



City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Agenda - Final

Healthy Neighborhoods

Chairperson, Jan-Michele Kearney
Vice Chairperson, Victoria Parks
Councilmember Anna Albi
Councilmember Scotty Johnson

Tuesday, April 29, 2025

12:30 PM

Council Chambers, Room 300

PRESENTATIONS

SPEAKERS

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Josh Springs & Kelly Hibbett

NEIGHBORHOOD LOOK & FEEL

Beth Johnson & Dawn Johnson

AGENDA

PRESENTATIONS

1. [202500896](#) **PRESENTATION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney, regarding the Efforts of Making Connected Communities Better Task Force to Pass Legislation Concerning Affordable Housing.

Sponsors: Kearney

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

2. [202500897](#) **PRESENTATION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney, regarding Recommendations of Updating Design Standards Made by the Making Connected Communities Task Force.

Sponsors: Kearney

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

COMMUNICATIONS

3. [202500899](#) **COMMUNICATION**, submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney regarding the Recommendations of the Making Connected Communities Better Task Force.

Sponsors: Kearney

Attachments: [Communication](#)

4. [202500900](#) **COMMUNICATION** submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney regarding Action Steps to Affordable Housing
Sponsors: Kearney
Attachments: [Communication](#)
5. [202500901](#) **COMMUNICATION** submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney regarding Sources for Action Steps & Rubrics.
Sponsors: Kearney
Attachments: [Communication](#)
6. [202500902](#) **COMMUNICATION** submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney regarding a Sample Analytic Rubric.
Sponsors: Kearney
Attachments: [Communication](#)
7. [202500903](#) **COMMUNICATION** submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney regarding a Compact Sample Neighborhood Evaluation Rubric.
Sponsors: Kearney
Attachments: [Communication](#)

ADJOURNMENT



Affordable Housing

Chair: Josh Spring

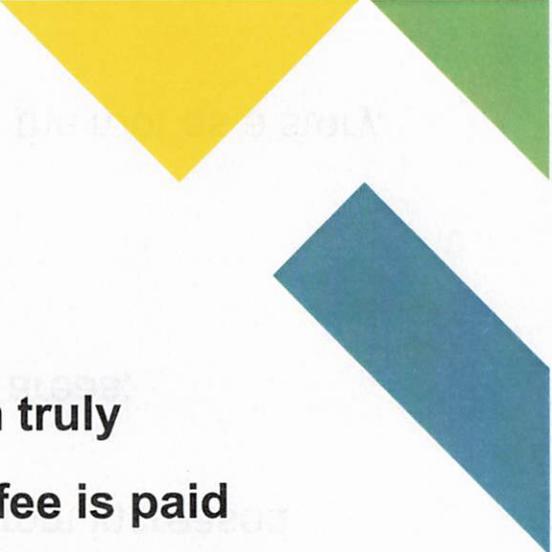


Committee Purposes

1. Create amendments to Connected Communities legislation that, when passed, will promote the development of truly affordable housing and prevent displacement.

2. Explain what else can be done to improve Connected Communities legislation.

Policy Position 1

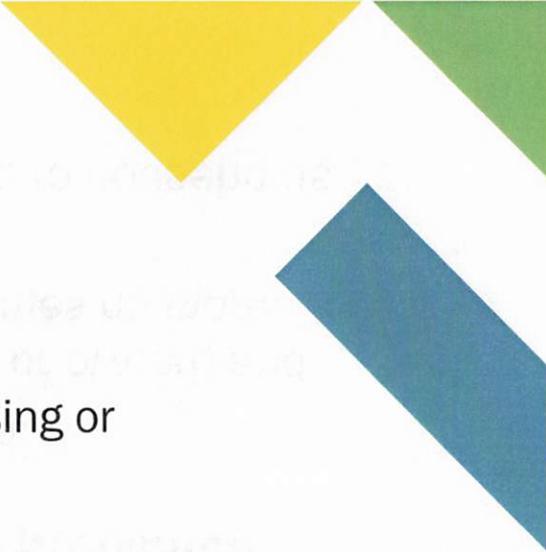


Grant Connected Communities density incentives only when truly affordable housing is included, or, in some cases, an in-lieu fee is paid to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Displacement must be prohibited.

At a minimum, the City will determine and report, by neighborhood,

- the change in the quantity of homes, including type (rented or owned) and bedroom count, that are affordable to households with incomes no more than 50% of AMI and no more than 30% of AMI,
- change in the number, type, and size of homes affordable to households earning $\leq 50\%$ and $\leq 30\%$ AMI.

Foundational Requirements



1. The following will trigger the required inclusion of affordable housing or an in-lieu-of fee:

Benefit from Connected Communities legislation to the developer from increased density in any form, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Allowance of “middle housing” in formerly single-family zoned areas;
- Decrease in or elimination of density restrictions;
- Decrease in or elimination of parking restrictions;
- Allowance to build one story higher or not count structures on the roof as a story.

Foundational Requirements (continued)

2. At least 20% of the units in a development triggering the above requirements must be affordable at equal to or less than 50% AMI.
3. The following income targets must be met:
 - Rental units must be affordable to households earning $\leq 50\%$ AMI, with at least 30% of those units affordable at $\leq 30\%$ AMI. At move-in, household income must not exceed the targeted level.
 - Homeownership units must be affordable to households earning $\leq 80\%$ AMI. Before approval, household income must not exceed the target.

Foundational Requirements (continued)

4. Preventing Displacement and Protecting the Investment

Rentals:

- Require the affordable homes to remain affordable for at least 30 years.
- At each transfer of ownership, the 30 years would automatically restart.
- Prior to the sale of a property, the tenants of that property must be given the first right of refusal to purchase.
- The City must be given the second right of refusal to purchase.
- Owners/landlords of CC benefiting developments triggering these requirements, must commit to only practicing “just-cause evictions” in these properties.

(Homeownership: We have not finalized this yet.)

Foundational Requirements (continued)

5. In-lieu-of fee parameters will include the following: (Pending Approval)

- Only benefiting developments with four units or fewer may pay an in-lieu of fee to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (Fund 439) instead of including the required number of affordable units onsite.
- The in-lieu of fee must be equivalent to what the cost would otherwise be to develop the required percentage of affordable units.

Details

- 1. Area Median Income (AMI):** As defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN HUD Metro FMR Area.
- 2. Income Definition (for household eligibility for these affordable units):** Federal or State regulations already in place on the development. If none,
 - Wages from employment age 18+
 - SS for age 18+
 - Benefits or resources based on having a low-income, such as the following, will not be counted as part of total income: SNAP, Utility Allowance, TANF, WIC, Child Support, Medicare, Medicaid.
- 3. Income and Rent Restriction Standard:** The same standard used by HUD and the Ohio Housing Finance Agency.



Details (continued)

4. Income Verification (Pending Committee Approval)

- Rental units require income verification before move-in and annually by June 30. If a household's income exceeds 120% of AMI for two consecutive years, they have one year to vacate.
- If income drops below 120% of AMI within that year, the vacate requirement is waived, and the process resets.
- A new one-year lease must be offered after each verification.



Enforcement and Tracking Outcomes

1. Non-complying developers, owners, or landlords will be required to pay significant fines.
2. The City will officially declare that they will do no future business with non-complying developers, owners, or landlords (e.g., no property tax abatements, no benefits from CC, no zoning variances, no grants or loans, etc.).
3. By June 30 each year, rental-unit owners must submit documentation to the City showing they are charging affordable rents at the required AMI levels for the agreed number and size of units (according to bedroom count), along with completed income verifications.
4. If a household's income reaches 80% AMI or higher, the City will offer available homeownership assistance. The household may accept or decline without affecting their current housing.

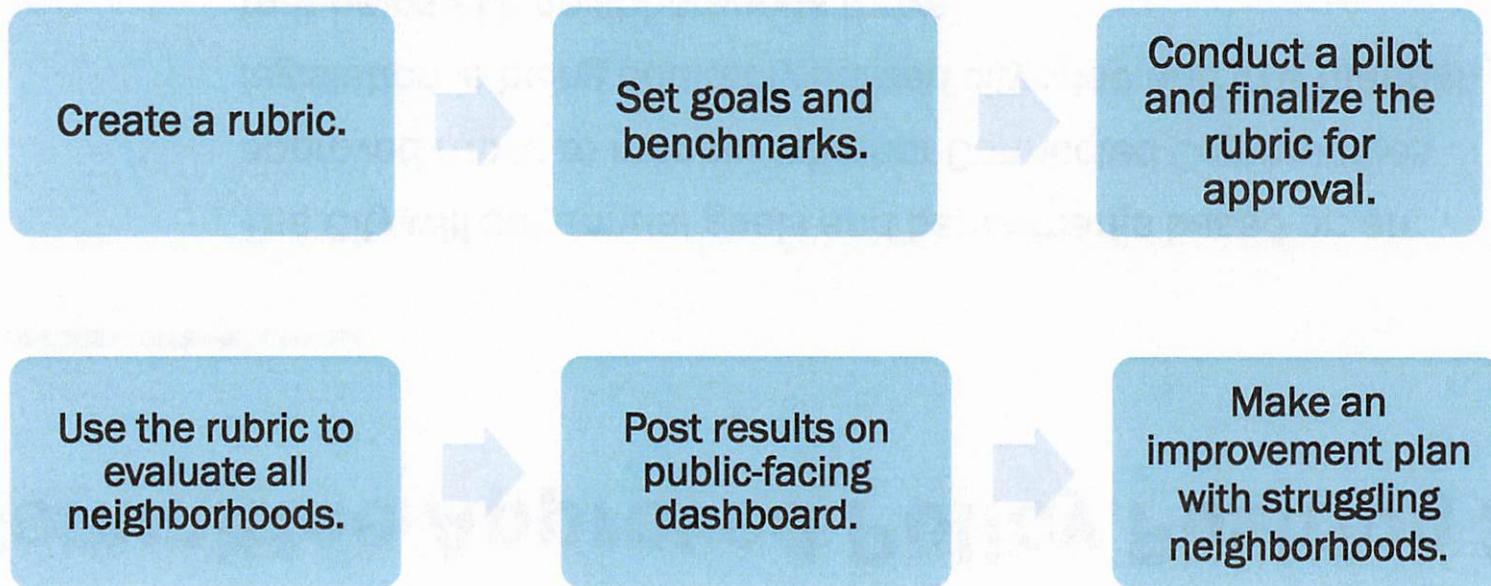


Committee-Approved Policy Position 2

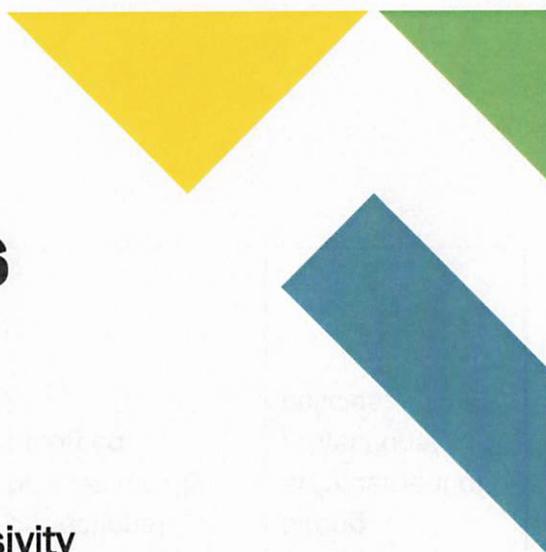
The City will set annual goals and benchmarks based on an approved rubric to monitor whether Connected Communities legislation is being equitably utilized city-wide and in a manner that helps ALL neighborhoods thrive.



