



City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Agenda - Final

Climate, Environment & Infrastructure

Councilmember Meeka Owens, Chairperson
Councilmember Mark Jeffreys, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Jeff Cramerding, Member
Councilmember Seth Walsh, Member

Tuesday, May 7, 2024

10:00 AM

Council Chambers, Room 300

REVISED

PRESENTATIONS

Assessing the Potential of Leveraging City-owned Properties

Markiea Carter, Director of DCED

Green City Plan 2023

Oliver Kroner, City of Cincinnati, Office of Environment & Sustainability

AGENDA

1. [202401111](#) **MOTION**, submitted by Councilmembers Harris, Walsh, Jeffreys and Owens **WE MOVE** that the administration partner with METRO to engage in their METRO Pass program to provide interested City of Cincinnati Employees with discounted monthly passes. This should be promoted through the annual employee survey with eventual consideration of further subsidizing the passes to help recruit and retain talent.

Sponsors: Harris, Walsh, Jeffreys and Owens

Attachments: [202401111](#)

2. [202401016](#) **REPORT**, dated 4/3/2024, submitted Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager, regarding Hillside Overlay District issue spotting. (Ref. Doc. #202301262)

Sponsors: City Manager

Attachments: [Report](#)

3. [202401247](#) **REPORT**, dated 4/24/2024, submitted Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager, regarding Energy Benchmarking and Building Performance Standards. (Ref. Doc. # 202400225)

Sponsors: City Manager

Attachments: [Report](#)

4. [202401058](#) **REPORT**, dated 4/17/2024, submitted Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager, regarding High Potential City-Owned Properties Along Major Transit Corridor. (Ref. Doc. # 202301025)

Sponsors: City Manager

Attachments: [Report](#)

[Attachment I](#)

[Attachment II](#)

5. [202401296](#) **PRESENTATION** submitted by Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager, dated 5/7/2024, regarding high-potential city-owned properties along major transit corridors

Sponsors: City Manager

Attachments: [Transmittal](#)

[Presentation](#)

6. [202401308](#) **PRESENTATION** submitted by Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager, dated 5/7/2024, regarding the Green Cincinnati Plan.

Sponsors: City Manager

Attachments: [Transmittal](#)

[Presentation](#)

ADJOURNMENT



Reggie Harris
Councilmember

4/3/2024

MOTION

To Engage With METRO to Offer Employees of the City of Cincinnati Discounted Bus Passes

WE MOVE that the administration partner with METRO to engage in their METRO Pass program to provide interested City of Cincinnati Employees with discounted monthly bus passes. This should be promoted through the annual employee survey with eventual consideration of further subsidizing the passes to help recruit and retain talent.

Councilmember Reggie Harris

Councilmember Seth Walsh

Councilmember Mark Jeffreys

Councilmember Meeka Owens

STATEMENT

METRO offers a discount to participating organizations for month passes that can be paid through employee benefits (coming out of paycheck). This lowers the barrier significantly to attaining a pass and increases the likelihood that employees make the transition to commuting via transit. Each employee who opts-in is provided a co-branded smart card unique to each employee. This motion is intended to request that this become an integrated part of our employee benefits, like parking currently is.

One of the City of Cincinnati's top priorities is employee retention and recruitment. Across the nation, transportation access continues to be a barrier for connecting the workforce with quality jobs, including in the public sector. METRO has already partnered with Hamilton County and other large employers to offer discounted bus passes which have the potential to be further subsidized by the employer. This has proven to be an excellent tool for attracting and retaining talent and meeting organizational goals around sustainability.

CAL 4/10

April 3, 2024

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

From: Sheryl M.M. Long, City Manager

202401016

Subject: Hillside Overlay District Issue Spotting

Reference Document #202301262

The Climate, Environment & Infrastructure Committee, at its session on May 9, 2023, referred the following item for review and report:

MOTION, submitted by Councilmember Jeffreys, WE MOVE that the Administration report within thirty (30) days on the status of the updates the City is making to its hillside regulations. This update should include, but is not limited to, an update on:

- Funding sources to cover construction mishaps associated with construction within the hillside district.
- Regulations associated with stormwater runoff.
- Work that is being done to update CAGIS' Hillside Overlay District Map.

ORIGINS AND VALIDITY OF THE CAGIS HILLSIDE OVERLAY DISTRICT MAP

The CAGIS Hillside Overlay District Map was created and last updated in 2004 at the time of the adoption of the most recent Zoning Code. This map shows those areas of the City where the Hillside Overlay District regulations apply. The regulations guide development in existing hillside areas to ensure it is compatible with the natural environment and a quality urban environment. The regulations are especially focused on locations where the hillsides are of significant public value as determined by the City policy as outlined in the document "A Hillside Protection Strategy for Greater Cincinnati," 1991.

The Hillside Overlay District layer on CAGIS is typically applied to hillside areas where the existence of a 20% slope is combined with the KOPE geologic formation, the shale bedrock that is overlaid by colluvial soils. The layer was created through a digitization of the 1980 "Landslide Susceptibility Study and Map" prepared in 1980 by the consulting firm of Sowers and Dalrymple for the Department of Transportation and Engineering. This map divides the City of Cincinnati into four categories of landslide susceptibility: low, moderate, moderately high, and high. Most areas categorized as moderately high and high are included in the boundaries of the Hillside Overlay Districts. The map is also used by the Department of Buildings and Inspections to determine the need for further geotechnical investigation, requiring geotechnical involvement in areas categorized as moderately high and high.

This study is still considered to be an accurate portrayal of the landslide susceptibility in Cincinnati. If it is determined that further review of the 1980 Landslide Susceptibility Study and Map is warranted, allocation of funds to retain a consultant to perform this work is required.

FUNDING SOURCES

The City does not currently provide funding for construction mishaps associated with private development on private properties - either in a hillside area or otherwise. The Administration does not recommend committing public funds to this purpose and instead recommends focusing on updating or creating appropriate regulations to address the risk.

HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Buildings & Inspections (B&I) convened several meetings of City agencies that regulate development of landslide prone properties, mostly found within Hillside Development Overlay zoning districts. The group identified multiple challenges with management of development within the landslide prone areas. These are summarized below:

- The Zoning Code presently expresses most of the City's aspirations and requirements for development on hillsides. While a GIS layer is a good tool to establish heightened development regulations, and zoning overlays are effective for guiding a community's design preferences for development, the zoning code is ill-suited to establish the associated construction standards and making engineering determinations.
- Damages from landslides are hard to predict, can be financially calamitous to the City and affected property owners, and nearly impossible to insure. A key consideration is to what degree the City should consider preventative strategies, including further studying our landslide susceptibility, preventing poor land management practices like clear-cutting, requiring notice of landslide susceptibility with deeds and property documents, and weighing whether some land is simply not suitable for development.
- Hillside-area specific minimum engineering and building standards do not currently exist and should be created to provide clear standards for hillside development.
- Best practices in mitigation of hillside development risks necessitate a closer examination of the management of stormwater, and the effectiveness and enforcement systems of current stormwater management regulations. This includes examining regulations regarding vegetation and clear-cut management, maximum impervious surface coverage, detention triggers on development and re-development, and detention design requirements.

Given the complexity of these interwoven challenges and the high potential for extensive impacts on development costs and patterns, the Administration proposes to undertake a long-term initiative to update associated law and regulation. Given the multi-department and even multi-government nature of this initiative, the need for extensive community engagement and iteration, and available resources for overseeing such an initiative, this process is expected to take one to two years. However, work is already underway on opportunity identification and changes will be rolled out and implemented throughout this long-term process, as to create more short-term improvement. The Administration will provide periodic updates to Council on the progress.

cc: William "Billy" Weber, Assistant City Manager
Art Dahlberg, Director of Buildings and Inspections
Katherine Keough-Jurs, Director of City Planning and Engagement

April 24, 2024

To: Mayor and Members of City Council
From: Sheryl M.M. Long, City Manager
Subject: Energy Benchmarking & Building Performance Standards

202401247

Reference Document #202400225

The Climate, Environment, & Infrastructure Committee at its session on January 10, 2024, referred the following item for review and report.

MOTION, WE MOVE that the Administration compile a report back to Council within sixty (60) days on the use of “energy benchmarking” practices and building performance standards in other cities and their effectiveness on reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions from residential, commercial, and industrial buildings.

WE MOVE, that the Administration share as a part of this report any learning as a result of the energy benchmarking involving companies in the 2030 District.

WE FURTHER MOVE, that the report contains a list of existing incentives, programs, and/or financing tools at the Federal, State and Municipal level that can be utilized to improve the energy efficiency of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings.

The purpose of this report is to provide City Council with the requested information on energy benchmarking and building performance standards to determine the potential implementation of benchmarking practices in Cincinnati.

