



# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement Policy

Review, Updates, and What's Next

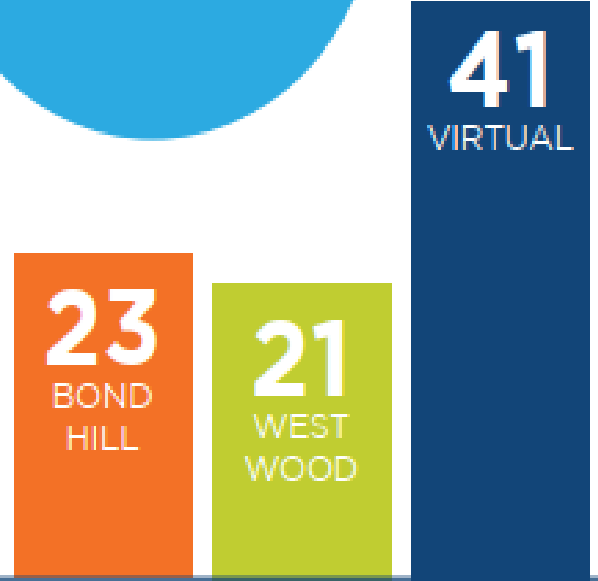
# Overview

- 1 History of Engagement
- 2 Engagement Policy Process
- 3 Internal Engagement Support
- 4 What's Next – Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

# **HISTORY OF ENGAGEMENT**

# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement

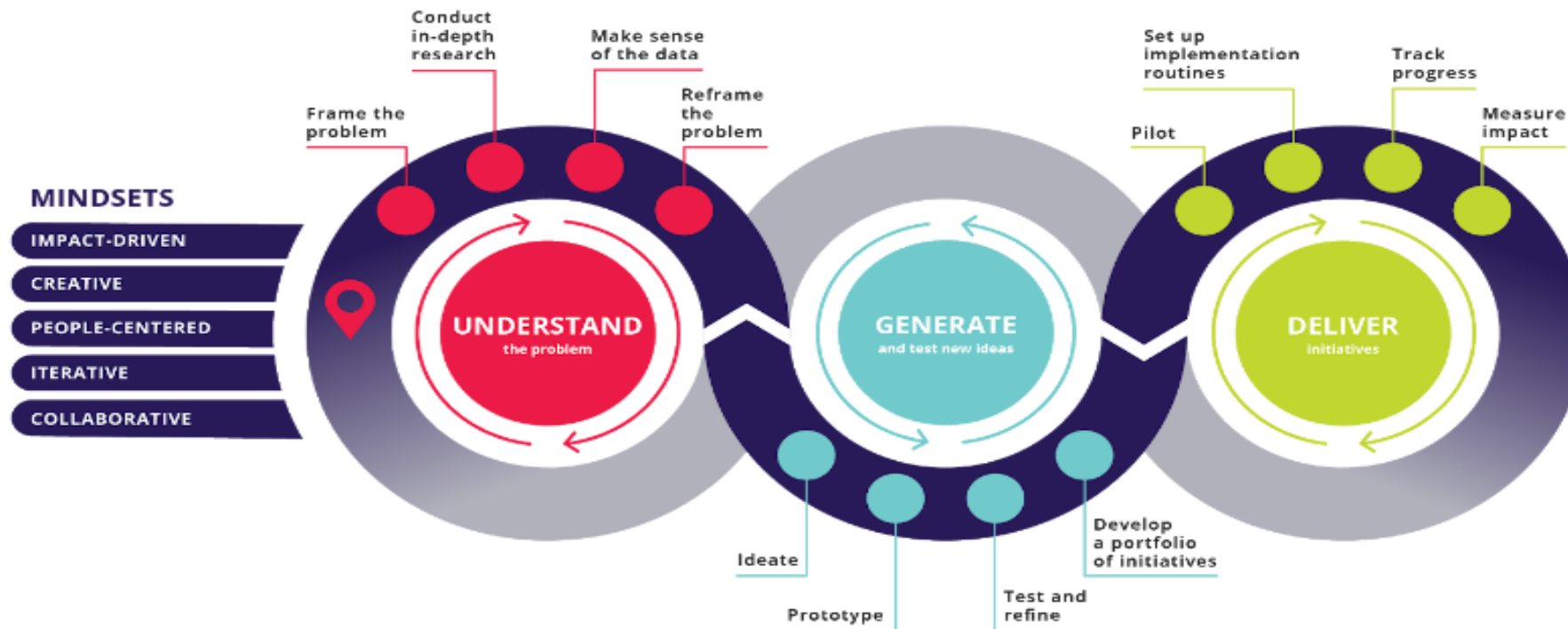
- In **2021**, Cincinnati City Council passed ordinance 0358-2021
- In fall of 2021, The Department of City Planning and Engagement hosted a series of community engagement sessions entitled “Community Conversations” to gather feedback.
- DCPE held **two in person meetings accompanied by a virtual meeting and an online survey.**
- In-person meetings were held at the **Bond Hill Recreation Center and Westwood Town Hall.**