Overview of Action Steps



Traits of Thriving Neighborhoods



Safety and security

Housing affordability, quality,
and diversity

Housing stability

Walkability and accessibility

Community engagement and social
cohesion

Education and schools

Socio-economic diversity and inclusivity

Health and wellness

Local amenities and services

Green spaces and outdoor recreation

Economic outlook, opportunities, and employment

Sample Rubrics

Click on image of rubric to access a pdf of the entire document.



Category	1 - Needs Much Improvement	2 - Below Average	3 - Moderate/Adequate	4 - Good	5 - Excellent
K. Housing Stability	Rent/mortgage costs highly volatile; vacancies >12%; evictions >7%; no enforcement of protections/policies.	Unstable prices; vacancies 9–11%; evictions 5–6%; weak enforcement of protections/policies.	Somewhat stable; vacancies 6–8%; evictions 3–4%; enforcement of protections/policies has gaps.	Stable costs; vacancies 3–5%; evictions 1–2%; protections/policies mostly enforced.	Very stable; vacancies <3%; evictions <1%; strong enforcement of protections/policies.

Sources



Click on image of sources to access a pdf of the entire document.



Sources for Action Steps and Rubrics

A. Safety & Security

- Hartley, Daniel A. 2014. "Public Housing, Concentrated Poverty, and Crime." Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Economic Commentary 2014-19 <https://doi.org/10.26509/frbc-ec-201419>
- *Neighborhood Crime and Disorder: Implications for Health and Quality of Life.* (2005). American Journal of Public Health, 95(9), 1507–1512.
This paper examines the impact of crime and safety concerns on public health, underlining the need for secure environments to support flourishing communities.
- Rios, V. M. (2011). *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys.* New York University Press.
- Sampson, R. J., & Winter, A. (2021). *The Legacy of the "Culture of Poverty" and the Future of Neighborhood-based Policing.* The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 694(1), 94-114.

B. Walkability & Accessibility

- Ewing, R., & Cervero, R. (2010). *Travel and the Built Environment: A Meta-Analysis.* Journal of the American Planning Association, 76(3), 265-294.
This study emphasizes the importance of walkability and access to public transportation as essential components of sustainable and livable urban areas.
- Ewing, R., & Hamidi, S. (2015). *The Influence of Walkability on Housing Prices and Rents: A Review of the Literature.* Journal of Planning Literature, 30(4), 239-251.
- Ghods, L., & Zhou, M. (2020). *The Role of Urban Design in Promoting Walkability and Active Transportation.* Journal of Urban Design, 25(3), 367-388.

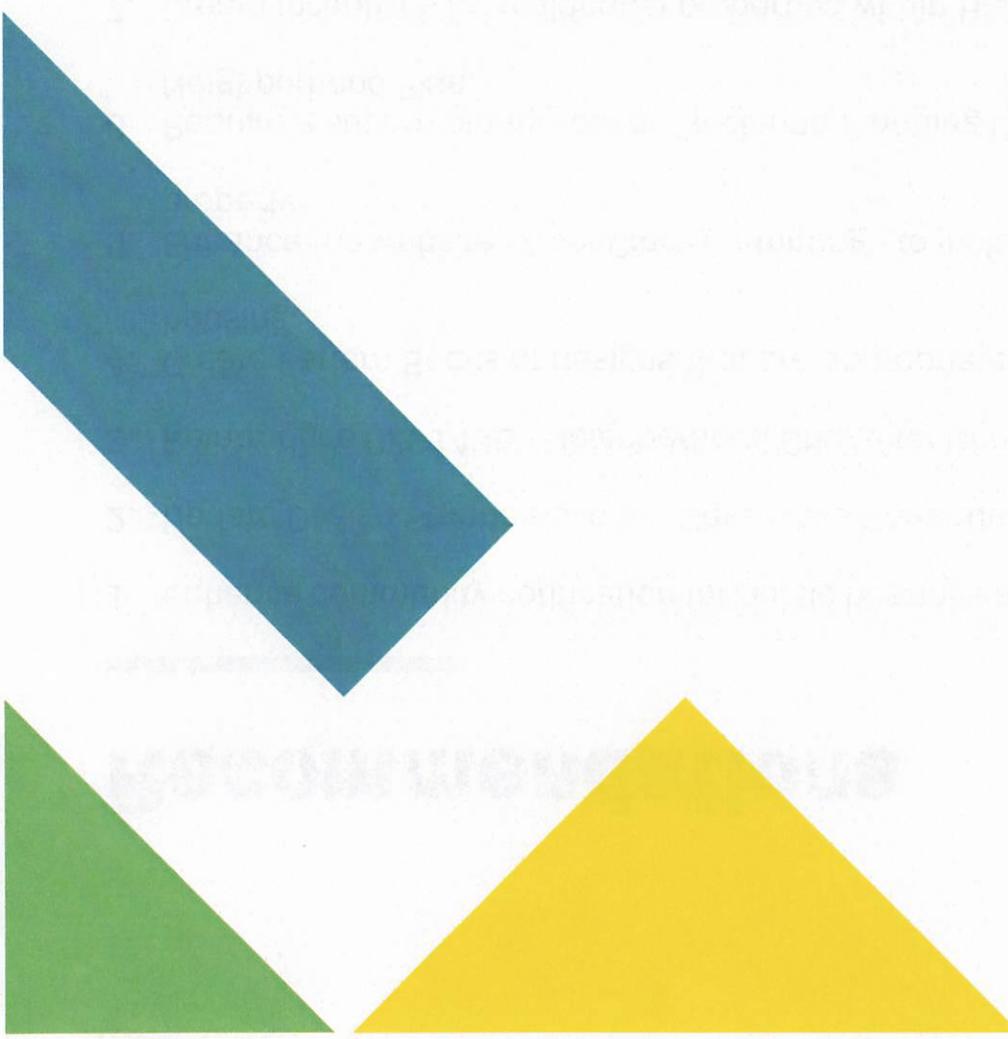
C. Community Engagement & Social Cohesion

- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community.* Simon & Schuster.
Robert Putnam's work highlights the role of social capital and community engagement in creating vibrant, resilient neighborhoods.
- Putnam, R. D. (2016). *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis.* Simon & Schuster.
- Van Der Boor, M., & Hofman, Z. (2022). *Social Cohesion and Neighborhood Well-Being: A Systematic Review.* Urban Studies, 59(2), 321-340.

D. Green Spaces & Outdoor Recreation

- Barton, H., & Grant, M. (2018). *A Healthier Place: Theory, Evidence and Practice in Building Sustainable Communities.* Routledge.
- Maas, J., et al. (2006). *Green Space, Urbanity, and Health: How Strong Is the Relation?* Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health, 60(7), 587-592.
This study discusses the positive impact of green spaces on physical and mental health, reinforcing the importance of parks and natural environments in flourishing neighborhoods.





Neighborhood Look and Feel

Chairs: Beth Johnson and Dawn Johnson

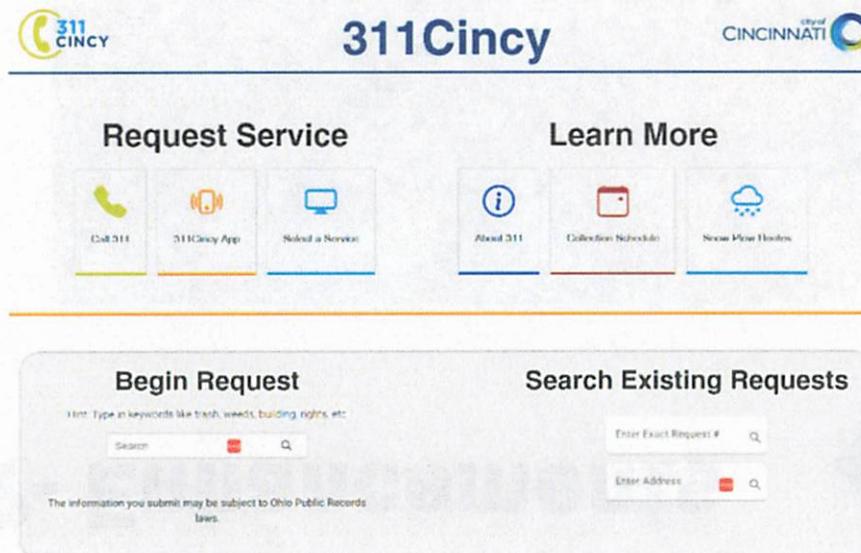
Recommendations

1. Enhance community notification for public hearings and permits.
2. Update Design Standards in the Connected Communities legislation.
3. Reintroduce CZC1436 - Neighborhood Character Conservation Districts.
4. Create Pattern Books of designs that are appropriate for different neighborhoods for various types of housing.
5. Enhance the website - OpenCincy Permitting - to include what design standards are applicable to each property.
6. Require a supermajority vote at Cincinnati Planning Commission and City Council to override an adopted Neighborhood Plan.
7. Create incentives for residential properties within Historic Districts and Neighborhood Character Conservation Districts to aid homeowners in lower-income brackets with home improvements.

Notification: How Are You Heard?

Current system allows for community input for development during

- Zoning relief (i.e., variances, conditional uses, etc. at a public hearing. Notice is sent via email and mail.
- Zoning changes at staff conferences and public hearings (Planning Commission and City Council). Notice is sent via email and mail.
- Code Enforcement: Cincy 311 website and app.
- TIF funding: community council meetings, public hearings (Planning Commission and City Council). Notice is sent via email.
- Tax abatements: Public hearings (Planning Commission and City Council). Notice is sent via email.