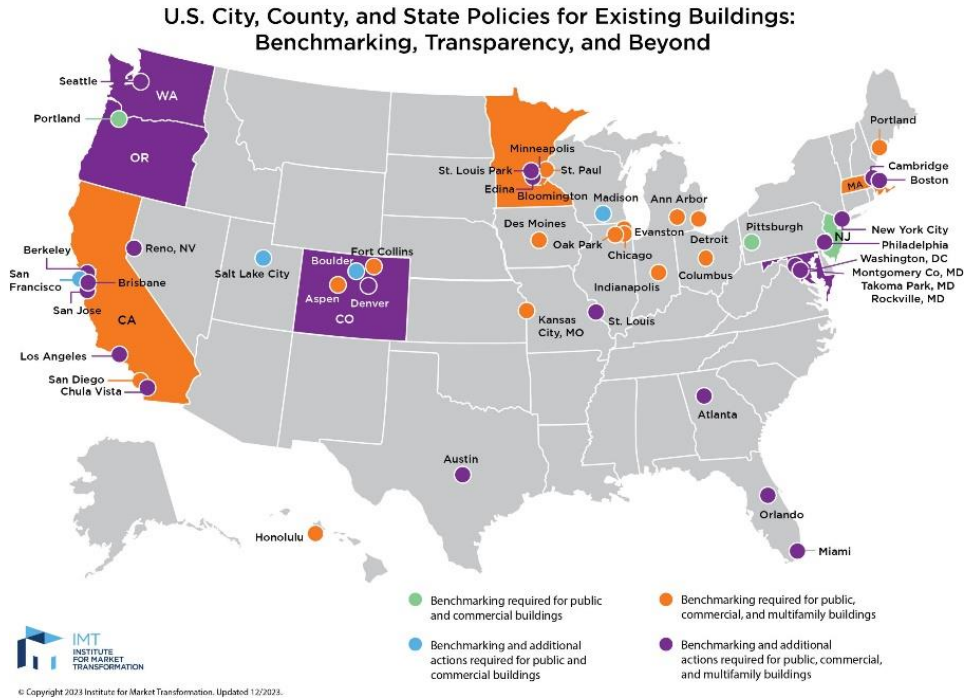
BACKGROUND

Commercial buildings currently account for more than 30% of greenhouse gas emissions in Cincinnati¹. Two strategies cities and states often employ to reduce emissions from commercial buildings include “energy benchmarking” and “building performance standards.”

Energy benchmarking refers to the practice of measuring the energy performance of a building over time. This provides owners and occupants the ability to understand their building’s energy performance relative to similar buildings and provides an easy way to understand energy use and evaluate smarter, more cost-effective operational and capital investment decisions. Performance is measured using energy usage intensity (EUI), which is the amount of energy the building uses per square foot on an annual basis (kBtu/sq.ft./year). Currently, 44 cities, 6 states, and the District of Columbia have passed benchmarking policies requiring certain types of buildings to report energy usage annually. The policies are designed to make building energy performance information available to the market, to help owners and occupants value energy performance in decision-making.

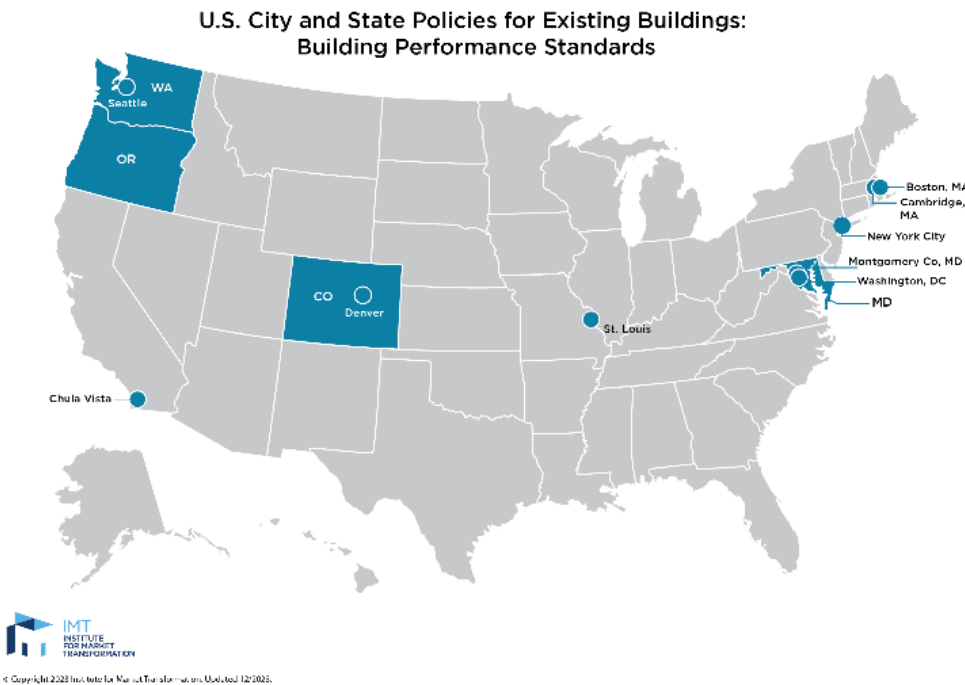
¹ 2023 Green Cincinnati Plan

Figure 1: Energy Benchmarking Policies in the United States²



Building performance standards (BPS) are an additional policy tool beyond energy benchmarking that establishes performance targets that buildings are required to achieve. BPS use reported benchmarking data to track compliance with targets such as energy use intensity (EUI) or greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). BPS often get stricter over time which ensures continuous improvement of a city’s building stock.

Figure 2: Building Performance Standards Policies in the United States³



² Institute for Market Transformation, 2023

³ Institute for Market Transformation, 2023

Most benchmarking and BPS programs utilize the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) free ENERGY STAR® *Portfolio Manager*® tool to track and score building energy usage. Building owners enter information for each building such as size, type of building, and occupancy information. Utility usage must be entered monthly and can be obtained from utility bills, data collected from tenants, or from master meters. Once data is entered in *Portfolio Manager*®, it will calculate the building’s EUI and assign an ENERGY STAR score. Program managers can review the data for compliance with local policies. In many cities, this information is displayed on transparency maps so that the data can be viewed by the public and other interested parties.

Benchmarking policies can help reduce building energy usage. *Portfolio Manager*® conducted a study of 35,000 buildings that consistently benchmarked their energy usage for three years. The study found that, on average, benchmarking produces energy savings of 2.4% annually, and 7% over a three-year period.⁴ The savings are due to increased awareness of energy usage by building owners and increased market competition as tenants are better equipped to value energy costs in the site selection process.

EXAMPLES OF BENCHMARKING POLICIES IN THE MIDWEST

Several Midwestern cities have passed benchmarking policies, including Columbus, Chicago, Indianapolis, and St. Louis. Columbus, Indianapolis, and Chicago have adopted benchmarking ordinances while St. Louis has adopted benchmarking as well as building performance standards. All four cities require benchmarking on commercial buildings measuring 50,000 square feet and larger.

Columbus

The City of Columbus measures energy use intensity (EUI) through *Portfolio Manager*®. Under Columbus City Code Title 41 - Building Code Chapter 4117, public, commercial, and multifamily buildings over 50,000 square feet must report their energy usage.⁵ Based on 2023 reporting, 39.94% of applicable buildings were in compliance with the ordinance.⁶ The average EUI for buildings required to benchmark their data was 84.6 kBtu/sq.ft./year during the 2023 reporting year.⁷ Over three years, Columbus saw an 11.04% decrease in average energy usage.⁸ Under Section 4117.15 of the benchmarking ordinance, failure to comply results in a notice of the violation after 60 days and potential fines or late fees.⁹

Chicago

Chicago requires residential, commercial, and multifamily buildings to report energy data to benchmark EUI and GHG emissions. The city’s benchmarking policy is outlined under Municipal Code Chapter 18-14.¹⁰ Based on 2020 reporting, 85% of required buildings were in compliance.¹¹ Chicago’s benchmarking ordinance charges a fee of up to \$100.00 for an initial violation, with an additional penalty of \$25.00 for each day that a building fails to report.¹² The city reports that GHG intensity decreased 25% from 2016 to 2020 while EUI decreased by 9% over the same time period.¹³ In 2019, the city implemented the Chicago Energy Rating System, which requires buildings to place a placard indicating their energy performance in public view.

⁴ https://www.energystar.gov/sites/default/files/buildings/tools/DataTrends_Savings_20121002.pdf

⁵ <https://www.columbus.gov/sustainable/benchmarking/>

⁶ <https://maps.touchstoneiq.com/columbus/>

⁷ Data cited from Sustainable Columbus Initiative’s Columbus Compliance Report

⁸ Data cited from Sustainable Columbus Initiative’s Columbus Compliance Report

⁹ <https://www.columbus.gov/sustainable/benchmarking/>

¹⁰ https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/chicago/latest/chicago_il/0-0-0-2685180

¹¹ https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/progs/env/EnergyBenchmark/2020_Chicago_Energy_Benchmarking_Report.pdf

¹² https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/chicago/latest/chicago_il/0-0-0-2685180

¹³ https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/progs/env/EnergyBenchmark/2020_Chicago_Energy_Benchmarking_Report.pdf

St. Louis

St. Louis passed building performance standards in addition to its benchmarking policies. The original ordinance, #70474, was passed in 2017, mandating the reporting of energy usage.¹⁴ In 2021, the city reported an average EUI of 81.2 kBtu/sq.ft./year, a decrease of 14.9 kBtu/sq.ft. from 2017.¹⁵ In the same year, 76.1% of buildings were in compliance, an increase of over 20% from 2017.¹⁶ In 2020, the city became the first in the Midwest to enact building performance standards.¹⁷ The St. Louis BPS include EUI requirements for different types of buildings. For example, education buildings must achieve an EUI of 80.1 kBtu/sq.ft./year, while hospitals must achieve an EUI of 259.9 kBtu/sq.ft./year. [08]

Indianapolis

Indianapolis passed its Benchmarking and Transparency Ordinance in July of 2021. The policy requires commercial buildings larger than 50,000 sq. ft. and public buildings 25,000 sq. ft. and larger to report their energy usage.¹⁸ As of 2022, 83 total buildings had reported their energy usage through *Portfolio Manager*®, 66 of which were privately-owned.¹⁹ Under Section 710-109 of Chapter 710 of the Revised Code of the Consolidated City and County, buildings that do not report their energy usage will be subject to fines after 30 days past the initial notice of violation.²⁰ There is currently no published data for energy savings under the ordinance.