Meeting Attendance

# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement

The City applied for and received a grant to participate in the **Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation's year-long community engagement research project**. As a part of the Bloomberg process, **12** City staff members including the City Manager and Mayor participated in workshops to identify and address problems with community engagement.



# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement

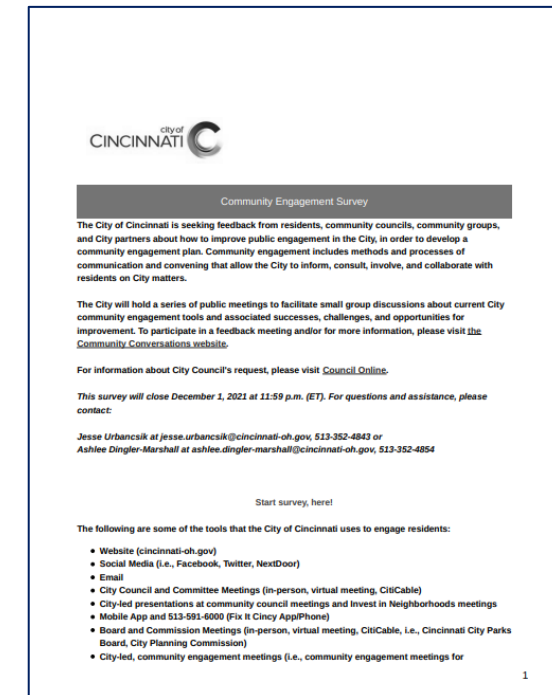
## **Bloomberg Problem Statement:**

The problem is "The City" has historically relied upon expediency, perceived expertise, and prioritizing comfortable relationships with existing power structures, which perpetuates cycles of distrust where community members are apathetic and don't find engagement worth their time.

# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement

- In early 2023, DCPE hired two full-time Community Engagement Specialists (CES)
- CES launched an online survey available to all staff members. Over seven hundred employees responded, revealing a need for more in-depth training and a system to track engagement initiatives.
- The Communications and Engagement SIET Team was formed to assist with developing a new community engagement policy and resource guide.

## Community Engagement Survey



700  
SURVEY  
RESPONSES

# **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY PROCESS**



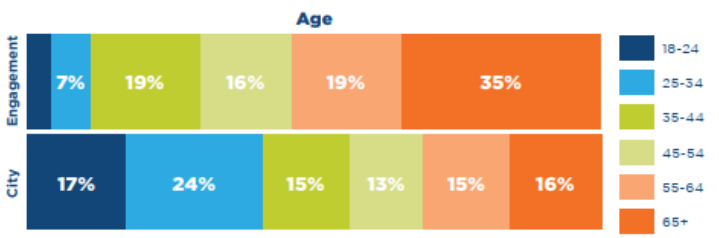
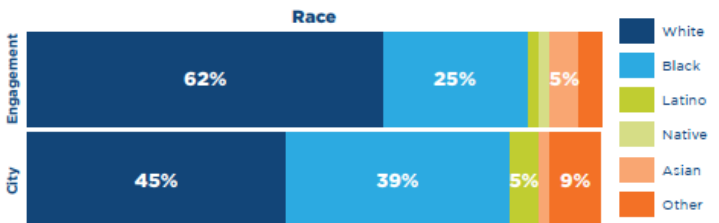
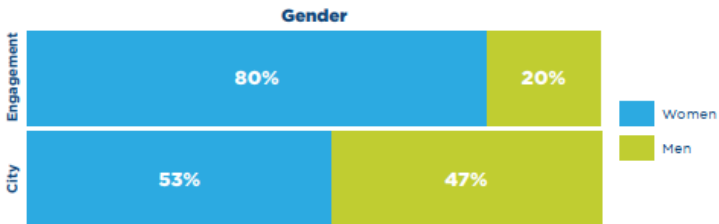
# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement