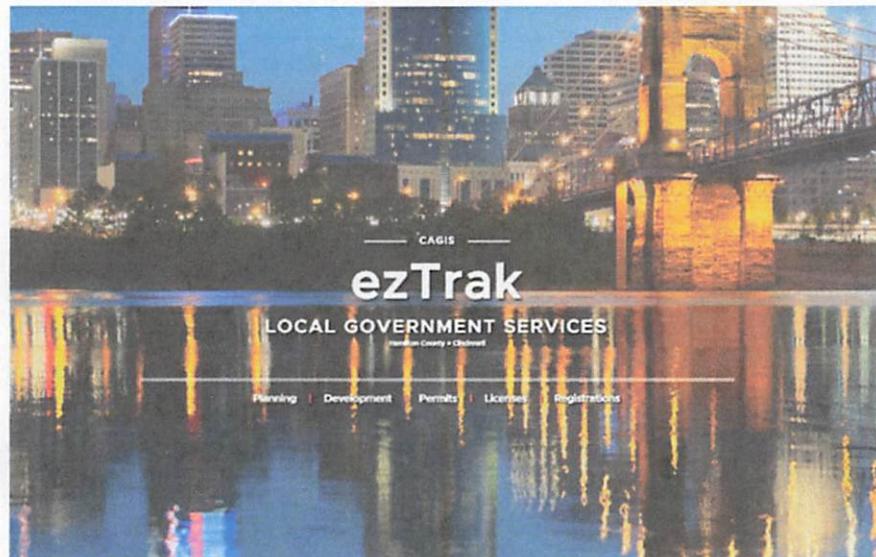


How Are You Heard?- Enhancements

Send automated emails or text messages with comprehensive information on projects to community councils through the EZtrak permitting system whenever Zoning Examiner, Zoning Change, or Historic Conservation Board, etc. applications are accepted as complete for properties in their neighborhoods.

Create an option for citizens to opt into automatic emails or text messages for specific neighborhoods.

Send automatic emails or text messages through the EZTrak permitting system to community councils when permits are issued in their neighborhoods in connection with Connected Communities.



Basic Terminology Used

Design Standards: mandatory design requirements that must be followed per the interpretation of either staff or a review board/zoning hearing examiner. Standards can help ensure that development in the city achieves at least a minimum quality of design.

Zones: the divisions of the city into distinct areas, each with its own set of regulations regarding permitted land uses, building size, density, and other development characteristics, essentially dictating what types of structures can be built and how they can be used within that specific zone; typically categorized as residential, commercial, or industrial.

Planned Development: a large, integrated development adhering to a comprehensive site plan and located on a single site. Planned developments can create their own site and development requirements, including height, density, setbacks, parking, etc.

Update the Design Standards

Design standards that allow for better contextual design rather than an Italianate building type.



This is what is required: Italianate commercial building form with base middle and top.

This is not the predominate form for residential architecture in Cincinnati and is commercial in nature, not residential.



This is an example of infill in Walnut Hills that is compatible but wouldn't meet the current Connected Community design standards. The brick house is a typical existing building within the Walnut Hills neighborhood.

Update the Design Standards

Design that promotes contextual height within Single Family and Residential Mixed Zones through averaging.



Existing Standards

SF- Maximum Height remains at 35 feet

RM- MH Maximum height remains at 35 feet

RM-T Maximum height increases to 47 feet (equivalent to 4 stories)

An example of a Proposed Standard with averaging height based on current zoning code averaging for setbacks:

The height of new structures may not exceed the maximum average height of three buildings or 300 feet in both directions, whichever is greater, on the same side of the street, in the same block face, and in the same zoning district.

Update the Design Standards

Design standards that apply to all buildings within Single Family and Residential Multi-Family Districts, not just 2-4 family units

Existing Standards

Design Standards. Two-family, three-family, and four-family dwellings located within a designated Connected Communities district shall comply with the design standards set forth below.

RMT: Minimum lot-area-per-dwelling-unit regulations do not apply.

What this will allow

No density limits to RM 2.0T, RM 1.2T, or RM .7T

No design standards for 5-unit and above buildings in RM 2.0T, RM 1.2T, or RM .7T

Update the Design Standards

Design standards that are applicable to the different zones, including planned developments, rather than the same design standards for residential, commercial, office etc.



Residential buildings

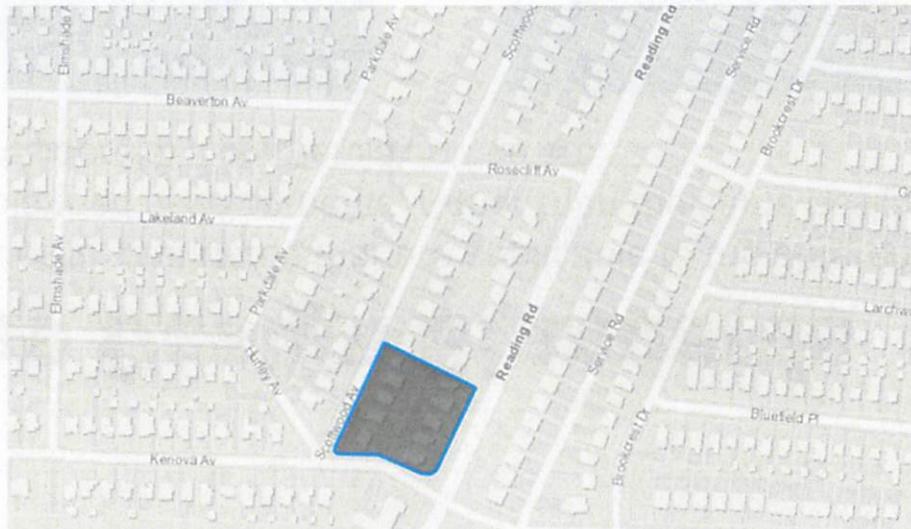


look different from

commercial buildings.

Update the Design Standards

- Design standards are applicable to planned developments
- Planned developments can be as small as 1.5 acres.
- The smaller the site, the more it must be integrated into the existing context.



Reintroduce CZC 1436 - Neighborhood Character Conservation Districts

Similar to Urban Design Overlay Zones but for Residential areas

“Preservation Light.” Similar to historic districts, with less restrictive design guidelines and no historic, architectural, or cultural integrity requirements to establish a district

Each NCCD would create individualized Neighborhood Character Conservation District overlay plans and development standards.

- Required Review and Standards
- Contributing vs. non-contributing
- Demolition review
- Building massing, bulk, size, and height
- Lot configuration, frontage, and orientation
- Each neighborhood can decide additional elements to review.

Create Pattern Books



SOUTH BEND NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL
Pre-approved, ready-to-build housing

Create a collection of ready-made, pre-approved designs for residential infill.

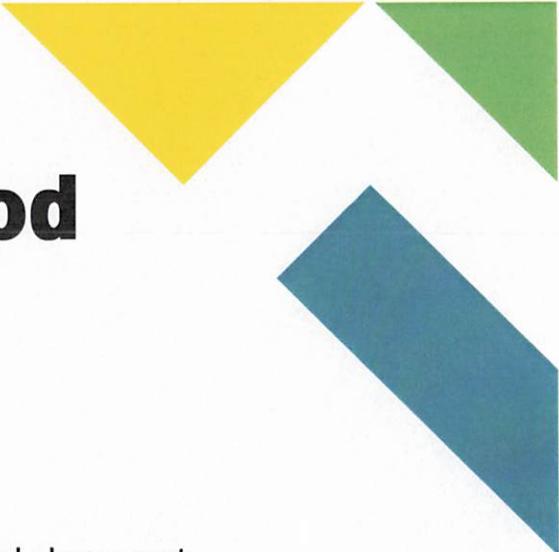
Can be customized to neighborhoods, general styles, or type of housing

Can support a more streamlined permitting process

Communities will be asked to identify “model” buildings for their communities.

Enhance the Website - OpenCincy

Require a Supermajority Vote to Override an Adopted Neighborhood Plan



Update neighborhood plans on a regular basis.

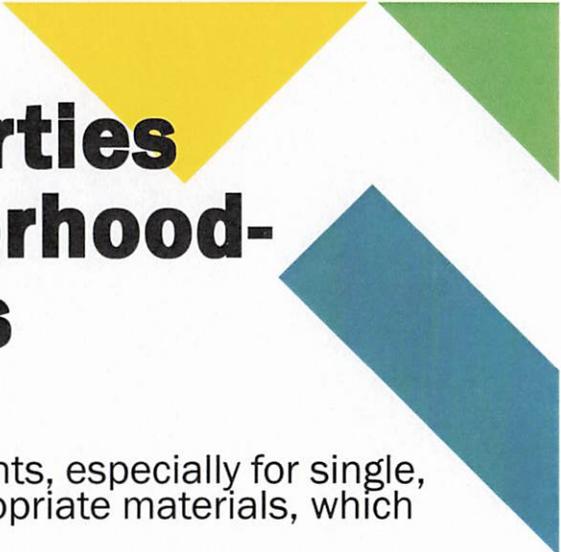
City Planning Department should highlight when a development or proposal does not meet a neighborhood plan or a part of a neighborhood plan.

- For example, a neighborhood plan could call for increased density but also call for the preservation of a street.

A supermajority should be required at both Cincinnati Planning Commission and City Council.

- CPC Super Majority= 5 votes rather than 4 or 1 more than the majority present
- City Council Super Majority= 6 votes rather than 5

Incentives for Residential Properties in Historic Districts and Neighborhood- Character Conservation Districts



Very few incentives at the local, state, or federal level for residential improvements, especially for single, two, three and four family buildings. Incentives can help to offset costs for appropriate materials, which are often better quality.

Incentives can be focused on lower-income brackets or can be tiered similar to Residential Tax Abatement.

Incentives can be focused on exterior improvements/façade improvements of existing buildings since overlays review exterior changes.

Incentives can be developed for adaptive reuse of existing structures that are contributing to the character of neighborhoods and can be turned into or are existing middle housing.

Potential incentives

- Tax Abatements
- Façade Grants
- Tax Credits



Making Connected Communities Better!

Agenda

- WELCOME!
- PRESENTATIONS BY WORKING GROUPS
 - Infrastructure
 - Environment
 - Neighborhood Look and Feel
 - Affordable Housing
 - Accessibility
- Q&A





Environment

Chairs: Larry Falkin and Susan Bilz



Issue 1: Stormwater/Sewer Backups

The Problems

- Sewers overflow into streams and basements.
- Storms are intensifying.
- More households mean more sewage.
- More development means more storm runoff.

The Solutions – Code Revisions

- Allow pervious driveways and parking lots.
- Require/Incentivize stormwater BMPs.
- Require analysis of project impacts on stormwater.
- Prohibit projects that worsen flooding/overflows/backups.



Issue 2: Tree Protection/Heat Islands

The Problems

- Trees provide vital services - cooling, water absorption, air cleaning.
- Cincinnati has great tree coverage but not in all neighborhoods.
- New development may displace trees.

The Solutions – Adopt-a-Tree Protection Ordinance

- Require curb strips with trees and grass.
- Require replacement of removed trees on site or through a tree bank.
- Protect heritage trees (large native trees).
- Adopt “Trees in Parking Lots” white paper.

Issue 3: Code Enforcement



The Problems

- Some landlords don't maintain their properties.
- More multi-family properties means more risk of problem landlords.

The Solutions

- Increase budget for code enforcement and outreach (property owners and residents).
- Add citizen-suit provision to property maintenance code.
- Increase penalties, including property forfeiture.

Issue 4: Climate Protection

The Problems

- Green Cincinnati Plan goal – 50% GHG reduction by 2030; 100% by 2050.
- Most emissions come from buildings.
- More buildings and more residents = more emissions.

The Solutions

- Electrify everything.
- Incentivize solar.
- Promote energy efficiency.
- Replace gaslights.