Table 1: Summary of Benchmarking Requirements in Midwest Cities

	Building Size	Measurement	Participation	Enforcement	Energy Savings	BPS in Place
Columbus, OH	≥ 50,000 sq ft	EUI, Energy Star Score	39.94% (2023)	60 days past notice, fee of up to \$1000	11.04% average energy usage decrease from 2021 to 2023	No
Chicago, IL	≥ 50,000 sq ft	GHG, EUI, Energy Star Score	85% (2020)	First violation results in fine ≥ \$100, + \$25 for each additional day	GHG: decrease of 25% since 2016; EUI: 9% decrease since 2016	No
St. Louis, MO	≥ 50,000 sq ft	EUI, Energy Star Score	76.1% (2021)	60 days past notice, fine ≤ \$50 - \$200 ≥, cumulative fine not exceeding \$1000 annually	15.50% average EUI decrease over 4 years (2021)	Yes
Indianapolis, IN	≥ 50,000 sq ft ≥ 25,000 sq ft (city buildings)	EUI, Energy Star Score	66 privately-owned buildings, 17 city buildings (2022)	30 days past notice results in issuance of fine, not in effect until January 1, 2026	Pending	No

BENCHMARKING IN THE CINCINNATI 2030 DISTRICT

The 2030 District Network includes 24 cities across the United States and Canada, encompassing 1,650 organizational members and 618 million square feet of commercial building space.²¹ As a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the 2030 District aims to “establish a global network of thriving high-performance

¹⁴ <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/city-laws/upload/legislative//Ordinances/BOAPdf/BB205CSAA-wd7--Ord.%2070474.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.stlbenchmarking.com/Resources#Training104>

¹⁶ <https://www.stlbenchmarking.com/Resources#Training104>

¹⁷ <https://www.imt.org/news/st-louis-passes-first-building-performance-standard-in-the-midwest/>

¹⁸ <https://www.indy.gov/activity/benchmarking-and-transparency>

¹⁹ https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fd7a2f03c3ad531f41de6bb/t/644173908021bb51b8c3df6d/1682011040412/ThriveAnnualReport2022_FINAL.pdf

²⁰ https://library.municode.com/in/indianapolis_-_marion_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TITHIIPUHEWE_CH710ENBETR_S710-109EN

²¹ <https://2030districts.org/>

building districts and cities, uniting communities to catalyze transformation in the built environment and its role in mitigating and adapting to climate change.”²²

The Cincinnati 2030 District was established in 2018 as a program run by Green Umbrella. It includes 321 buildings that have committed to reducing their energy, water, and transportation emissions 50-60% by 2030.²³ There are 50 building owners participating in the Cincinnati 2030 District representing over 28 million sq. ft.²⁴

Cincinnati’s 2030 District collects building data from its members to track progress towards its goals. The 2030 District uses ENERGY STAR® *Portfolio Manager*® to track energy usage data, which it compares against baseline data from the 2003 Commercial Building Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS). At the conclusion of 2021, the 2030 District reported a 31.5% decrease in energy usage.²⁵ They have also reported a 31.3% reduction in water usage and a 20.8% decline in transportation emissions.²⁶ It is important to note that benchmarking data for members of the 2030 District is confidential so the only data available to the public is aggregate data for the district as a whole.

The Cincinnati 2030 District has identified several challenges related to benchmarking since its creation. Small building owners often do not have a dedicated energy team to assist with reporting data. Large building owners can have difficulty obtaining energy data if portions of the property are leased and tenants do not share data in a timely manner.

INCENTIVES, PROGRAMS, AND FINANCING TOOLS

While benchmarking ordinances can help identify how much energy buildings are using, many building owners lack access to funding that can be used to implement energy saving improvements. There are several local, state, and federal programs available to help buildings reduce their energy consumption.

Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE): Through PACE, the costs of implementing energy improvement projects are paid for by a lender. The property owner repays the loan through a special assessment on the building’s property tax bill.²⁷ PACE features 15- to 30-year terms, no down payment, no personal guarantees, fixed rates, and set payment schedules.²⁸ PACE financing is active in Cincinnati and can be used to fund energy saving improvements.

Green and Resilient Retrofit Program (GRRP): The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offers GRRP which provides funding for direct loans and grants to projects that improve energy or water efficiency, enhance indoor air quality or sustainability, install renewable energy, or utilize low-emission building materials, energy storage, or electrification strategies in eligible HUD-assisted multifamily properties.²⁹ GRRP also provides funding to support benchmarking at assisted properties.

Federal tax credits: The Inflation Reduction Act offers tax credits for the installation of qualifying energy saving technologies. These credits are also available to nonprofits as a direct pay benefit from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The most common technologies supported through this program are solar energy and battery storage. However, there are also benefits available for other sources of clean energy production.

²² <https://2030districts.org/about/>

²³ <https://2030districts.org/>

²⁴ <https://www.dropbox.com/s/uk3zgyalxvxz95/Cincinnati%202030%20District%202021%20Progress%20Report.pdf?e=1&dl=0>

²⁵ <https://www.dropbox.com/s/uk3zgyalxvxz95/Cincinnati%202030%20District%202021%20Progress%20Report.pdf?e=1&dl=0>

²⁶ <https://www.dropbox.com/s/uk3zgyalxvxz95/Cincinnati%202030%20District%202021%20Progress%20Report.pdf?e=1&dl=0>

²⁷ https://www.brickergreydon.com/assets/htmldocuments/Documents/Resources/OH_PACE-Financing_WhitePaper.pdf

²⁸ <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/oes/energy/pace-financing1/>

²⁹ <https://www.hud.gov/GRRP/Benchmarking>

Section 179D commercial buildings energy efficiency tax deduction: This tax deduction enables building owners to claim a tax deduction for installing qualifying energy saving systems in buildings. A deduction of up to \$1.88 per square foot is available for interior lighting, building envelope, or heating, cooling, ventilation, or hot water systems that reduce the energy consumption by 50% or more in comparison to a building meeting minimum requirements set by ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers) Standard 90.1.³⁰

U.S. Department of Energy Rebate Programs: The Inflation Reduction Act created the HOMES and HEERA Rebate programs which provide grants to State Energy Offices for rebate programs to reduce the costs of energy efficiency retrofits that are modeled to achieve or have achieved verifiable minimum energy use reductions. These rebates are available to owners of multifamily buildings that house low- to moderate-income residents and qualifying homeowners.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund: The U.S. EPA offers several programs under the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) – a program created by the Inflation Reduction Act. The first of these is the National Clean Investment Fund (NCIF) which recently awarded \$14 billion in competitive grants to three national nonprofit financing institutions with a focus on clean energy.³¹ These financing institutions will partner with the private sector to fund and secure clean energy projects.³² Eligible projects must meet a six-part definition that requires each project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; reduce other air pollutants; deliver benefits to communities; meet the requirement that it may not have otherwise been financed; mobilize private capital; and support only commercial technologies. The Clean Communities Investment Accelerator (CCIA) is a similar program offering \$6 billion to five national nonprofits to provide funding and technical assistance to community lenders in low-income neighborhoods to support clean energy projects and activities.³³ These nonprofits can lend to many public, quasi-public, not-for-profit, and non-profit community lenders in community development financial institutions, credit unions, green banks, housing finance agencies, minority depository institutions, and more.

Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA): The OAQDA is an independent state agency that funds projects that improve air quality, offer significant public health savings, and foster a strong economy. Through its Clean Air Improvement Program, it provides businesses with access to financing through OAQDA issued bonds. Eligible projects may also be able to leverage Green Bonds which can provide access to additional capital from the investment community. The program supports energy conservation measures on new and existing buildings, renewable energy, clean transportation infrastructure, and other projects that improve air quality.

Ohio Department of Development (ODOD): Through its various energy programs, the ODOD helps building owners identify and implement energy efficiency improvements. The Energy Efficiency Program connects commercial buildings and manufacturing facilities to certified energy auditors who will review energy usage and identify energy saving measures. Once building owners have completed an energy audit, the Energy Loan Fund provides eligible projects with access to low interest financing to install efficiency measures that reduce energy by at least 15%.³⁴

³⁰ <https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/energy-efficient-commercial-buildings-deduction>

³¹ <https://www.epa.gov/greenhouse-gas-reduction-fund/national-clean-investment-fund>

³² <https://www.epa.gov/greenhouse-gas-reduction-fund/national-clean-investment-fund>

³³ <https://www.epa.gov/greenhouse-gas-reduction-fund/clean-communities-investment-accelerator>

³⁴ <https://development.ohio.gov/community/redevelopment/energy-efficiency-program>

Conclusion

Energy Benchmarking and Building Performance Standards are established policies currently used by cities and states across the United States. Both policies have been proven to effectively reduce building energy usage and carbon emissions. These policies are most effective when local context is carefully considered, and stakeholders are engaged in program development.

cc: Virginia Tallent, Assistant City Manager
Oliver Kroner, Director, Office of Environment Sustainability

April 17, 2024

To: Mayor and Members of City Council
From: Sheryl M.M. Long, City Manager **202401058**
Subject: Report on High-Potential City-Owned Properties Along Major Transit Corridor

Ref. Doc. #202301025

City Council, at its session on April 12, 2023, referred the following item for review and report:

MOTION, submitted by Councilmembers Jeffreys, Owens and Harris, To understand opportunities for further development along or near transit corridors, **WE MOVE** that the Administration report back to Council within ninety days (90) on: An audit of high-potential surface parking and vacant lots owned by the City along or near transit corridors. Recommendations on which among those properties should be candidates for issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to develop housing, retail, office space, or other development. (STATEMENT ATTACHED).