Phase one of the Community Engagement Policy began fall of 2023 with the release of the first draft. Community feedback sessions were held at the following Cincinnati Recreation Commission Centers:

- Tuesday, October 17, 2023 – Pleasant Ridge Rec Center
- Tuesday, October 24, 2023 – Hirsch Recreation Center
- Thursday, November 2, 2023 – McKie Recreation Center



### Demographic Breakdown



- Neighborhoods Represented**
- Avondale
  - Camp Washington
  - Clifton
  - College Hill
  - CUF
  - East Price Hill
  - Evanston
  - Madisonville
  - Mt. Airy
  - Mt. Washington
  - North Avondale
  - Northside
  - OTR
  - Pleasant Ridge
  - Roselawn
  - Walnut Hills
  - West Price Hill

# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement

CES engaged with various community groups to review the first draft of the community engagement policy and gather their insights on enhancing the culture of engagement in Cincinnati.

CES engaged with:

- Parents
- Youth
- Educators
- Culture based organizations
- Community Councils
- LGBTQIA+ members and allies
- Policy coalition members
- Accessibility advocates

**ALIN CINCINNATI** *Register Now!*  
FEBRUARY COALITION MEETING

**JOIN US in Co-Creating Cincinnati's Community Engagement Plan and Policy!**

**EUNIQUE AVERY**  
Community Engagement Specialist  
City of Cincinnati

**JEREMIYAH HAIRSTON**  
Community Engagement Specialist  
City of Cincinnati

**Thursday, February 22** 3PM - 5PM

**Greater Cincinnati Foundation**  
720 E Pete Rose Way  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Coalition Meeting will immediately follow the **Heart of the Community: Impact Symposium**



# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement

Phase two began in May 2024 with the release of the second draft policy. The second draft featured several revisions stemming from feedback received on the first draft. These changes included:

- ❑ **SMART Goals** (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound)
- ❑ **A Measurement Section** to track progress
- ❑ **An Action Section** outlining steps the City will take
- ❑ **Engagement Tracking** to monitor participation
- ❑ **Shared Definitions** developed collaboratively with the public

Copies of the second draft engagement policy and feedback forms were available **at all Cincinnati Recreation Commission Centers and the Downtown Branch of the Hamilton County Cincinnati Public Library.**



A Fresh Approach to Community Engagement

The City of Cincinnati is working to craft a new community engagement policy.

## Feedback Opportunity!

Share your input on the [second draft](#) of our community engagement policy! Visit any Cincinnati Recreation Center or the Main Cincinnati Public Library downtown to fill out a community feedback form!