Issue 5: Transit Support

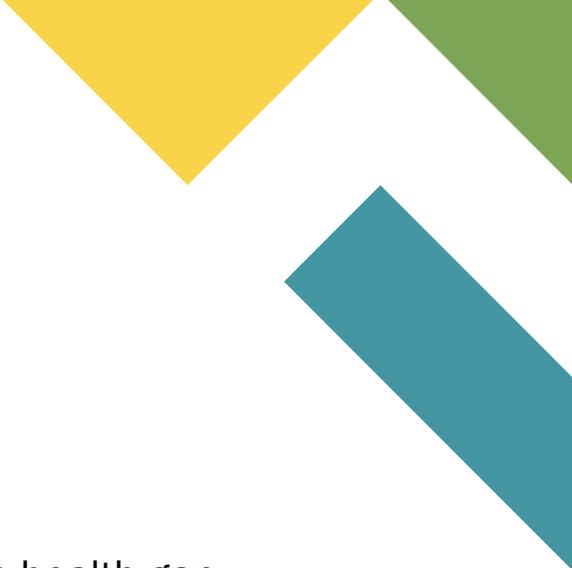
The Problems

- Connected Communities aims to increase transit use.
- The “Last Mile” problem suppresses transit use.
- Poor sidewalks discourage walking.
- Other last-mile options are limited.

The Solutions

- Make sidewalks a City responsibility, funded by a sidewalk assessment.
- Support bike/pedestrian infrastructure, including the CROWN loop.
- Require “Complete Streets.”

Issue 6: Environmental Equity



The Problems

- Many indicators of wellness, like life expectancy and asthma rates, vary dramatically from one neighborhood to the next.
- Environmental conditions, like indoor air quality, are big contributors to the wellness gap.

The Solutions

- Identify the causes of the health gap.
- Strengthen policies and programs that address indoor-air-quality problems, infestations, and exposure to mold and lead.

Issue 7: Hillsides/Floodplains/Wetlands

The Problems

- Some land is not suitable for development.
 - Landslide prone
 - Flood prone
- Pressure to densify may mean pressure to encroach on unsuitable sites.
- Intensifying storms mean more floods and landslides.

The Solutions

- Update Hillside District maps and regulations.
- Update and strengthen floodplain restrictions and stormwater regulations.
- Require developers of steep slopes to provide financial assurance for future landslide damage.
- Create a fund to acquire and protect undevelopable land.

Issue 8: EV Charging Infrastructure



The Problems

- Electric vehicles are growing in popularity.
- EVs are cleaner, faster, quieter, cheaper, and more reliable than older technologies.
- Many tenants lack access to chargers.

The Solutions

- Require new residential parking to have chargers.
- Locate DC fast chargers in or near Neighborhood Business Districts.

Issue 9: Food Deserts and Food Swamps

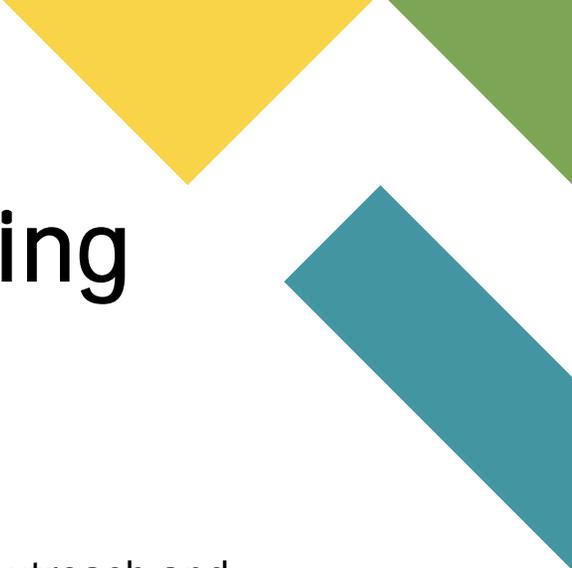
The Problems

- Some neighborhoods lack convenient access to healthy foods (food deserts).
- Some neighborhoods have an overabundance of unhealthy fast food (food swamps).
- Adding density to food deserts and food swamps means more people lack good nutrition.

The Solutions

- Incentivize basic services to locate in Neighborhood Business Districts.
- Expand Food Access Programs.
- Provide support services for small businesses in underserved locations.

Issue 10: Illegal Dumping/Littering



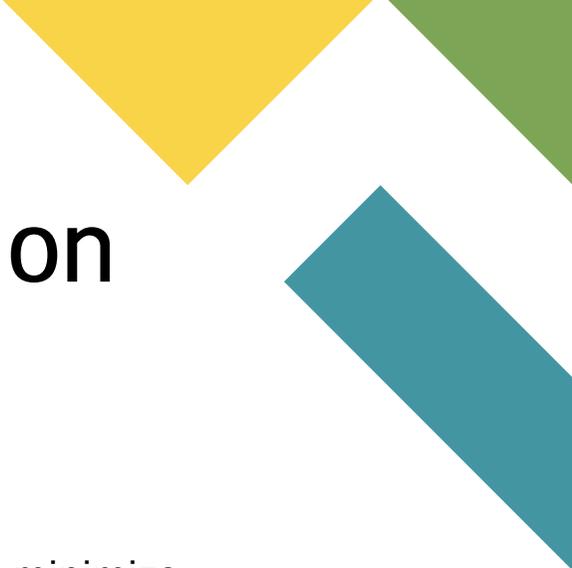
The Problems

- Many neighborhoods have too much littering and illegal dumping.
- When a neighborhood looks bad, people treat it badly.
- More density may increase littering and dumping.

The Solutions

- The City should step up outreach and enforcement of illegal dumping and littering.
- The City should increase funding for clean ups.
- Add a “citizen suit” provision to dumping and property maintenance laws.

Issue 11: Noise and Light Pollution



The Problems

- Excess noise and light at night disrupt the lives of people and wildlife.
- Increased density may increase noise and light levels at night.

The Solutions

- Design new structures to minimize noise and light issues.
- Utilize trees as noise and light barriers.
- Update codes to limit nighttime noise and light.



Infrastructure

Chairs: Brian Spitler and Carol Gibbs

Introduction: Infrastructure and the Environment

The infrastructure committee's discussion closely mirrored that of the environment committee, highlighting the deep interconnection between these areas. While the outcomes may differ, their relationship is mutually reinforcing. Together, they shape the strength and livability of our city.

You've already heard many infrastructure points raised by the environment committee. We've collaborated with them and fully support their analysis.



Areas of Particular Concern

These issues have been ongoing—some for many years. Without clear regulations for new and modified development, the problems will inevitably worsen:

- Sewers
- Stormwater
- Traffic
- Pedestrian Safety
- Internet Access

Click for a Must-hear Podcast by WVXU's Becca Costello and Ella Rowan:



Sewers and Stormwater

“Without the stormwater entering into our system, we have plenty of capacity.”

--MSD Director, Diana Christy

Short-term Solution

A short-term solution to reduce stormwater runoff is on-site retention for new construction—installing holding tanks sized to the property, which slowly release water to mimic smaller flow rates, though increasingly intense storms pose challenges.



Problems

- Increase in density increasing the load
- Lack of funding

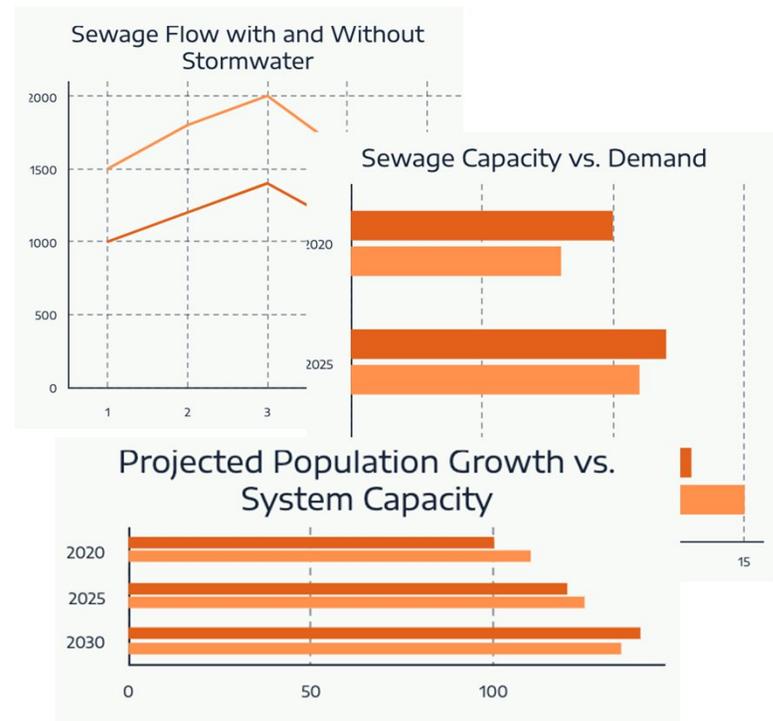
(Most MSD funding goes to downstream capture facilities, leaving upstream supply lines underfunded and unresolved.)

Recommendations

City Council: Immediately work with the administration to identify the long-term funding needed to fix these problems.

MSD: Provide a clear breakdown of per capita sewage capacity and the additional density the system could support if stormwater were excluded.

Stormwater: do the same for a newly proposed system.



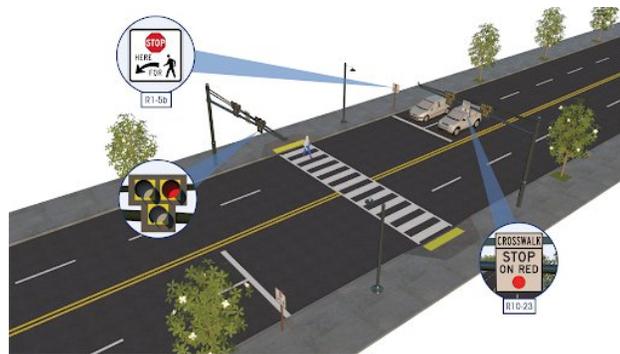
Traffic and Pedestrian Safety

Problem

Increased commuting, limited traffic enforcement, and narrow roadways have led to more pedestrian deaths. More density will exacerbate this.

Recommendation

Require a stricter review of new or modified developments, with specific traffic capacity limits tailored to each area.



Parking and Street Capacity Challenges



Problems

- Many streets can't support more parking
- Increased density worsens congestion
- Narrow lots often allow only 1 off-street space
- Most households have 2+ cars
- One-side parking causes:
 - Blocked sidewalks
 - Pedestrian safety risks
 - Emergency vehicle access issues

Recommendation

City Council should require a more thorough visual review of pedestrian safety and increased parking stress when a Connected Communities zone is being developed.