OVERVIEW

In early 2023, the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (“SORTA”) announced plans to create the region’s first bus rapid transit (“BRT”) corridors along Hamilton Avenue and Reading Road. This historic investment in transit has high potential to increase regional connectivity, increase the vibrancy of communities located along the BRT routes, and spur regional economic growth.

At the direction of City Council, the Department of Community and Economic Development (“DCED”) has been exploring ways that the City Administration can encourage growth along major transit corridors. The City of Cincinnati presently owns various surface parking lots and vacant or underutilized parcels located along or near major transit corridors. At City Council’s request, DCED recently completed an audit of all City-owned surface parking lots and vacant parcels along or near these corridors. The goal of this audit was to identify sites with high development potential. The results of the audit can be found in the report below.

DCED recommends that the City issue Requests for Proposals/Qualifications (“RFP/Q”) for the redevelopment of select high-potential sites identified in the audit. These RFP/Qs will seek to attract proposals from qualified developers interested in partnering with the City to

realize its vision of transit oriented development. DCED is seeking a variety of uses, including the development of new housing stock, commercial and office space, and mixed-use property.

DCED further recommends extensive community engagement surrounding the redevelopment of these key parcels throughout the development process.

AUDIT OF HIGH-POTENTIAL SURFACE PARKING AND VACANT LOTS

As per the directive of City Council, DCED conducted an audit of surface parking and vacant or underutilized lots owned by the City along or near major transit corridors. For the purposes of this report, “major transit corridors” are defined as 24-hour Metro bus routes. The scope of this audit was narrowed following discussions with Councilmembers and City leadership. Properties located along or within roughly a block of major transit corridors were included in the audit. Adjacent and adjoining multi-parcel properties were considered single “sites” for the purpose of this audit.

In total, 48 different sites were identified. A full list of the sites can be found in Attachment B. Collectively, these sites represent roughly 73.804 acres of potentially developable land, with an average size of 1.538 acres. The sites had a variety of different zoning designations, which are listed below from most common to least common. Some sites held multiple zoning designations.

- SF-2 – Single Family (8)
- DD – Downtown Development (5)
- RM-1.2 – Residential Multifamily (5)
- PR – Parks and Recreation (4)
- RMX – Residential Mixed (4)
- CC-P – Commercial Community – Pedestrian (4)
- CC-M – Commercial Community – Mixed (3)
- IR – Institutional Residential (3)
- MG – Manufacturing General (3)
- T3N – T3 Neighborhood (2)
- T5MS-O – T5 Main Street – Open (2)
- OL – Office Limited (2)
- CC-A – Commercial Community – Auto (2)
- SF-20 – Single Family (1)
- SF-6 – Single Family (1)
- RM-0.7 – Residential Multifamily (1)
- CN-P – Commercial Neighborhood – Pedestrian (1)
- CG-A – Commercial General (1)

These sites are located across 20 different neighborhoods, including Downtown, Over-the-Rhine, Pendleton, Mount Auburn, Corryville, CUF, Avondale, North Avondale, Bond Hill, Northside, College Hill, Lower Price Hill, East Price Hill, West Price Hill, Westwood, East Westwood, Mount Airy, East Walnut Hills, Oakley, and Madisonville.

IDENTIFICATION OF PROPERTIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

More detailed analysis of the audit revealed several parcels of land with significant potential for development. Properties were assessed on a variety of factors including location, size, current zoning designation, and current market demand. Based upon this assessment, sites were then organized into three “tiers” ranging from most developable to least developable. Properties for which the City has already designated a preferred developer or upon which future redevelopment is already planned were excluded from the tier rankings. DCED’s Tier 1 recommendations focus on properties that align with the City’s long-term development goals and have the capacity to catalyze economic growth along transit corridors. The sites determined to have the highest potential for redevelopment are strategically located in areas with high transit accessibility. A breakdown of the tier rankings can be found below. Site specific tier designations can be found in Attachment B.

- Tier 1 Sites – Most Potential for Redevelopment: 22
- Tier 2 Sites – Redevelopment May be Challenging: 18
- Tier 3 Sites – Highly Unlikely to be Developable: 5
- Excluded – Existing Development Rights or Planned Redevelopment: 3

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ISSUING REQUESTS FOR PROPSAL (RFP/Q)

Tier 1 sites were further analyzed to determine which could be most readily released for RFP/Q to maximize impact. DCED recommends that the City Administration consider the release of RFP/Qs for the redevelopment of the following sites:

- Hughes Street & Schiller Street Properties
- 5103 Kenwood Road
- 3362 Reading Road
- 3916 Reading Road

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC INPUT

As the Administration moves to issue RFP/Qs for these high-potential sites, it is imperative that the City engage with critical neighborhood stakeholders and solicit public input throughout the development process. Community engagement sessions, public forums, and stakeholder meetings will provide opportunities for residents, business owners, and other key stakeholders to share their perspectives and contribute to the decision-making process. By fostering inclusive dialogue and collaboration, the Administration can ensure that development initiatives reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

DCED is aware of several federal funding sources available to support transit-oriented development projects. Sites identified in this report and released for future RFP/Qs present the City and qualified developers with an opportunity to leverage historic amounts of federal funding. To encourage utilization of this funding, DCED would like to highlight two federal loan programs:

- US Department of Transportation – Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (“TIFIA”)
 - o TIFIA gives the USDOT up to \$70 billion in lending capacity and can be used to provide transit-oriented development projects located along or within walking distance of transit facilities. The loans offered under TIFIA can be used to finance certain predevelopment costs, construction and rehabilitation costs, and certain interest, reserve, and project carrying costs. Up to 49% of total eligible costs for a transit-oriented development project can be financed by a TIFIA loan.
- US Department of Transportation – Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing (“RRIF”)
 - o The RRIF gives the USDOT \$35 billion in revolving loan authority and can be used to finance economic development, including commercial and residential development. Eligible projects must be physically connected to or within a half mile of a transit station and must be able to demonstrate that the project can generate new revenue for the relevant transit service. Eligible costs under the loan program can include construction and rehabilitation costs, and certain interest, reserve, and project carrying costs. Up to 75% of total eligible costs for a transit-oriented development project can be financed by an RRIF loan.

NEXT STEPS

DCED will proceed with the following steps:

- Initiate the process of seeking leadership approval to pursue the issuance of RFP/Qs for select high-potential properties identified in the audit.
- Engage with stakeholders and seek public input to inform the development process.
- Evaluate proposals submitted in response to RFP/Qs and select preferred developers based on predefined criteria.
- Work closely with select developers to facilitate the implementation of approved projects and monitor progress to ensure compliance with established guidelines and standards.

CONCLUSION

The opportunities to further development along major transit corridors in Cincinnati are abundant, and with strategic planning and collaboration, the City can unlock the full potential of these sites to create vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive communities. DCED looks forward to working closely with the Council and other stakeholders to advance these initiatives and realize our shared vision for the City of Cincinnati.

Attachment A: Statement from Councilmembers Jefferys, Owens, and Harris

Attachment B: List of City-owned Properties located along Major Transit Corridors

Copy: Markiea L. Carter, Director, Department of Community & Economic Development

Attachment A – Motion 202301025

City of Cincinnati



801 Plum Street, Suite 346A
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Phone: (513) 352-3464
Email: mark.jeffreys@cityofcincinnati.ohio.gov
Web: www.cincinnati.ohio.gov

202301025

Mark Jeffreys
Councilmember

March 27, 2023

MOTION

Surface Parking & Economic Development

To understand opportunities for further development along or near transit corridors,¹ WE MOVE that, the Administration report back to Council within ninety days (90) on:

- An audit of high-potential surface parking and vacant lots owned by the City along or near transit corridors.
- Recommendations on which among those properties should be candidates for issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to develop housing, retail, office space, or other development.

STATEMENT

The City of Cincinnati owns multiple surface parking and vacant lots throughout the city. With Metro's historic investment in our community paired with the multi-faceted approach the City is taking to increase housing options, now is an opportune time to reimagine surface parking lots and underutilized vacant lots as a more productive use. Converting these underutilized properties into housing, office space, restaurants, or storefronts can provide more opportunities for small businesses, increase housing options, enhance community vibrancy, and decrease runoff.

Councilmember Mark Jeffreys

¹ For the purposes of this motion, "near transit corridors" should be understood as within .25 miles of any bus route.