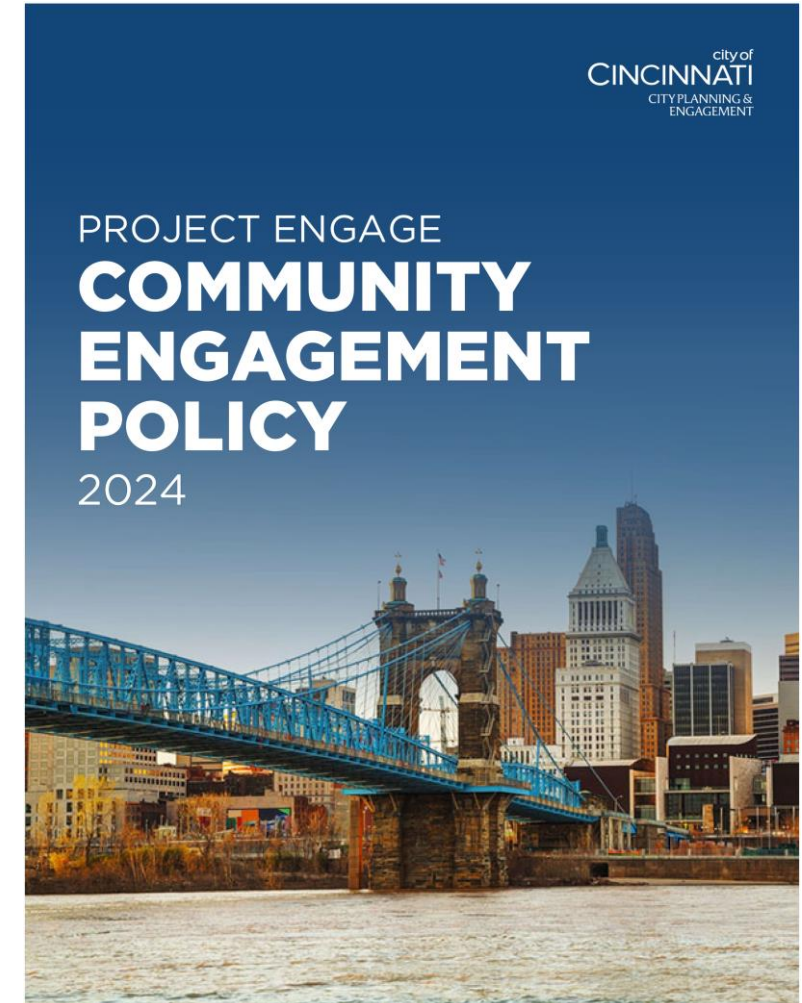


# City of Cincinnati Community Engagement

## External Research

- Met with representatives from the cities of Lancaster, Portland, and Philadelphia to learn about their approach to creating a community engagement resource guide.
- Explored various engagement software options, including Citizens Lab (now Go Vocal), Social Input, Granicus, and Social Pinpoint, to provide community members with timely, transparent, and accessible information. **CES will continue researching potential engagement software to support the goals of the community engagement policy.**

With over three years of ongoing engagement and research, **the new Administrative Regulation for Community Engagement went into effect September 3rd, 2024.**



# **INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT**

# City Planning & Engagement Community Engagement

## Department Engagement Champions

Engagement champions serve as liaisons for their respective departments and assist with supporting and strengthening the culture of engagement across the city.

### Champions will:

- Take part in engagement education, ideation, and collaboration
- Share engagement successes and challenges
- Support and test engagement strategies led by Community Engagement Specialists
- Share engagement updates and best practices with colleagues









# City Planning & Engagement Community Engagement

## Engagement Website

The Community Engagement Resource website is designed to:

- Introduce the City of Cincinnati’s adopted engagement framework
- Assist staff with selecting an engagement level
- Share engagement templates, resources, and success stories
- Highlight upcoming events/initiatives on the engagement calendar
- House all community engagement internal forms

	Level of community power 				
	INFORM 	CONSULT 	INVOLVE 	COLLABORATE 	OWN 
Public Participation Goal	Provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	Obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	Partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	Place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Committee Presentations</li> <li>• Development Notices</li> <li>• Social Media Campaigns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Perceptions Survey</li> <li>• Public Comment</li> <li>• Focus Groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile Engagement Unit</li> <li>• Policy Explorations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhood Plans</li> <li>• Community-driven Advisory Groups (MAG)</li> <li>• Place-based Problem Solving (PIVOT)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe &amp; Clean Fund</li> <li>• Boots on the Ground Fund</li> </ul>

## Engagement Tracking

All engagements under the following criteria will be tracked:

- Required by law
- Regarding policy creation and/or amendments
- Seeking public input on a proposed project
- Surveying or polling community members
- Support a specific community or neighborhood
- Involve or collaborate with community members



# City Planning & Engagement Community Engagement

## Engagement Training

**Engagement trainings are designed to:**

- Familiarize staff with engagement materials and resources
- Boost confidence in applying engagement best practices
- Ensure compliance with policy guidelines

Engagement modules are currently being developed.



**WHAT'S NEXT?**

# City Planning & Engagement Community Engagement

- Encourage City Departments to utilize the new engagement website as a resource for tools and best practices.
- Department Champions will remain key liaisons, supporting their departments by identifying potential engagement goals and metrics.
- Continue advancing efforts to create and implement engagement training opportunities for City staff.
- Explore the possibility of developing an engagement guidebook tailored for developers and applicants.



**Thank you!**  
**Questions & Discussion**

**For more information:**

<https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/engage/>

[Engage@Cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:Engage@Cincinnati-oh.gov)