Expansion of Internet Access



Problem

- Many residents lack affordable, reliable internet
- Not due to provider limitations — providers are willing
- Key barrier: building owners denying infrastructure access
- Providers confirmed this in a report shared with the Vice Mayor

Recommendation:

- Require all permits in Connected Communities areas to allow infrastructure installation
- Ensure equal access to high-speed internet, especially for underserved communities

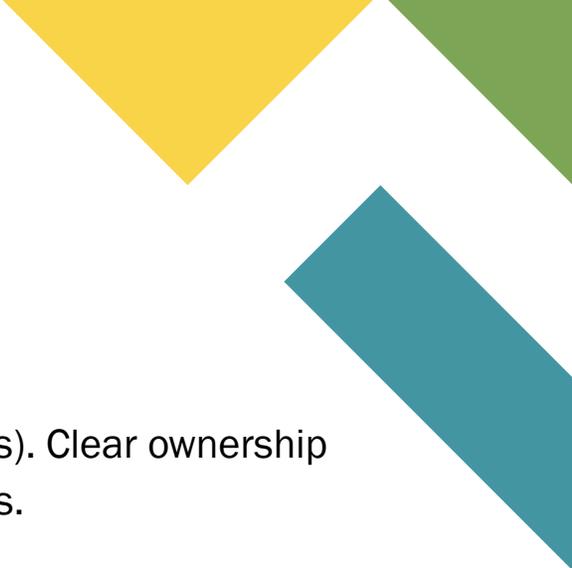
Altafiber: Issues



Reasons for Limited Internet Access in Multiple-Dwelling-Unit (MDU) Buildings

- Each MDU is privately owned, so installing fiber requires a Right of Entry (ROE) agreement from the owner. While Altafiber covers upgrade costs, permission from the owner is essential.
- In some cases, the building owner may have an exclusive bulk or marketing agreement with another provider that limits our ability to upgrade the building to fiber or to deliver our Fioptics services where we have made the upgrades.
- "A major challenge in upgrading fiber is identifying the building owner. Without contact information, we can't begin next steps—and ownership can be difficult.

Altafiber: Solutions



-
- Owner contact info is often hard to find, especially for smaller MDUs (<50 units). Clear ownership details would greatly support efforts to initiate Right of Entry (ROE) agreements.
 - Most MDUs are private property, so owner approval is needed for fiber installation. Altafiber covers costs and minimizes disruption, but without legal incentives, many owners decline ROE agreements.
 - Integrating fiber during early design and construction benefits both Altafiber and developers. Early notification of MDU projects allows us to install fiber in existing trenches or run inside-wiring before drywall, ensuring faster deployment and minimizing disruptions.
 - To ensure new MDU buildings are equipped with Altafiber services, collaborate with us early in the construction process and help arrange ROE agreements with the owner.



Neighborhood Look and Feel

Chairs: Beth Johnson and Dawn Johnson

Recommendations



1. Enhance community notification for public hearings and permits.
2. Update Design Standards in the Connected Communities legislation.
3. Reintroduce CZC1436 - Neighborhood Character Conservation Districts.
4. Create Pattern Books of designs that are appropriate for different neighborhoods for various types of housing.
5. Enhance the website - OpenCincy Permitting - to include what design standards are applicable to each property.
6. Require a supermajority vote at Cincinnati Planning Commission and City Council to override an adopted Neighborhood Plan.
7. Create incentives for residential properties within Historic Districts and Neighborhood Character Conservation Districts to aid homeowners in lower-income brackets with home improvements.

Notification: How Are You Heard?

Current system allows for community input for development during

- Zoning relief (i.e., variances, conditional uses, etc. at a public hearing. Notice is sent via email and mail.
- Zoning changes at staff conferences and public hearings (Planning Commission and City Council). Notice is sent via email and mail.
- Code Enforcement: Cincy 311 website and app.
- TIF funding: community council meetings, public hearings (Planning Commission and City Council). Notice is sent via email.
- Tax abatements: Public hearings (Planning Commission and City Council). Notice is sent via email.

The screenshot displays the 311Cincy website interface. At the top, there are logos for '311 CINCY', '311Cincy', and 'CINCINNATI city of'. Below the logos, there are two main sections: 'Request Service' and 'Learn More'. The 'Request Service' section includes three buttons: 'Call 311' (with a phone icon), '311Cincy App' (with a mobile app icon), and 'Select a Service' (with a computer monitor icon). The 'Learn More' section includes three buttons: 'About 311' (with an information icon), 'Collection Schedule' (with a calendar icon), and 'Snow Plow Routes' (with a snowflake icon). Below these sections, there are two search boxes: 'Begin Request' and 'Search Existing Requests'. The 'Begin Request' box has a search input field with a hint: 'Hint: Type in keywords like trash, weeds, building, rights, etc.' and a search button. The 'Search Existing Requests' box has two search input fields: 'Enter Exact Request #' and 'Enter Address', both with search buttons. At the bottom of the 'Search Existing Requests' box, there is a note: 'The information you submit may be subject to Ohio Public Records laws.'

How Are You Heard?- Enhancements

Send automated emails or text messages with comprehensive information on projects to community councils through the EZtrak permitting system whenever Zoning Examiner, Zoning Change, or Historic Conservation Board, etc. applications are accepted as complete for properties in their neighborhoods.

Create an option for citizens to opt into automatic emails or text messages for specific neighborhoods.

Send automatic emails or text messages through the EZTrak permitting system to community councils when permits are issued in their neighborhoods in connection with Connected Communities.



Basic Terminology Used



Design Standards: mandatory design requirements that must be followed per the interpretation of either staff or a review board/zoning hearing examiner. Standards can help ensure that development in the city achieves at least a minimum quality of design.

Zones: the divisions of the city into distinct areas, each with its own set of regulations regarding permitted land uses, building size, density, and other development characteristics, essentially dictating what types of structures can be built and how they can be used within that specific zone; typically categorized as residential, commercial, or industrial.

Planned Development: a large, integrated development adhering to a comprehensive site plan and located on a single site. Planned developments can create their own site and development requirements, including height, density, setbacks, parking, etc.

Update the Design Standards

Design standards that allow for better contextual design rather than an Italianate building type.



This is what is required: Italianate commercial building form with base middle and top.

This is not the predominate form for residential architecture in Cincinnati and is commercial in nature, not residential.



This is an example of infill in Walnut Hills that is compatible but wouldn't meet the current Connected Community design standards. The brick house is a typical existing building within the Walnut Hills neighborhood.

Update the Design Standards

Design that promotes contextual height within Single Family and Residential Mixed Zones through averaging.



Existing Standards

SF- Maximum Height remains at 35 feet

RM- MH Maximum height remains at 35 feet

RM-T Maximum height increases to 47 feet (equivalent to 4 stories)

An example of a Proposed Standard with averaging height based on current zoning code averaging for setbacks:

The height of new structures may not exceed the maximum average height of three buildings or 300 feet in both directions, whichever is greater, on the same side of the street, in the same block face, and in the same zoning district.

Update the Design Standards

Design standards that apply to all buildings within Single Family and Residential Multi-Family Districts, not just 2-4 family units

Existing Standards

Design Standards. Two-family, three-family, and four-family dwellings located within a designated Connected Communities district shall comply with the design standards set forth below.

RMT: Minimum lot-area-per-dwelling-unit regulations do not apply.

What this will allow

No density limits to RM 2.0T, RM 1.2T, or RM .7T

No design standards for 5-unit and above buildings in RM 2.0T, RM 1.2T, or RM .7T

Update the Design Standards

Design standards that are applicable to the different zones, including planned developments, rather than the same design standards for residential, commercial, office etc.



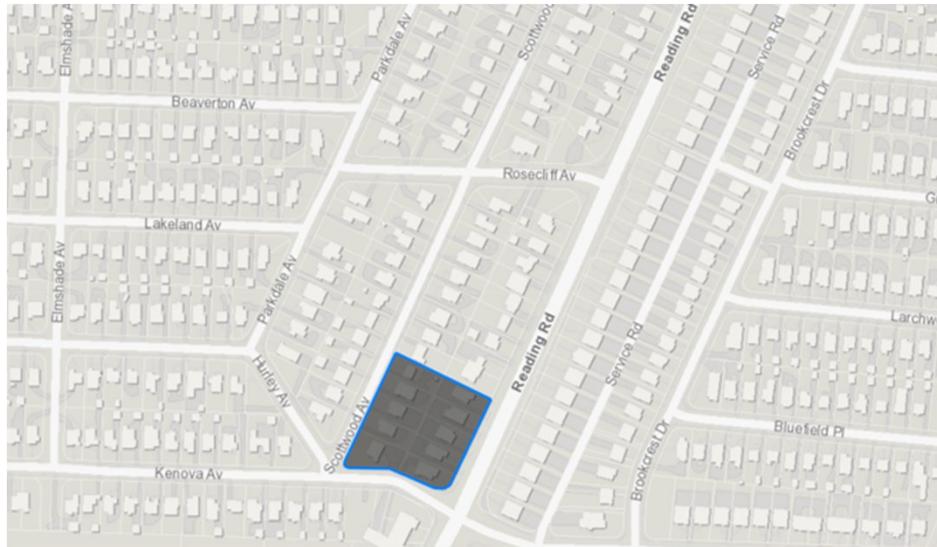
Residential buildings



look different from commercial buildings.

Update the Design Standards

- Design standards are applicable to planned developments
- Planned developments can be as small as 1.5 acres.
- The smaller the site, the more it must be integrated into the existing context.



Reintroduce CZC 1436 - Neighborhood Character Conservation Districts

Similar to Urban Design Overlay Zones but for Residential areas

“Preservation Light.” Similar to historic districts, with less restrictive design guidelines and no historic, architectural, or cultural integrity requirements to establish a district

Each NCCD would create individualized Neighborhood Character Conservation District overlay plans and development standards.

- Required Review and Standards
- Contributing vs. non-contributing
- Demolition review
- Building massing, bulk, size, and height
- Lot configuration, frontage, and orientation
- Each neighborhood can decide additional elements to review.

Create Pattern Books



SOUTH BEND NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL
Pre-approved, ready-to-build housing

Create a collection of ready-made, pre-approved designs for residential infill.

Can be customized to neighborhoods, general styles, or type of housing

Can support a more streamlined permitting process

Communities will be asked to identify “model” buildings for their communities.

Enhance the Website - OpenCincy



Require a Supermajority Vote to Override an Adopted Neighborhood Plan

Update neighborhood plans on a regular basis.

City Planning Department should highlight when a development or proposal does not meet a neighborhood plan or a part of a neighborhood plan.

- For example, a neighborhood plan could call for increased density but also call for the preservation of a street.

A supermajority should be required at both Cincinnati Planning Commission and City Council.

- CPC Super Majority= 5 votes rather than 4 or 1 more than the majority present
- City Council Super Majority= 6 votes rather than 5



Incentives for Residential Properties in Historic Districts and Neighborhood- Character Conservation Districts

Very few incentives at the local, state, or federal level for residential improvements, especially for single, two, three and four family buildings. Incentives can help to offset costs for appropriate materials, which are often better quality.

Incentives can be focused on lower-income brackets or can be tiered similar to Residential Tax Abatement.

Incentives can be focused on exterior improvements/façade improvements of existing buildings since overlays review exterior changes.

Incentives can be developed for adaptive reuse of existing structures that are contributing to the character of neighborhoods and can be turned into or are existing middle housing.