Attachment B – List of Properties

Tier 1 Sites

Address	Neighborhood	Parking Lot/Vacant Lot	Department	Zoning	Acreage	
Site 1						
31 Garfield Place	Downtown	Parking Lot	DCED	DD	0.198	
Site 2						
Reedy/E. Court Street Police Lot	Downtown	Parking Lot	CPD/DOE	DD	1.728	
Site 3						
302-320 W. 9th Street	Downtown	Parking Lot/Vacant Building	CMO/DPS	DD	0.767	
Site 4						
Hughes & Schiller Street Properties	Over-the-Rhine/Mt. Auburn	Vacant Lot	DCED/CRC	SF-20; RM-0.7	1.926	
Site 5						
5103 Kenwood Road	Madisonville	Vacant Lot	DOE	T3N	0.211	
Site 6						
3362 Reading Road	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DCED	RM-1.2	1.476	
Site 7						
3916 Reading Road	North Avondale	Vacant Lot	DCED	CN-P	1.827	
Site 8						
3614 Glenway Avenue	East Price Hill	Vacant Lot	DOE	SF-2	2.666	
3626-3634 Glenway Avenue	East Price Hill	Vacant Lot	MSD	SF-2	0.272	
Site 9						
3420-3422 Ibsen Avenue	Oakley	Vacant Lot	DOE	CG-A	0.191	
Site 10						
3521-3537 Ibsen Avenue	Oakley	Vacant Lot	DOE	RMX	0.584	
Ibsen Avenue Property	Oakley	Vacant Lot	DOE	RMX	0.463	
Site 11						
3620-3622 Madison Road	Oakley	Vacant Lot	DOE	RMX	0.193	
Site 12						
4791 Ridge Avenue	Oakley	Vacant Lot	DOE	CC-P	0.129	
Site 13						
1247 Dewey Avenue	West Price Hill	Vacant Lot	DCED	SF-2	0.126	
Site 14						
1263-1265 Dewey Avenue	West Price Hill	Vacant Lot	DCED	SF-2	0.124	
Site 15						
1125 Wells Street	East Price Hill	Vacant Lot	MSD	SF-2	0.13	
Site 16						
716 State Avenue	Lower Price Hill	Vacant Lot	DCED	CC-M	0.052	
Site 17						
719 State Avenue	Lower Price Hill	Vacant Lot	DOE	CC-M	0.268	
Site 18						
Highland Avenue Property	Mt. Auburn	Vacant Lot	Parks	SF-2	1.64	
Site 19						
Dandridge Street Property	Mt. Auburn	Vacant Lot	Parks	OL	0.502	
Site 20						
2203 Ohio Avenue	CUF	Vacant Lot	Parks	PR	0.549	
Site 21						
Lawn Avenue	Bond Hill	Vacant Lot	CRC	PR	1.757	
Site 22						
1211 Grosebeck Road	College Hill	Vacant Lot	DOE	SF-6	8.855	
1206 Grosebeck Road	College Hill	Vacant Lot	DOE	SF-6	0.876	
					Total Acreage	27.51
					Avg. Acreage	1.2504545

Tier 2 Sites

Address	Neighborhood	Parking Lot/Vacant Lot	Department	Zoning	Acreage
Site 1					
2200-2208 Loth Street	Mt. Auburn	Vacant Lot	DCED	RMX	0.296
2225-2227 Loth Street	Mt. Auburn	Vacant Lot	DCED	RMX	0.105
Site 2					
1523 Madison Road	East Walnut Hills	Parking Lot	DCED	CC-P	0.794
Site 3					
1557 Chase Avenue	Northside	Parking Lot	DCED	CC-P	0.178
4162-4166 Hamilton Avenue	Northside	Parking Lot	DCED	CC-P	0.214
Site 4					
1580-1584 West Fork Road	Northside/Mt. Airy	Vacant Lot	GCWW	SF-2	0.375
Site 5					
2951 Montana Avenue	Westwood	Parking Lot	DCED	T5MS-O	0.096
Site 6					
Queen City Avenue Property	Westwood	Parking Lot/Vacant Lot	Unknown/CRC	IR	5.859
Site 7					
2008 West Fork Road	Mt. Airy	Vacant Lot	DOTe	PR	10.151
Site 8					
2284 Montana Avenue	East Westwood	Vacant Lot	DOTe	OL	3.099
Site 9					
Mallon Avenue/Reading Road Property	Mt. Auburn	Vacant Lot	Parks	SF-2; CC-A	5.79
Site 10					
529-533 Dandridge Street	Pendleton	Vacant Lot	DOTe/DCED	RM-1.2	0.17
Site 11					
537-545 Dandridge Street	Pendleton	Vacant Lot	DOTe	RM-1.2	0.17
Site 12					
530-546 Dandridge Street	Mt. Auburn	Vacant Lot	DOTe	RM-1.2	0.28
Site 13					
23 Mulberry Street	Over-the-Rhine	Vacant Lot	DCED	RM-0.7	0.058
Site 14					
2434 Vine Street	Mount Auburn	Vacant Lot	Unknown	PR	5.186
2438 Vine Street	Mount Auburn	Vacant Lot	DOTe	CC-M	0.027
Site 15					
Reading Road	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DCED	CC-A	0.316
Site 16					
3362 Reading Road	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DOTe	RM-1.2	0.14
Site 17					
3638 Reading Road	Avondale	Vacant Lot	CRC	RM-1.2	0.083
Site 18					
Shillito's West	Downtown	Vacant Building	DCED	DD	0.946
Total Acreage					34.333
Avg. Acreage					1.907389

Tier 3 Sites

Address	Neighborhood	Parking Lot/Vacant Lot	Department	Zoning	Acreage	
Site 1						
601-605 Race Street	Downtown	Land Only	DCED	DD	0.301	
Site 2						
Ludlow Avenue Viaduct Properties	Northside	Parking Lot/Existing Building	Health/DOE	MG	3.73	
Site 3						
680 Evans Street	Lower Price Hill	Vacant Lot	GCWW	MG	1.86	
Site 4						
3116 Highland Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
3108 Highland Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
3106 Highland Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.014	
300 E. Martin Luther King Drive	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.095	
306 E. Martin Luther King Drive	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.134	
308 E. Martin Luther King Drive	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
310 E. Martin Luther King Drive	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
312 E. Martin Luther King	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
305 Piedmont Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
307 Piedmont Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
309 Piedmont Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
313 Piedmont Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
3107 Burnet Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.062	
3103 Burnet Avenue	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.062	
318 E. Martin Luther King Drive	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.067	
316 E. Martin Luther King Drive	Corryville	Parking Lot	Health	IR	0.061	
Site 5						
Reading Road	Avondale	Parking Lot	DCED	IR	0.035	
					Total Acreage	6.97
					Avg. Acreage	1.394

Non-Applicable Sites

Address	Neighborhood	Parking Lot/Vacant Lot	Department	Zoning	Acreage	
Site 1						
5100-5108 Whetsel Avenue	Madisonville	Vacant Lot	DCED	T5MS-O	0.406	
5910 Sierra Street	Madisonville	Vacant Lot	DCED	T3N	0.101	
5105 Whetsel Avenue	Madisonville	Parking Lot	CRC	T5MS-O	0.283	
5811-5813 Sierra Street	Madisonville	Vacant Lot	DCED	T3N	0.239	
Site 2						
800 Evans Street Properties	Lower Price Hill	Vacant Lot/Existing Building/Parking Lot	DCED/CPD	MG	3.21	
Site 3						
Reading Road	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DCED	CC-P	0.221	
Blair Avenue	Avondale	Existing ROW	DOE	CC-P	0.084	
Bowman Terrace	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DOE	CC-P	0.008	
Savoy Place	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DCED	RMX	0.044	
Savoy Place	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DCED	RMX	0.052	
Savoy Place	Avondale	Existing ROW	DOE	RMX	0.046	
Savoy Place	Avondale	Existing ROW	DOE	CC-P	0.014	
3112 Savoy Place	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DOE	RMX	0.126	
3112 Savoy Place	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DCED	RMX	0.063	
3113 Borrman Avenue	Avondale	Vacant Lot	DCED	RMX	0.094	
					Total Acreage	4.991
					Avg. Acreage	1.663667

May 7, 2024

To: Members of the Climate, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

From: Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager 202401296

Subject: **High-Potential City-Owned Properties Along Major Transit Corridors**

Attached is the DCED presentation regarding high-potential city-owned properties along major transit corridors.

Cc: Markiea L. Carter, Director, Department of Community & Economic Development

High-Potential City-Owned Properties Along Major Transit Corridors

Assessing the potential of leveraging City-owned properties to encourage **transit-oriented development** throughout Cincinnati.

CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 7, 2024

Department of Community & Economic Development (“DCED”) // 513-352-6146 // #700, Two Centennial, 805 Central Ave., Cincinnati 45202

Presentation Outline

- Defining Terms: Transit Corridors & Transit-Oriented Development
 - TCs & TOD in Cincinnati: Background and Timeline
 - The Report: Identifying High-Potential City-Owned Properties Along Major Transit Corridors
 - *Introducing The Report*
 - Methodology for Identification*
 - Tier Ranking System*
 - Findings & Recommendations*
 - Additional Considerations & Funding Opportunities*
- Next Steps: RFP/Qs and Beyond

“HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS” // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024

Defining Terms: What is a Transit Corridor?

