wake Up”

— Music by Jake Briggs / Lyrics by group

When I wake up

When I wake up

When I wake up

When I wake up

When I wake up, I grab a peach off a nearby tree

Dinner tonight, fresh corn from a farm

Looks so good, so succulent

When I wake up (4X)

I pedal my bike, wind whips through my hair

I catch a train, sit back, and then I regroup

Tonight I'll hike with somebody hot

And tomorrow I'll hyperloop

When I wake up (4X)

I stretch my arms, take a look outside

Sun smiles on my face

Open my door, start walking the streets

A lovely calm to start my day

The streets are bustling, I'm feeling alive

Pretty buildings surround my view

People spilling from shops and cafes

Some city planners would call that “mixed-use”

Spoken: Mixed-use is a bold strategy to

build communities. All we need are updated

plans and codes. Please help us create places

that people want. Come on! Let's all get in

Purpose Region mode.

When I wake up (4X)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION

How does a Purpose Region manifest opportunity through workforce and education?

Columbus will grow to 2.5 million residents in the next decade, but only 54% are expected to be prepared for the economic opportunities available in 2025. As several students from Columbus State Community College shared, there is a great need to connect education to a productive workforce. Education is a lifelong path, and an essential need for a prosperous future.

Workshop Format

- Respond to morning introductions
- In groups, discuss current state of workforce development
- Review “in the moment” drawing and analyze visual themes
- Define group values
- In groups, define success based on shared values, and identify obstacles
- Discuss “purpose” in Central Ohio

Top Issues

- Wages
- Legal/criminal system
- Poor representation
- Imbalance of power
- Low civic engagement

Mechanisms for Change

- Outreach that empowers people to become politically active and make change
- Civics education in schools
- Better childcare
- More active engagement by city officials and more diversity in office
- Better dialogue around community values
- Rehabilitation training in prisons and reintegration into society
- Mental health care
- Ability to grow and consume good/healthy food

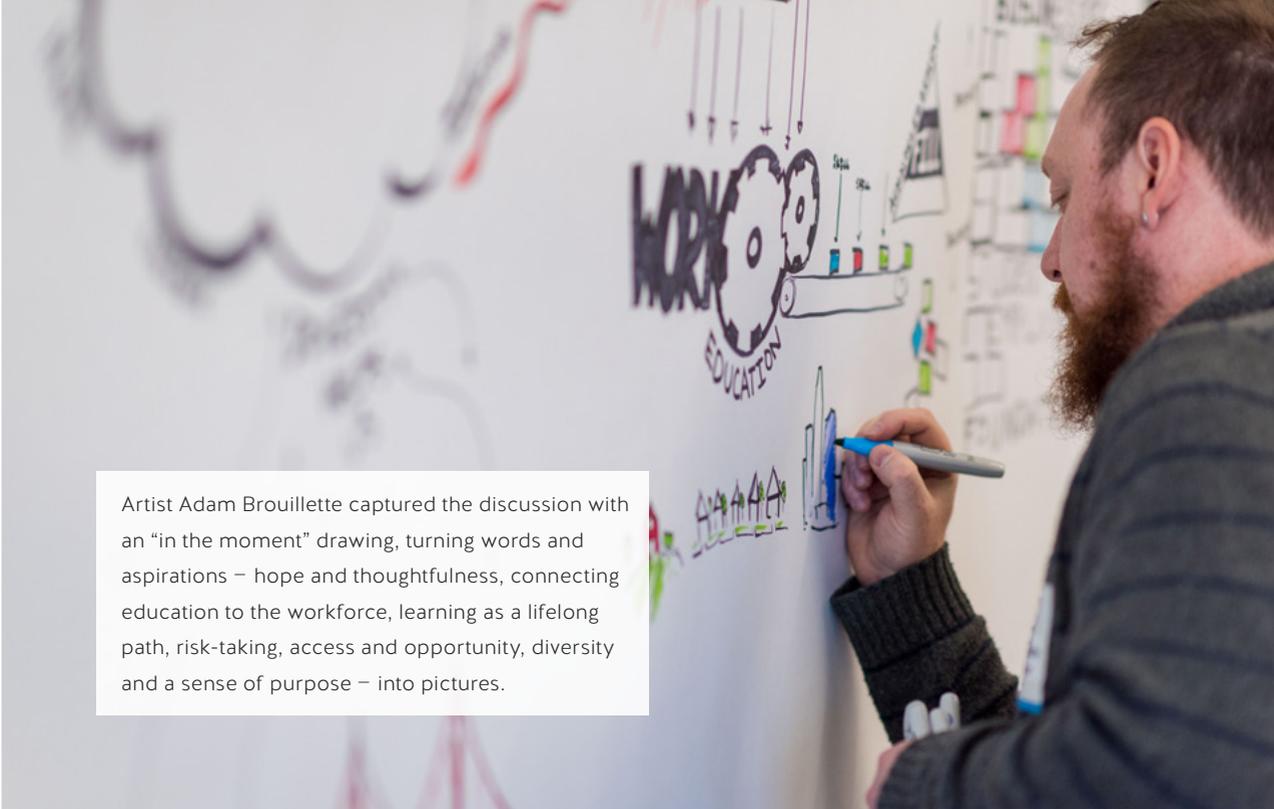
Values

For Community, we believe in:

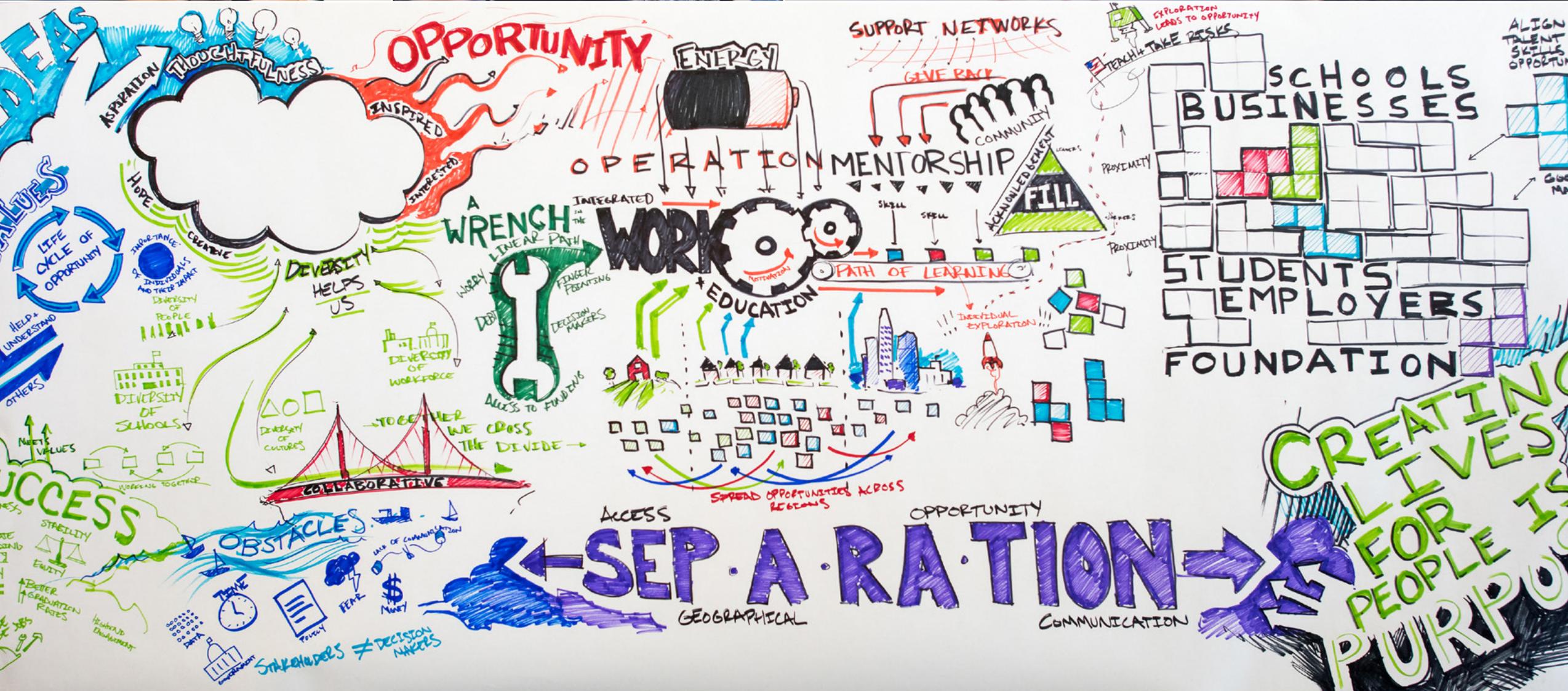
- Strategic growth that aligns talent, skills, and opportunity.
- Embracing obsolescence and risk-taking with entrepreneurship, creativity, intentionality, and high expectations.
- Life cycle of opportunity—for earning and learning—that is continuous.

For Individuals, we believe in:

- The value and potential of everyone.
- Livable wages where you can feed your family, take a vacation and find meaning in work.
- Nurturing a caring community that pursues equity, appreciates diversity and creates multiple pathways.



Artist Adam Brouillette captured the discussion with an “in the moment” drawing, turning words and aspirations – hope and thoughtfulness, connecting education to the workforce, learning as a lifelong path, risk-taking, access and opportunity, diversity and a sense of purpose – into pictures.





Affordable Housing Facilitators

Ginny Barney

Senior Collaborator, The Collective Genius

Megan Kelley

Director of Public Policy & Government Relations, National Church Residences

Michelle Heritage

CEO, Community Shelter Board

Environment & Sustainability Facilitators

Dr. William Ball

Capital University

Mackenzie King

Director, Design Research & Insight Translation, Lextant

Health & Wellbeing Facilitators

Marie Keister, AICP, APR

President & CEO,
Engage Public Affairs/MurphyEpson

Rich Lehmuth

System Vice President for Strategic Planning,
OhioHealth

Jake Briggs

Musician

Workforce Development & Education Facilitators

Jamie Greene, FAICP, AIA

Principal, planning NEXT

Dr. Lillian M. Lowery

President & CEO, FutureReady Columbus

Adam Brouillette

Founder, littleINDUSTRIES

HOSTS

MORPC

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is a voluntary association of local governments and regional organizations which envisions and embraces innovative directions in economic prosperity, energy, the environment, housing, land use, and transportation. Our transformative programming, services and innovative public policy are designed to promote and support the vitality and growth in the region.

NBBJ

For nearly 40 years, NBBJ's Columbus office has helped shaped the Central Ohio region and its communities through planning and design. NBBJ brings an urban spirit to all of our projects, practices and initiatives, and are known to create environments that inspire communities to think differently about themselves and their future. We passionately and continuously strive to improve the region we all call home. Some of our recent work includes, 250 High, Two25 Commons, 500 West Broad, Ohio Health's Neuroscience Tower, Mount Carmel's East Campus Transformation, several new branch libraries for the Columbus Metropolitan Library, and neighborhood studies for the cities of Dublin and Bexley.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