Potential incentives

- Tax Abatements
- Façade Grants
- Tax Credits



Affordable Housing

Chair: Josh Spring



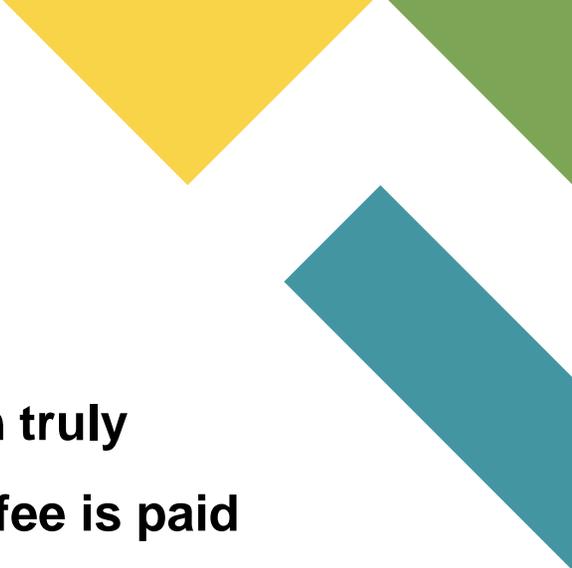
Committee Purposes

1. Create amendments to Connected Communities legislation that, when passed, will promote the development of truly affordable housing and prevent displacement.



2. Explain what else can be done to improve Connected Communities legislation.

Policy Position 1



Grant Connected Communities density incentives only when truly affordable housing is included, or, in some cases, an in-lieu fee is paid to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Displacement must be prohibited.

At a minimum, the City will determine and report, by neighborhood,

- the change in the quantity of homes, including type (rented or owned) and bedroom count, that are affordable to households with incomes no more than 50% of AMI and no more than 30% of AMI,
- change in the number, type, and size of homes affordable to households earning $\leq 50\%$ and $\leq 30\%$ AMI.

Foundational Requirements



1. The following will trigger the required inclusion of affordable housing or an in-lieu-of fee:

Benefit from Connected Communities legislation to the developer from increased density in any form, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Allowance of “middle housing” in formerly single-family zoned areas;
- Decrease in or elimination of density restrictions;
- Decrease in or elimination of parking restrictions;
- Allowance to build one story higher or not count structures on the roof as a story.

Foundational Requirements (continued)

2. At least 20% of the units in a development triggering the above requirements must be affordable at equal to or less than 50% AMI.
3. The following income targets must be met:
 - Rental units must be affordable to households earning $\leq 50\%$ AMI, with at least 30% of those units affordable at $\leq 30\%$ AMI. At move-in, household income must not exceed the targeted level.
 - Homeownership units must be affordable to households earning $\leq 80\%$ AMI. Before approval, household income must not exceed the target.

Foundational Requirements (continued)



4. Preventing Displacement and Protecting the Investment

Rentals:

- Require the affordable homes to remain affordable for at least 30 years.
- At each transfer of ownership, the 30 years would automatically restart.
- Prior to the sale of a property, the tenants of that property must be given the first right of refusal to purchase.
- The City must be given the second right of refusal to purchase.
- Owners/landlords of CC benefiting developments triggering these requirements, must commit to only practicing “just-cause evictions” in these properties.

(Homeownership: We have not finalized this yet.)

Foundational Requirements (continued)

5. In-lieu-of fee parameters will include the following: (Pending Approval)

- Only benefiting developments with four units or fewer may pay an in-lieu of fee to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (Fund 439) instead of including the required number of affordable units onsite.
- The in-lieu of fee must be equivalent to what the cost would otherwise be to develop the required percentage of affordable units.

Details



- 1. Area Median Income (AMI):** As defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN HUD Metro FMR Area.
- 2. Income Definition (for household eligibility for these affordable units):** Federal or State regulations already in place on the development. If none,
 - Wages from employment age 18+
 - SS for age 18+
 - Benefits or resources based on having a low-income, such as the following, will not be counted as part of total income: SNAP, Utility Allowance, TANF, WIC, Child Support, Medicare, Medicaid.
- 3. Income and Rent Restriction Standard:** The same standard used by HUD and the Ohio Housing Finance Agency.

Details (continued)

4. **Income Verification** (Pending Committee Approval)

- Rental units require income verification before move-in and annually by June 30. If a household's income exceeds 120% of AMI for two consecutive years, they have one year to vacate.
- If income drops below 120% of AMI within that year, the vacate requirement is waived, and the process resets.
- A new one-year lease must be offered after each verification.

Enforcement and Tracking Outcomes



1. Non-complying developers, owners, or landlords will be required to pay significant fines.
2. The City will officially declare that they will do no future business with non-complying developers, owners, or landlords (e.g., no property tax abatements, no benefits from CC, no zoning variances, no grants or loans, etc.).
3. By June 30 each year, rental-unit owners must submit documentation to the City showing they are charging affordable rents at the required AMI levels for the agreed number and size of units (according to bedroom count), along with completed income verifications.
4. If a household's income reaches 80% AMI or higher, the City will offer available homeownership assistance. The household may accept or decline without affecting their current housing.

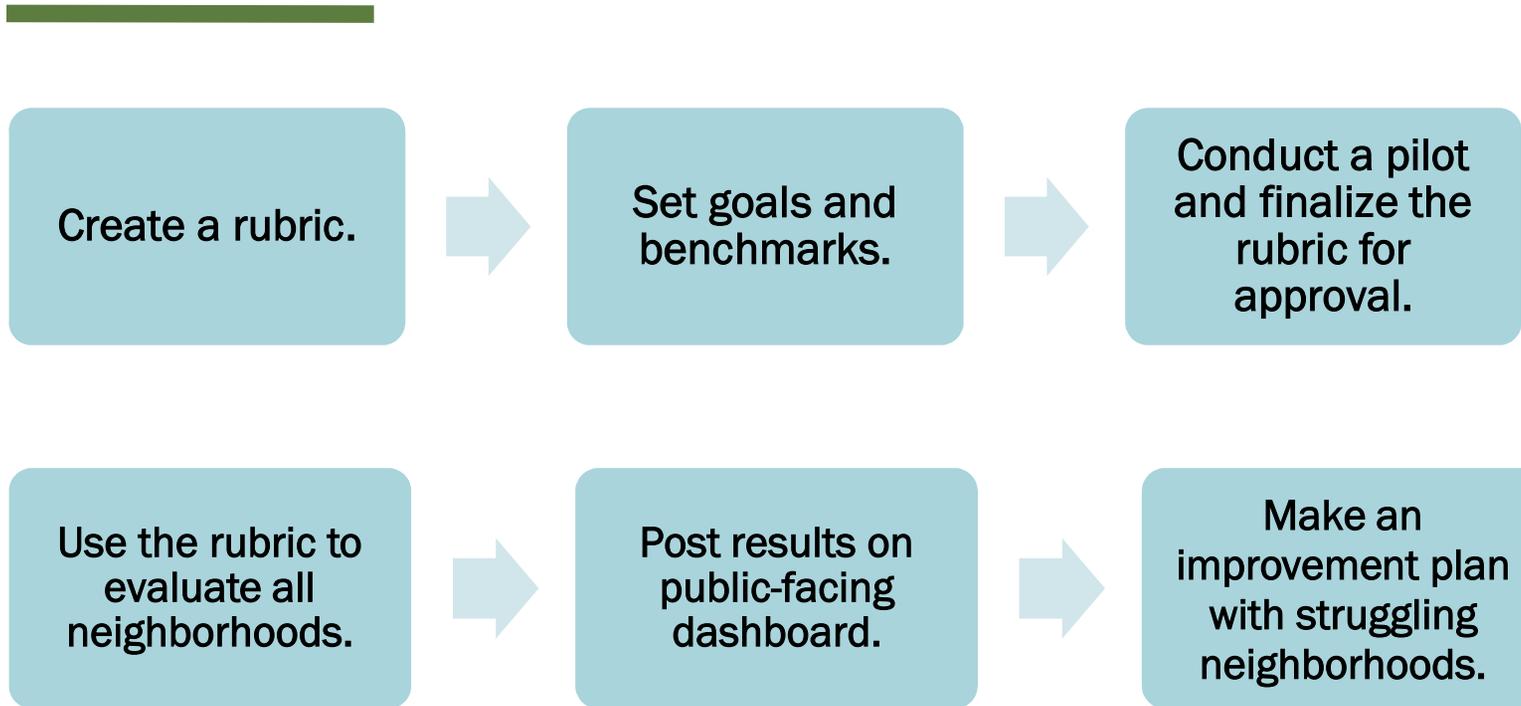


Committee-Approved Policy Position 2

The City will set annual goals and benchmarks based on an approved rubric to monitor whether Connected Communities legislation is being equitably utilized city-wide and in a manner that helps ALL neighborhoods thrive.



Overview of Action Steps



Traits of Thriving Neighborhoods



Safety and security

**Housing affordability, quality,
and diversity**

Housing stability

Walkability and accessibility

**Community engagement and social
cohesion**

Education and schools

Socio-economic diversity and inclusivity

Health and wellness

Local amenities and services

Green spaces and outdoor recreation

Economic outlook, opportunities, and employment

Sample Rubrics

Click on image of rubric to access a pdf of the entire document.



Category	1 - Needs Much Improvement	2 - Below Average	3 - Moderate/Adequate	4 - Good	5 - Excellent
K. Housing Stability	Rent/mortgage costs highly volatile; vacancies >12%; evictions >7%; no enforcement of protections/policies.	Unstable prices; vacancies 9–11%; evictions 5–6%; weak enforcement of protections/policies.	Somewhat stable; vacancies 6–8%; evictions 3–4%; enforcement of protections/policies has gaps.	Stable costs; vacancies 3–5%; evictions 1–2%; protections/policies mostly enforced.	Very stable; vacancies <3%; evictions <1%; strong enforcement of protections/policies.

Sources



Click on image of sources to access a pdf of the entire document.



Sources for Action Steps and Rubrics

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- Sampson, R. J., & Winter, A. (2021). *The Legacy of the "Culture of Poverty" and the Future of Neighborhood-based Policing.* The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 694(1), 94-114.

B. Walkability & Accessibility

- Ewing, R., & Cervero, R. (2010). *Travel and the Built Environment: A Meta-Analysis.* Journal of the American Planning Association, 76(3), 265-294.
This study emphasizes the importance of walkability and access to public transportation as essential components of sustainable and livable urban areas.
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C. Community Engagement & Social Cohesion

- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community.* Simon & Schuster.
Robert Putnam's work highlights the role of social capital and community engagement in creating vibrant, resilient neighborhoods.
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- Maas, J., et al. (2006). *Green Space, Urbanity, and Health: How Strong Is the Relation?.* Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health, 60(7), 587-592.
This study discusses the positive impact of green spaces on physical and mental health, reinforcing the importance of parks and natural environments in flourishing neighborhoods.