- According to the National Association of City Transportation Officials, transit corridors (“TCs”) are **thoroughfares that promote economic development around high-quality public transit service**. High quality public transit service can include light rail, streetcars, bus rapid transit, nonstop bus service, etc.
- TCs also foster an environment in which transit service is directly **complimented by high-quality pedestrian infrastructure for both walking and biking**.



Proposed TC plan in Atlanta

Defining Terms: What is Transit-Oriented Development?

- Transit-oriented development (“TOD”) is **dense, walkable, and mixed-use development** that is **in proximity to a transit corridor or transit system**.
- According to the Federal Transit Administration (“FTA”), successful TOD promotes:



“HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS” // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024

TCs & TOD in Cincinnati: Background and Timeline

May 2020

Issue 7 passes overwhelmingly, approving a 0.8% countywide sales tax increase and providing needed funding for the expansion of transit service and investment in transit-related infrastructure.



October 2020

Responding to the passage of Issue 7, major regional stakeholders send a letter to City Council requesting a zoning study of TCs in Cincinnati – both the BRT and 24-hour Metro routes – in order to plan to “update and improve the zoning with a more transit-oriented development pattern.”

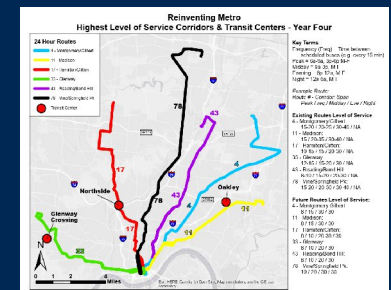
The letter was signed by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, Greater Cincinnati Northern Kentucky African American Chamber of Commerce, Homebase, LISC Greater Cincinnati, The Port, Urban Land Institute Cincinnati, Urban League of Greater Southwest Ohio

May 2021

In response, ULI Cincinnati executes and ultimately presents a report to City Council outlining the importance of TOD. The findings further the discourse around our transit infrastructure and inspires the City to continue looking into potential zone changes and incentives that would inspire successful TOD.

May 2021

SORTA rolls out it’s first seven 24-hour bus routes under Phase I of Reinventing Metro, helping to define Cincinnati’s existing transit corridors.

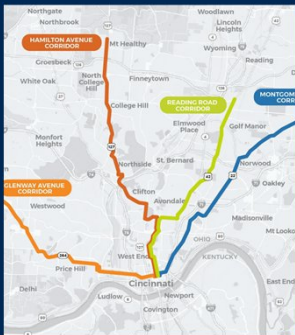


“HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS” // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024

TCs & TOD in Cincinnati: Background and Timeline

September 2022

SORTA launches a study to identify potential Bus Rapid Transit corridors in Hamilton County.



December 2022

Responding to Cincinnati’s housing crisis and ongoing research on TOD and land use reform, the Dept. of City Planning & Engagement begins initial engagement on what would become “Connected Communities,” a proposed land use policy reform that places emphasis on TOD.

January 2023

SORTA announces Hamilton Avenue and Reading Road as the region’s first planned Bus Rapid Transit corridors., further defining and strengthening Cincinnati’s major transit corridors.

March 2023

Prompted by ongoing research, engagement, and potential policy reforms surrounding land use reform and TOD, City Council requests a report on opportunities for reuse of vacant or underutilized City-owned parcels located along or near transit corridors.

January 2024

In concurrence with the Mayor, the City announces the final iteration of the proposed “Connected Communities” land use policy reforms, which will go before Council and Planning Commission in the coming weeks.

TODAY'S PRESENTATION



“HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS” // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024

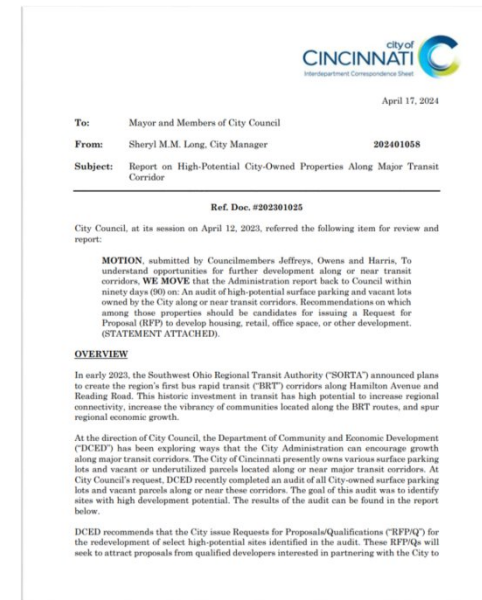


Introducing the Report

Report on High-Potential City-Owned Properties Along Major Transit Corridors

(referred to hereafter as “The Report”).

- The City owns parcels across all 52 neighborhoods.*
 - Most of these parcels serve a **municipal purpose**, however, the **City does control some that could be considered either entirely vacant or underutilized**.
 - The City also owns numerous surface parking lots that could be redeveloped into a higher and better use.
- SORTA operates several 24-hour Metro bus routes in Cincinnati, along TCs.
 - Some of the City’s vacant or underutilized parcels and surface parking lots are **located along these routes and are primed for redevelopment**.



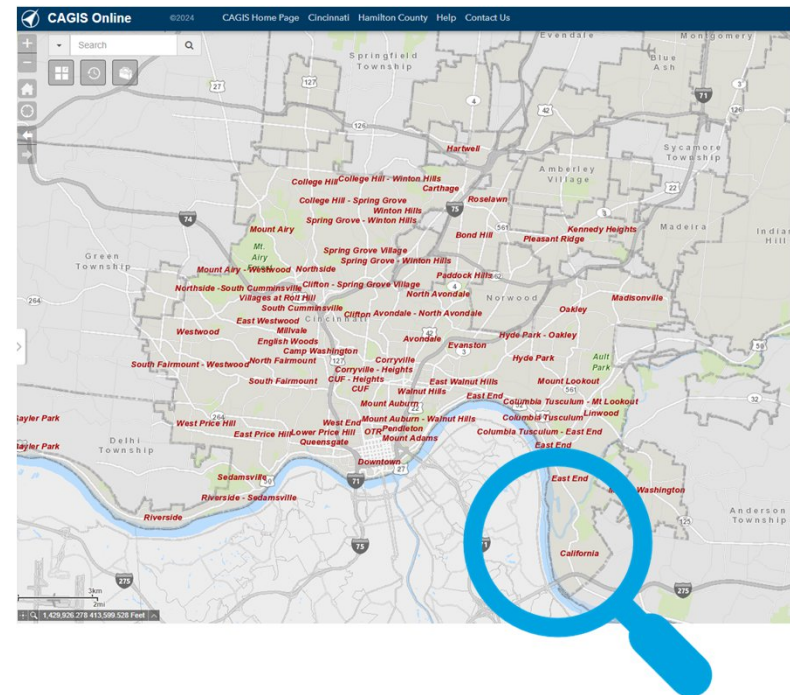
***Note:** The City owns & controls comparatively fewer parcels than the hundreds of the Hamilton County Landbank, which primarily acquires and disposes property for the purpose of strategic redevelopment.

“HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS” // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024



The Report: Methodology for Identification

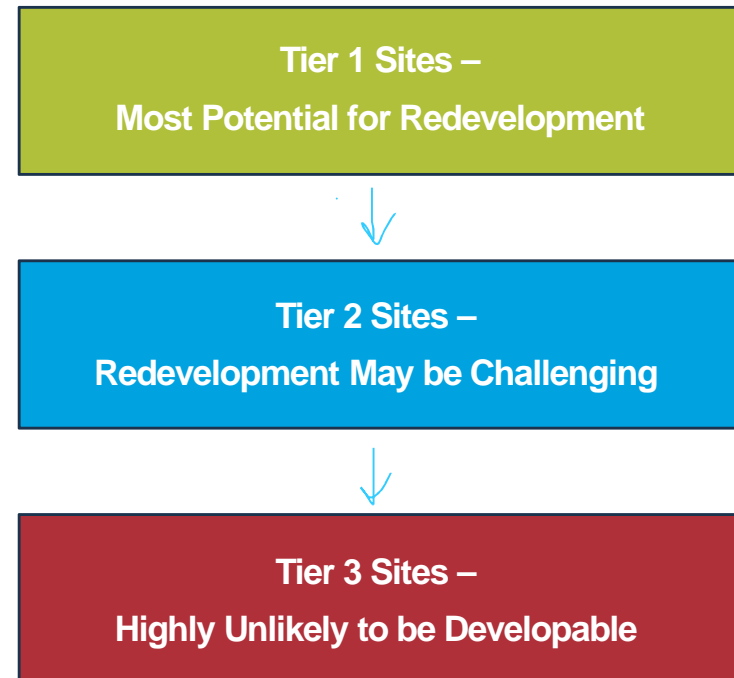
- At the direction of City Council, DCED worked with the Department of City Planning & Engagement to create a CAGIS overlay highlighting all 24-hour Metro bus routes in Cincinnati.
- ***The CAGIS overlay was then used to identify all City-owned parcels located along or within roughly a block of the 24-hour Metro routes.***
- Adjacent and adjoining multi-parcel properties were considered single “sites” for the purposes of the property audit.



“HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS” // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024

The Report: Tier Ranking System

- Sites were sub-categorized into 3 separate “tiers” ranging from most “developable” to “least developable.”
- Sites with existing development rights or with future planned redevelopments were excluded.
- To determine tier rankings, ***sites were assessed on a variety of factors including location, size, site condition, current zoning designation, current use, and current market demand.***





The Report: Tier Ranking System (cont'd.)

