



Dayton earns renewed "Certified Welcoming" status

-Dayton was awarded the nation's first municipal certification in 2017-

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	<h3>Welcome Dayton reception: July 19</h3>
	<p>Welcome Dayton staff and volunteers, community partners, representatives of Welcoming America and City officials will attend a reception marking the renewal of Dayton's Certified Welcoming status. The reception will be held in the lobby of City Hall (101 W. Third St.), from 5 p.m. to 5:50 p.m. on Wednesday, July 19. News media are welcome to attend.</p>

Dayton—the nation’s first official “Certified Welcoming” city—has earned renewal of the status in recognition of ongoing work in support of immigrants and refugees.

Certified Welcoming is a formal designation granted by the national non-profit Welcoming America for cities and counties that have created policies and programs reflecting their values and commitment to immigrant inclusion.

As the first city to become Certified Welcoming in 2017, Dayton is now one of 18 cities of counties in the U.S. (including Ohio's Toledo and Lucas County) that carry the designation.

While local governments are the lead entity on Certified Welcoming designations, they must work with a broad group of community-based organizations to achieve certification.

A certificate marking Dayton’s renewed status will be presented at the July 19 City Commission meeting (beginning at 6 p.m.), with remarks by Melissa Bertolo, senior director of the Certified Welcoming program and a Dayton resident.

“It is commendable that Dayton has been recertified as a Certified Welcoming city,” Mayor Jeffrey Mims said. “This marks a significant milestone in our efforts to create a

more welcoming community in Dayton. Our city is a great place to work, play, and raise a family, and we are committed to maintaining this welcoming environment.”

“Welcoming America is thrilled to congratulate the City of Dayton for its redesignation as a Certified Welcoming city,” said Welcoming America Executive Director Rachel Perić. “As a pioneer in the welcoming movement, Dayton has shown what is possible when communities work together to bring neighbors together to create a place where all people, new and long-time, can thrive, belong and prosper together.”

Commissioner Matt Joseph added: “I am very proud that we’ve been recognized as a Certified Welcoming city by Welcoming America. We have worked hard to make Dayton a more welcoming place for all, and one in which everyone has a chance to live up to their potential and contribute to the community. This recertification is both an endorsement of our efforts so far, and a useful tool for the work ahead of us.”

As of 2019, Dayton was home to 6,900 immigrants, a number that increased by 25.9% during the preceding five years. Recently, the city joined others across the U.S. in welcoming people fleeing conflict in Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Welcome Dayton, launched in 2011, supports integration of immigrants into the Dayton community by encouraging business and economic development, providing access to education, government, health and social services, ensuring equity in the justice system, and promoting arts and culture. The program is operated by the Community Engagement Division of the City of Dayton Department of Planning, Neighborhoods & Development.

Welcoming America is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization leading a movement of inclusive communities in becoming more prosperous by ensuring everyone belongs, with a belief that all people, including immigrants, are valued and vital contributors.

More information and updates are available at welcomingamerica.org and welcomedayton.org.

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