Accessibility

Chairs: Keli Blackshear and Dee Henry

Accessibility

-Meetings regarding the creation of legislation like Connected Communities, as well as meetings to get community feedback on such legislation, should be planned with universal design and accessibility in mind. **This includes choosing accessible locations for public meetings that can be reached by Metro Bus or Metro-Access, providing ASL and ESL interpreters, inviting the d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing community to accessible meetings, using multiple channels of communication to get community feedback, and using common and plain language, when possible, to ensure participation is accessible to all.**

-All ordinances should also be made available to the public in alternative formats, including, but not limited to, plain language versions. Digital versions should also be available in formats accessible to people with disabilities, particularly those who utilize screen readers. A glossary defining technical terms should be provided to the public, see [Connected Communities Chicago Glossary](#).

Accessibility

-The appeals process mentioned in the Connected Communities Ordinance, as well as any subsequent appeals processes involving governmental systems, should be expanded on to include the right to reasonable accommodations during the processes. These rights to accommodations should be codified into the ordinance itself.

-As there is constantly societal progress made in regard to universal design, accessibility, and visitability, we propose that there be an annual review of the Connected Communities Ordinance, with the expectation that there will be updates necessary. Future versions of the ordinance should be informed by a [Health Impact Assessment of Cincinnati](#), focusing on underserved communities. DEIA principles should be integrated into the systems that manage the areas covered in Connected Communities. **An example of good practices that the City of Cincinnati can adopt regarding its housing can be found in the National Low-income Housing Coalition's (NLIHC) [initiative](#).**

Accessibility



Accessible Parking

We recommend that the Connected Communities Ordinance be updated to reflect the accessibility standards for accessible parking spots in accordance with the ADA. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations and Parking

- We recommend that the Connected Communities Ordinance be updated to reflect the accessibility standards for electric-vehicle charging stations in accordance with the ADA.
- The City of Cincinnati should be cognizant of the trend to prioritize electric vehicle (EV) charging spots over accessible parking spots at many retail establishments. We recommend investigating the possibility of regulating the locations in which EV charging spots are installed as to not impact the potential locations where logical accessible parking spots could exist.

Accessibility



Accessible Pathways

- The Connected Communities Ordinance should include the accessibility standards for accessible pathways as [explained by the U.S. Access Board](#) as well as the [2010 Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design](#).

The landscaping section, currently on page 61, should state that landscaping must not block the path of a person using a mobility device.

Signage Height and Attributes: Accessibility and Illumination



Signage Height and Attributes

“The Standards require accessible signs that are used to identify certain accessible elements and spaces...The Standards address visual and tactile content on signs, where provided” (Access Board).

“Signs covered by the Standards must meet specifications for visual requirements so that they are accessible to people with low vision. Several categories of signs also must meet tactile requirements so that they are accessible to people who are blind or have low vision. Tactile requirements primarily apply to signs typically located at doorways because doorways provide a cue for locating signs by touch” (Access Board) [page 190](#).

Signage Height and Attributes: Accessibility and Illumination

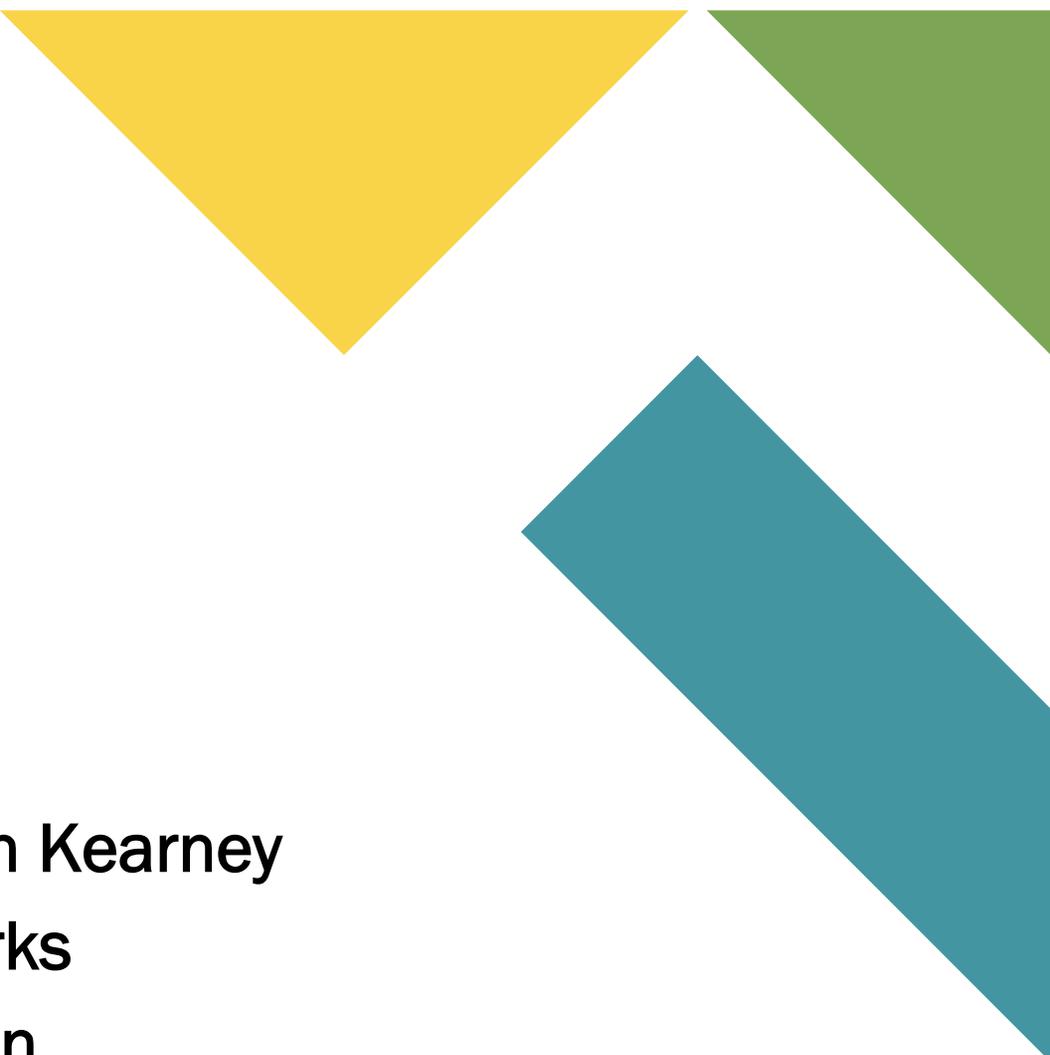


Illumination

Light safety and building codes address the visibility and illumination of exit signs, not the Standards. (?)

The [2010 ADA Accessibility Standards](#) do make some comments on lighting/illumination of:

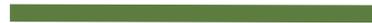
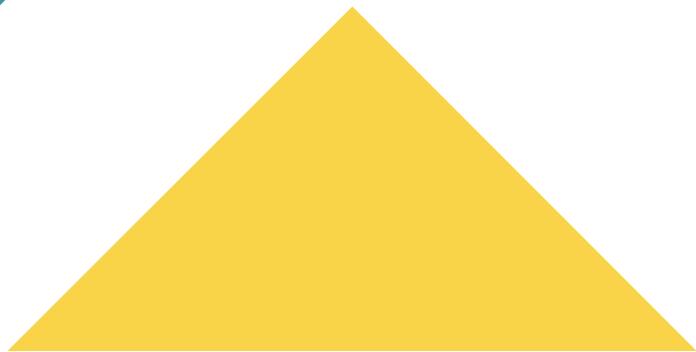
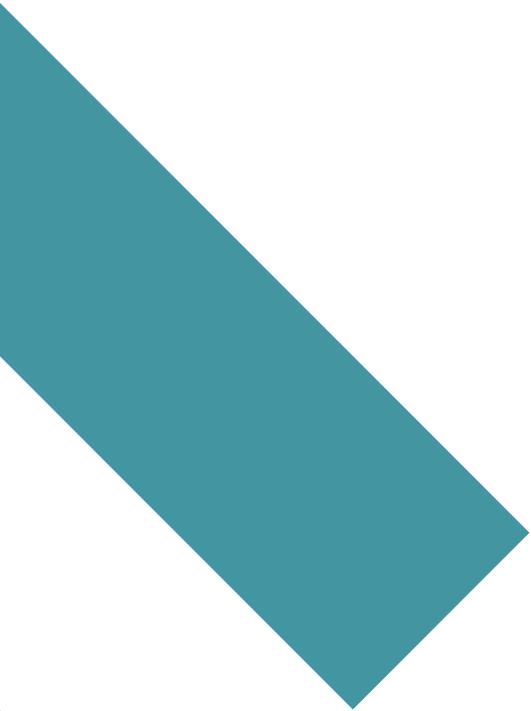
- Parking Lots, page 71, “Advisory 208.3.1 General Exception 2. Factors that could affect “user convenience” include, but are not limited to, protection from the weather, security, lighting, and comparative maintenance of the alternative parking site.”



Thank you!

From the Offices of:

- Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney
- President Pro Tem Victoria Parks
- Councilmember Scotty Johnson



Still to Be Determined



1. How to prevent displacement and protect the investment as it pertains to homeownership. Also, what if the owner has to move out of the home for grounds reasonably out of their control?
2. In terms of first right of refusal, how long do tenants and then the City have to respond to the offer to purchase the property? How do we ensure a reasonable price is asked? How are tenants notified?
3. Environmental Sustainability
4. Tracking effects:
 - Ensure developers are carefully watched and held accountable.
 - Ensure developments benefiting from Connected Communities are neighborhood-serving.
 - Incentivize “home-grown” developers.



Affordable Housing Group: Action Steps

1. **Develop Rubric (by ___ 2025):**

The City Manager’s Office and/or Healthy Neighborhoods Committee will create a measurable rubric, using reliable data to assess how well each of Cincinnati’s 52 neighborhoods is thriving.

2. **Include Key Criteria:**

The rubric will reflect best practices and include:

Safety and security Walkability and accessibility Community engagement and social cohesion Green spaces and outdoor recreation Economic outlook, opportunities, and employment Housing affordability, quality, and diversity	Education and schools Socio-economic diversity and inclusivity Health and wellness Local amenities and services Housing and stability
---	---

3. **Create Public Dashboard:**

Upgrade CincyInsights or create a new public dashboard with thorough, accurate, up-to-date rubric data for all 52 neighborhoods.

4. **Set Targets:**

Define clear goals and benchmarks.

Example Goal: All neighborhoods score at least 3 (moderate) by ___.

Benchmark: Neighborhoods scoring below 3 improve by at least 1 point in one area by ___.

5. **Pilot the Rubric:**

Test the rubric on 9 neighborhoods—3 each from high-, middle-, and low-income ranges—using 2024 data.

6. **Review and Revise:**

Share the draft rubric, targets, and pilot results with Vice Mayor Kearney and the Affordable Housing Task Force for feedback. Make appropriate revisions.

7. **Create and Post Baseline Scores for the Whole City**

Use the rubric to evaluate the remaining 43 neighborhoods, using 2024 data, and post on the dashboard.