Example Property: 680 Evans Street

Neighborhood: Lower Price Hill

Description:

Sizable portion of land in Lower Price Hill with favorable zoning for future manufacturing use.

However, ***additional site context reveals that it is part of a larger, existing GCWW facility***, making redevelopment of the site highly unlikely.

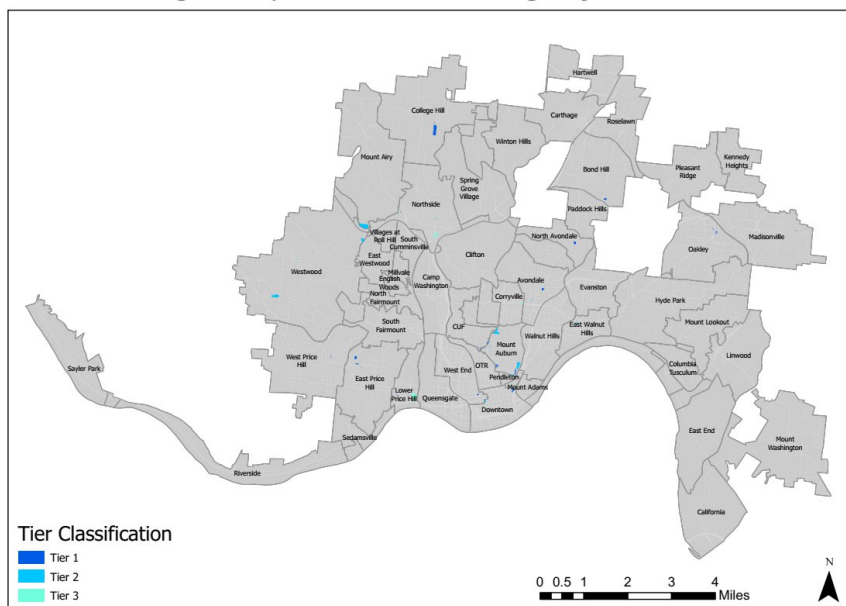
FINAL DESIGNATION: TIER 3



The Report: Findings and Recommendations

Citywide Maps of Identified Sites

Tier Ranking for City-Owned Parcels Along Major Transit Corridors



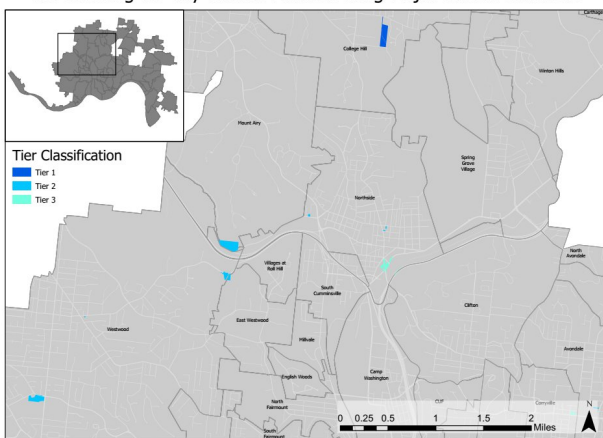
Map A: Full-City Map View.

Identified High-Potential City-Owned Properties Along Major Transit Corridors

The Report: Findings and Recommendations

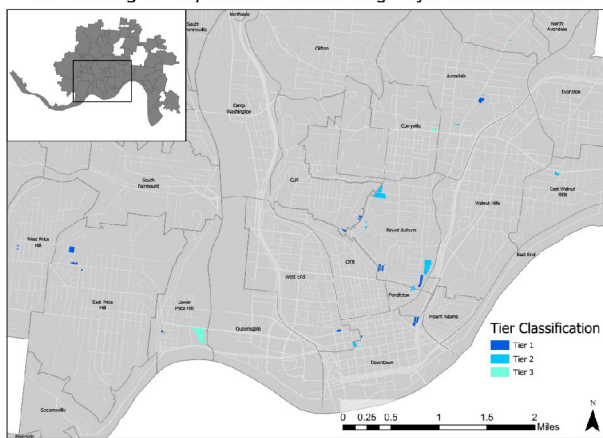
Citywide Maps of Identified Sites

Tier Ranking for City-Owned Parcels Along Major Transit Corridors



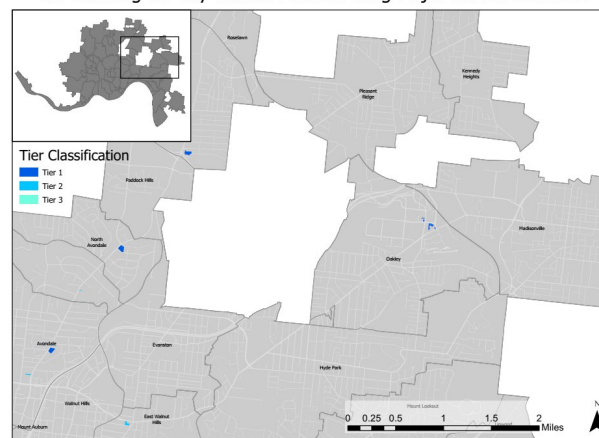
Map B: Upper-Left Section Map View.
*Identified High-Potential City-Owned
 Properties Along Major Transit Corridors*

Tier Ranking for City-Owned Parcels Along Major Transit Corridors



Map C: Lower-Center Section Map View.
*Identified High-Potential City-Owned
 Properties Along Major Transit Corridors*

Tier Ranking for City-Owned Parcels Along Major Transit Corridors



Map D: Upper-Right Section Map View.
*Identified High-Potential City-Owned
 Properties Along Major Transit Corridors*

“HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS” // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024

The Report: Findings and Recommendations

Overall Breakdown



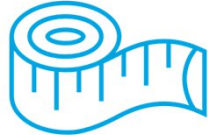
48
Total Sites Identified



Located across:
20 different neighborhoods!



~ 73.804 acres
Total Land Identified



~ 1.538 acres
Average Size of Identified Site

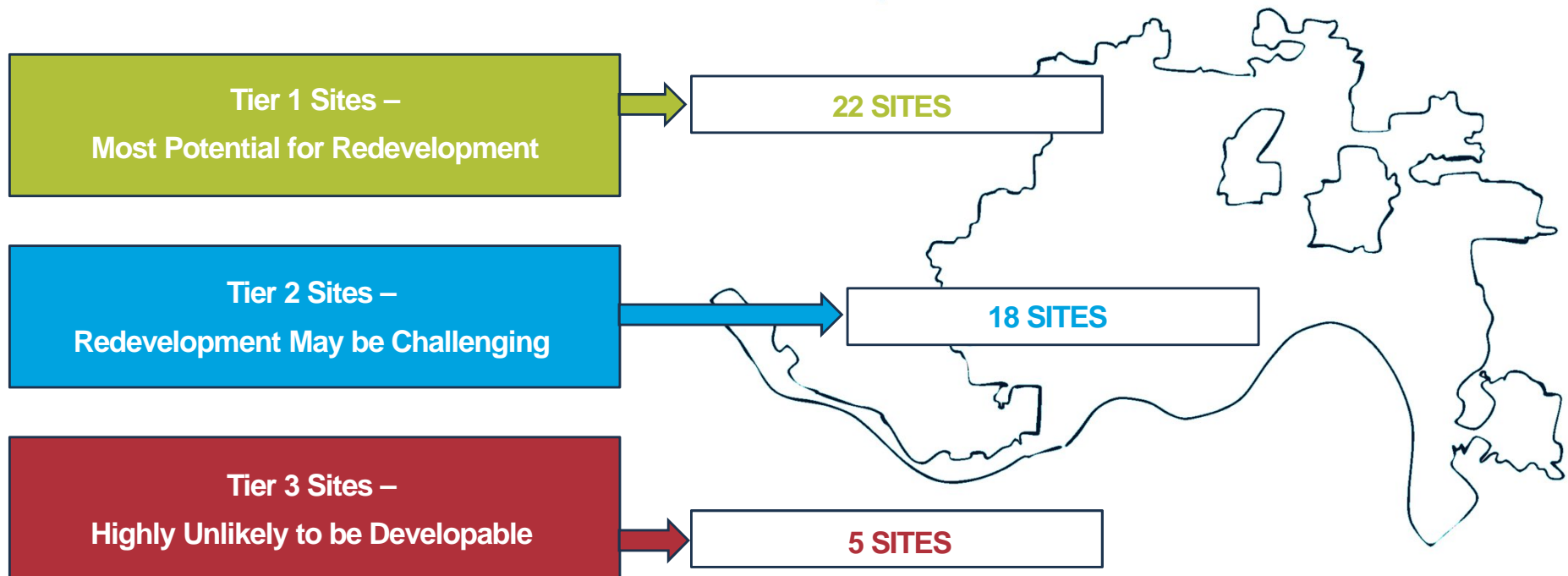


18
Different Zoning Designations
for Identified Sites

SF-2
Most Common Zoning
Designation of Identified Sites

The Report: Findings and Recommendations

Breakdown by Tier



Note: 3 SITES were excluded due to existing rights or planned redevelopment

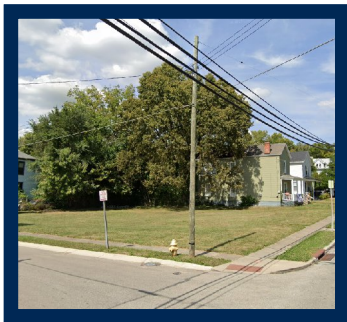
"HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS" // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024

The Report: Findings and Recommendations

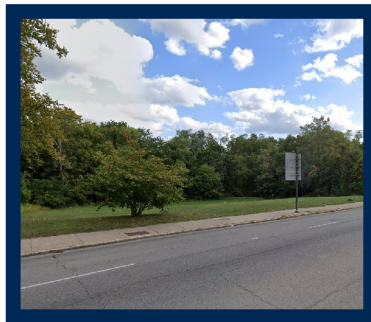
Tier 1 Site Highlights

(ie. identified sites DCED is especially excited about!)

