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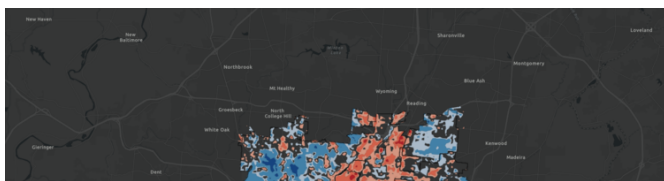
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Press Releases

Oct 30 • Written By Sophie Revis

# City of Cincinnati and Groundwork Ohio River Valley Awarded National Climate Grants

***Local Government and Nonprofit Team  
up to Ensure Equity in Climate Change  
Planning***



(CINCINNATI)- The City of Cincinnati and Groundwork Ohio River Valley (Groundwork) are collaborating on national projects with

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Heat anomalies; red indicates temperatures higher than the mean, blue indicates temperatures lower than the mean. *From the Climate Safe Neighborhoods map.*

the equity and inclusion component of the Green Cincinnati Plan. Groundwork received a \$50,000 Climate Safe Neighborhoods grant from The Kresge Foundation and The JPB Foundation to work with vulnerable communities to develop mitigation measures

for extreme heat, flooding, and air pollution. Groundwork and OES are working together to expand the impact of both projects. The partnership with Groundwork is helping OES to work directly with neighborhoods to equitably plan for Cincinnati's green future.

“It has become clear that cities will lead the global effort to fight climate change, and Cincinnati is on the front lines, “ said Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley. “This grant will expand upon the work of the Cincinnati Green Plan to ensure the results are inclusive and equitable for everyone.”

“This partnership highlights the City’s commitment to addressing racial equity and building stronger, more resilient communities from the ground up. Working with locally based Groundwork ensures long-term project sustainability and uplifts expert community voices in Cincinnati,” says Cooper Martin, the director of Sustainability & Solutions within the Center for City Solutions at the National League of Cities.

Together, Groundwork and OES plan to pilot an approach through Climate Safe Neighborhoods for residents to provide their neighborhood-level expertise, share a vision for their community, and co-create recommendations in the Green Cincinnati Plan - the City's playbook for local climate action.

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climate change, according to the National Climate Assessment. These impacts will not affect neighborhoods equally.

“Research has shown time and time again that communities of color and low-income communities will be disproportionately impacted by climate change,” says Groundwork’s Co-Executive Director, Tanner Yess. “We see that these impacts are not felt equally at a state, city, and even at the neighborhood level.”

Across the country, cities are now evaluating and revisiting policies that have helped create inequities in health, investment, greenspace, and climate vulnerability. Historic policies have left some communities more at risk than others- namely minority and low-income communities. Such neighborhoods have suffered from disinvestment, the effects of which can be seen today; fewer trees, green spaces, and far more heat-retaining surfaces. Little greenery and a high number of impervious surfaces create a hotter area and less space for rain to infiltrate naturally. In addition, neighborhoods like these have fewer resources to bounce back from the damaging effects of heat and flooding.

## **ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND**

The Climate Safe Neighborhoods Partnership pairs resident-led advocacy with environmental, demographic, and historical context. Resident science and mapping efforts will be used to engage the community, business, and government stakeholders to identify and prioritize mitigation efforts for extreme heat, flooding, and air pollution.

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The Cincinnati Park Board's Natural Resource Management Division (Parks) is overseeing the third iteration of the County's Urban Tree Canopy Assessment, which will take stock of the city's canopy coverage. From the assessment, which is supported by a grant from the U.S. Forest Service through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, will come a detailed planting plan. Groundwork will work with Parks to equitably implement meaningful improvements in neighborhood canopy coverage.

OES also recently completed an Urban Heat Island Community Science Campaign with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which will support the Climate Safe Neighborhoods effort. Vivek Shandas, Professor of Climate Adaptation at Portland State University, recently co-authored [a study](#) revealing that historical housing policies may be directly responsible for disproportionate exposure to current heat events.

"Even with the ongoing and pernicious effects of climate-induced pressures, historically disinvested communities have been remarkably resilient. Imagine how much we could learn about building regional resilience to climate change in Cincinnati if we centered communities of color in the policies and programs we develop," says Shandas.

Dr. Shandas is also the Principal at CAPA Strategies and provided support to the Cincinnati urban heat campaign along with CAPA's Manager Joey Williams.

Check out Cincinnati's Climate Safe Neighborhoods [map](#).

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efforts to build a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient future in the [Green Cincinnati Plan](#).

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Sophie Revis

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