8. **Hold Town Hall:**

Hold an open town hall to present the plan and share baseline scores. Invite all community councils and CDCs..

9. **Committee Review:**

Present findings at a Healthy Neighborhoods Committee meeting for refinement and endorsement.

10. **Council Approval:**

Submit the final rubric and process to City Council.

11. **Conduct Full Evaluation (by Dec. 2025):**

Use 2025 data to rate all 52 neighborhoods with the approved rubric.

12. **Publish and Notify:**

Post final results on the new or improved dashboard and inform all community councils and CDCs.

13. **Provide Support for Low-Scoring Areas:**

Assign City experts to help neighborhoods that miss benchmarks develop improvement plans.

14. **Conduct Public Forums:**

Host two open town halls annually to review results, set future goals, and discuss Connected Communities updates.

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Glaeser's work on urban economics outlines the importance of local amenities and services in promoting economic vibrancy and livability.
 - Glaeser, E. L., & Gottlieb, J. D. (2022). *The Economic Geography of Housing and Services*. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 94, 82-96.
 - Kwan, M. P. (2019). *Geographies of the City: Urban Amenities and Their Impact on Neighborhood Development*. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 51(2), 443-460.
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K. Housing Stability

1. Government and Public Data Sources
 - U.S. Census Bureau
 - Data: American Community Survey (ACS), Housing Vacancy Survey, and Median Income Reports.
 - Website: <https://www.census.gov>
 - Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
 - Data: Housing affordability, foreclosure rates, eviction statistics, and local housing policies.
 - Website: <https://www.hud.gov>
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
 - Data: Regional employment rates, income data, and inflation trends.
 - Website: <https://www.bls.gov>
2. Local Government and Planning Agencies
 - City or County Housing Authorities
 - Data: Local eviction rates, rental price trends, and community housing initiatives.
 - Regional Planning Commissions or Councils

- Data: Local occupancy rates, development plans, and economic diversity statistics.
- 3. Real Estate and Housing Market Platforms
 - Zillow Research
 - Data: Housing price trends, rent affordability, and foreclosure rates.
 - Website: <https://www.zillow.com/research>
 - Redfin Data Center
 - Data: Housing market trends, sales prices, and neighborhood statistics.
 - Website: <https://www.redfin.com/news/data-center>
- 4. Community and Advocacy Organizations
 - Eviction Lab
 - Data: National eviction database, trends, and research on eviction policies.
 - Website: <https://evictionlab.org>
 - National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)
 - Data: Housing affordability gap reports and low-income housing availability.
 - Website: <https://nlihc.org>
- 5. Research Institutions and Universities
 - Urban Institute
 - Data: Housing stability research, neighborhood assessments, and policy impact studies.
 - Website: <https://www.urban.org>
 - Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University
 - Data: Housing affordability and market trends.
 - Website: <https://www.jchs.harvard.edu>
- 6. Nonprofit and Private Sector Reports
 - CoreLogic
 - Data: Foreclosure rates, housing market analytics.
 - Website: <https://www.corelogic.com>
 - National Association of Realtors (NAR)
 - Data: Market trends and economic data related to homeownership and rentals.
 - Website: <https://www.nar.realtor>
- 7. Community Engagement Data
 - Local Surveys
 - Conduct surveys to gauge community participation and housing concerns.
 - Community Organization Reports
 - Data from local nonprofits or housing advocacy groups on engagement levels.
- 8. Legal and Policy Analysis Tools
 - Legal Aid Organizations
 - Data: Tenant protection cases and eviction assistance statistics.
 - State and Local Policy Databases
 - Information on zoning laws, rent control, and housing development regulations.

Sample Analytic Rubrics

Sample Comprehensive Neighborhood Evaluation Rubric

Category	1 - Needs Much Improvement	2 - Below Average	3 - Moderate/ Adequate	4 - Good	5 - Excellent
A. Safety & Security	At or above 80th percentile for police and fire calls for service per capita (very high crime rate, major safety concerns, etc.).	60th-79th percentile for police and fire calls for service per capita (high crime rate, noticeable safety concerns).	40th-59th percentile for police and fire calls for service per capita (moderate crime rate, manageable issues), some community safety efforts in place.	20th-39th percentile for police and fire calls for service per capita (low crime rate, residents generally feel safe), community safety efforts are improving.	1st-19th percentile for police and fire calls for service per capita (very low crime, strong sense of security), effective proactive community policing.
B. Walkability & Accessibility	Poor sidewalks that are mostly inaccessible for people with disabilities, minimal transit.	Some walkable areas, challenging for people with disabilities, limited transit access.	Mostly walkable with some small gaps, mostly accessible for people with disabilities, moderate transit access.	Highly walkable with good pedestrian infrastructure, accessibility, and transit access.	Fully walkable, pedestrian-friendly, fully accessible design; excellent public transportation.
C. Community Engagement & Social Cohesion	Little to no community-wide interaction or local events.	Occasional events, low community-wide participation, weak advocacy.	Regular events, moderate community-wide engagement, some advocacy efforts.	Frequent events, active community-wide participation, growing local advocacy.	Frequent events, high community-wide engagement, strong networks, regular collaboration and leadership.
D. Green Spaces & Outdoor Recreation	Very few or poorly maintained green spaces, largely inaccessible.	Some parks, limited and poor-quality recreational amenities, limited accessibility.	Adequate public parks and green areas, some recreational amenities, maintained for basic safety. All are somewhat accessible.	Many well-maintained parks, trails, and recreational options. All are accessible.	Abundant, universally accessible, well-maintained green spaces with diverse outdoor opportunities.

Category	1 - Needs Much Improvement	2 - Below Average	3 - Moderate/ Adequate	4 - Good	5 - Excellent
E. Economic Outlook, Opportunities, & Employment	Very high unemployment, minimal local job options—all below living wage, extreme poverty (80-100th percentile per capita).	Some local job options—mostly below living wage, stagnant growth, moderate-to-high poverty (60-79th percentile per capita).	Growing local job market, mixed economic sectors, some full-time jobs with benefits (including health insurance and pto) moderate poverty (40-59th percentile per capita).	Diverse local job opportunities, clear economic mobility, a growing number of full-time jobs with benefits (including health insurance, pto, and retirement plan), low poverty (20–39th percentile per capita).	Thriving local economy, strong employment in multiple sectors, many full-time jobs with benefits (including health insurance, pto, retirement plan, and other incentives), high mobility.
F. Housing Affordability, Quality, & Diversity	Rent and housing unaffordable, severe quality and maintenance issues, very limited options for home ownership.	Limited affordable options, mixed housing quality, few options for affordable home ownership.	Moderately affordable, generally decent quality, some options for home ownership, growing amount of “middle housing.”	Good affordability and housing conditions, consistent maintenance, a growing number of middle housing options for and some pathways to home ownership.	High-quality, affordable, well-maintained, and diverse housing options with a highly-utilized number of pathways to home ownership.
G. Education & Schools	Failing schools, very limited educational opportunities.	Low-perform-ing schools, resource limitations.	Adequate schools, average performance, improving resources.	Strong academic programs, good resources and extracurriculars.	Exceptional schools with high performance and robust programs.
H. Socioeconomic Diversity & Inclusivity	Homogeneous population, discrimination, severe inequalities.	Some diversity, low inclusivity, apparent inequalities.	Moderate diversity, some inclusive initiatives.	Diverse, inclusive community with efforts to reduce disparities.	Actively inclusive, highly diverse, with equitable resource distribution.

Category	1 - Needs Much Improvement	2 - Below Average	3 - Moderate/Adequate	4 - Good	5 - Excellent
I. Health & Wellness	Limited access to healthcare and wellness resources.	Some access, but with barriers (distance, cost, coverage).	Adequate healthcare options, a few community wellness initiatives.	Good access to care, regular wellness (including mental health) programs and outreach.	Comprehensive healthcare access, extensive wellness and mental health support.
J. Local Amenities & Services	Scarce amenities (e.g., no grocery, healthcare, or retail nearby).	Basic amenities present, but limited variety or quality.	Moderate access to everyday services and shops.	Broad range of good-quality services and amenities.	Rich mix of high-quality services, cultural venues, and amenities.
K. Housing Stability	Rent/mortgage costs highly volatile; vacancies >12%; evictions >7%; no enforcement of protections/policies.	Unstable prices; vacancies 9–11%; evictions 5–6%; weak enforcement of protections/policies.	Somewhat stable; vacancies 6–8%; evictions 3–4%; enforcement of protections/policies has gaps.	Stable costs; vacancies 3–5%; evictions 1–2%; protections/policies mostly enforced.	Very stable; vacancies <3%; evictions <1%; strong enforcement of protections/policies.

Scoring Guide: Goal: All neighborhoods should score 30 or above.

- 45-55: Flourishing Neighborhood – Excels in all key areas and provides a high QOL for residents.
- 35-44: Strong Neighborhood – Performing well, with some areas for improvement, but it offers a solid foundation for residents.
- 25-34: Developing Neighborhood – Noticeable challenges and growth opportunities, but the neighborhood has potential.
- 15-24: Struggling Neighborhood – Several key issues need addressing to improve livability and community QOL.

 **Compact Sample Neighborhood Evaluation Rubric**

Category	1 – Poor	2 – Fair	3 – Adequate	4 – Good	5 – Excellent
A. Safety & Security	High crime, low trust	Some incidents, safety concerns	Manageable crime, some efforts	Low crime, reliable policing	Very safe, strong trust
B. Walkability & Accessibility	Poor sidewalks, no transit	Partially walkable, limited transit	Walkable, some transit	Walkable, good transit access	Fully walkable, great transit
C. Community Engagement	No events or cohesion	Few events, low turnout	Some events, moderate engagement	Frequent events, active residents	Highly engaged, strong unity
D. Green Spaces	Few/poor parks	Some parks, under-resourced	Adequate green areas	Good park access and upkeep	Abundant, diverse, well-kept
E. Economic Opportunities	High joblessness, deep poverty	Few jobs, stagnant growth	Improving market, mixed sectors	Low poverty, diverse jobs	Thriving, high mobility
F. Housing Affordability & Quality	Unaffordable, poor condition	Some affordable, mixed quality	Moderate affordability, decent	Affordable, good condition	High-quality, affordable mix
G. Education & Schools	Failing, low resources	Underperforming, limited options	Average performance, improving	Strong programs, good extras	Excellent, rich opportunities
H. Diversity & Inclusivity	Homogeneous, exclusionary	Limited diversity, inequality	Moderate diversity, efforts made	Inclusive, noticeable diversity	Highly inclusive, equitable
I. Health & Wellness	Poor access, few services	Some care, not accessible	Adequate access, some programs	Good access, active wellness	Full access, robust wellness
J. Amenities & Services	Few essentials, low quality	Basic services, limited choice	Moderate service access	Good range, good quality	Excellent, high-quality mix
K. Housing Stability	Very unstable, evictions >7%	Unstable, evictions 5–6%	Somewhat stable, 3–4%	Mostly stable, 1–2%	Very stable, <1%