DCED further analyzed Tier 1 sites to determine which could be most readily released for RFP/Q to maximize impact. Following this analysis, **DCED recommends that the City Administration consider the release of RFP/Qs for redevelopment of the following:**



5103 Kenwood Road*
Madisonville



3362 Reading Road
Avondale



3916 Reading Road
North Avondale

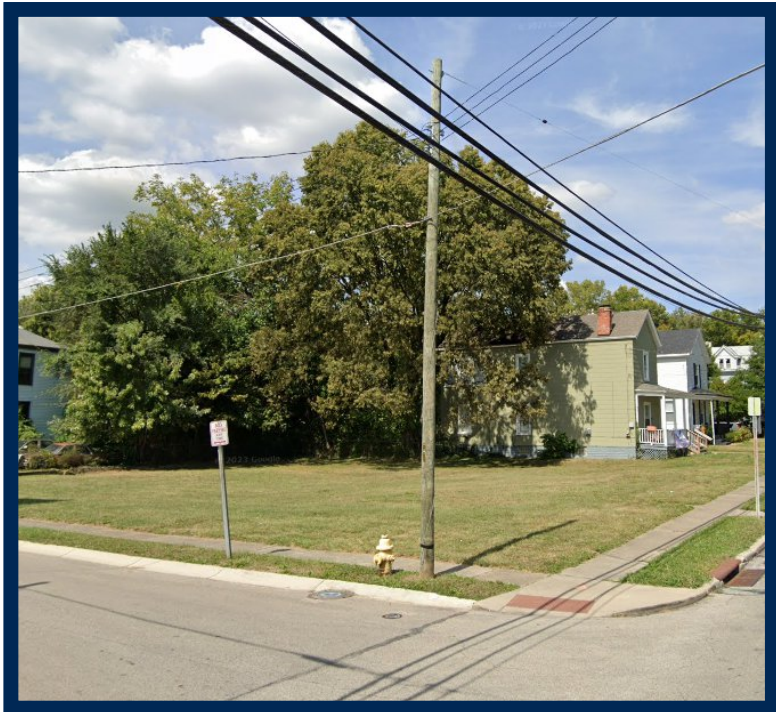


**Hughes St. & Schiller St.
Properties OTR/Mt Auburn**

*RFP/Q already planned for release in the coming months

"HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS" // DCED // CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE MEETING, MAY 7, 2024

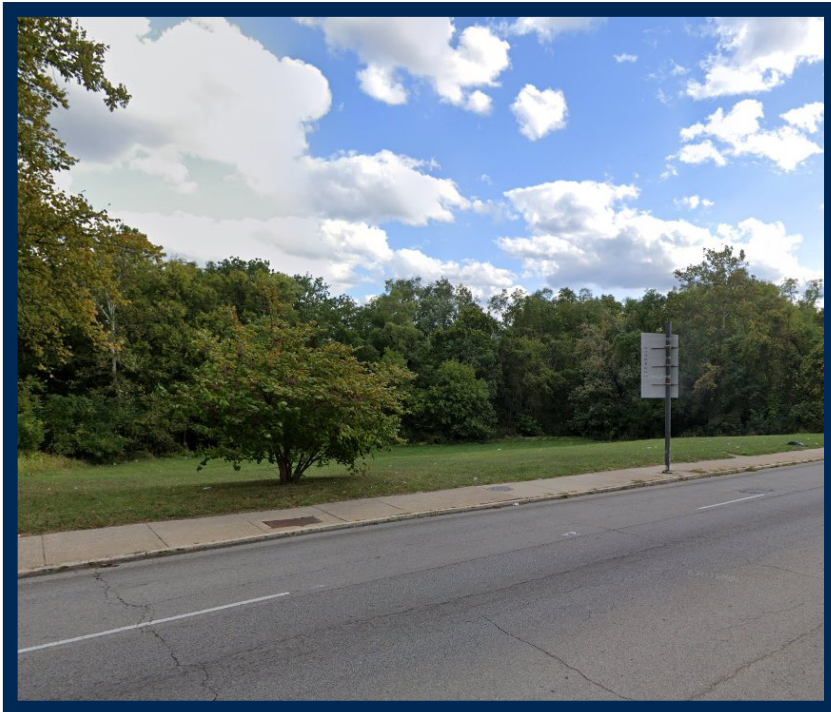
The Report: Findings and Recommendations



5103 Kenwood Road

- Located in Madisonville on the corner of Kenwood Road and Sierra Street
- Currently a vacant lot, formerly used by DOTE for aviation purposes
- Currently zoned as T3N – T3 Neighborhood
- Approximately 0.211 acres
- Planned RFQ release coming later this year

The Report: Findings and Recommendations



3362 Reading Road

- Located on Reading Road across from Hale Avenue in Avondale
- Currently a vacant lot controlled by DCED
- Currently zoned as RM-1.2 – Residential Multifamily
- Approximately 1.476 acres

The Report: Findings and Recommendations



3916 Reading Road

- Located at the intersection of Reading Road and Paddock Road in North Avondale
- Currently vacant lot controlled by DCED
- Currently zoned as CN-P – Community Neighborhood – Pedestrian
- Approximately 1.827 acres

The Report: Findings and Recommendations



Hughes Street & Schiller Street Properties

- Collection of multiple parcels bounded by Schiller St. to the south, Mulberry St. to the north, Main St. to the west, and Sycamore St. to the east
- Hughes St. runs through the middle of the site
- Located in Over-the-Rhine Statistical Neighborhood Area and Mount Auburn Community Council Boundary
- Parcel conditions vary; most parcels are entirely vacant while some at the southwest corner of the property contain existing CRC basketball courts
- Remainder of the properties controlled by DCED
- Most properties zoned as SF-20 – Single Family, with some zoned as RM-0.7 – Residential Multifamily
- Approximately 1.962 acres



The Report: Additional Considerations & Funding Opportunities

Federal Loan Programs

- DCED is aware of several federal loan programs available through the US Department of Transportation designed specifically to provide funding to transit-oriented development projects, including:
 - ***Transportation Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act*** *(up to \$70 billion in lending capacity)*
 - *Up to 49% of eligible costs can be funded*
 - ***Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing*** *(\$35 billion in revolving loan authority)*
 - *Up to 75% of eligible costs can be funded*
- DCED encourages qualified developers interested in pursuing future TOD projects in the City to work with the Administration to leverage this historic amount of federal funding and local support for this kind of development.



Next Steps: RFP/Qs and Beyond

Stakeholder Engagement and Public Input

- As the City Administration moves to issue RFP/Qs for these select high-potential sites, DCED believes it is imperative to ***conduct robust engagement*** with our most critical neighborhood stakeholders.
- The City should solicit feedback from the public throughout the development process via community engagement sessions, public forums, and stakeholder meetings.
 - ***These engagement opportunities should specifically target residents, business owners, and other key stakeholders such as community development corporations and non-profit organizations.***
- By fostering inclusive dialogue and collaboration, the Administration can ensure that development initiatives reflect the needs and aspirations of the community.

The Stakes: Capitalizing on Historic Opportunities



With historic investments in transit infrastructure like Bus Rapid Transit and planned land use reforms such as Connected Communities in the pipeline, Cincinnati faces significant opportunity to realize a vision of transit-oriented development that will help:

- **Increase neighborhood vibrancy** through the creation of much needed housing stock and new mixed-use development
- **Combat climate change** by reducing reliance on personal automobiles for transportation
- **Increase overall regional connectivity**
- Spur new and sustainable **economic growth**

By looking into exciting new uses for these High-Potential City-Owned Properties Along Major Transit Corridors, DCED can “meet the moment” and capitalize on these opportunities in the best interest of Cincinnati’s residents.

Thank You.

HIGH-POTENTIAL CITY-OWNED PROPERTIES ALONG MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDORS

CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 7, 2024

Department of Community & Economic Development ("DCED") // 513-352-6146 // #700, Two Centennial, 805 Central Ave., Cincinnati 45202

May 7, 2024

To: Members of the Climate, Environment, & Infrastructure Committee
From: Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager
Subject: Presentation – Green Cincinnati Plan

Attached is a presentation regarding the Green Cincinnati Plan.

Cc: Oliver Kroner, Director of Environment & Sustainability



Green Cincinnati Plan 2023

Update for Climate, Environment, & Infrastructure Committee | May 7, 2024



GREEN CINCINNATI PLAN



| BUILDINGS & ENERGY



| CITY OPERATIONS



| COMMUNITY ACTIVATION



| FOOD



| NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



| MOBILITY



| RESILIENCE & ADAPTATION



| ZERO WASTE

50% carbon emissions reduction by 2030, 100% carbon neutral by 2050.

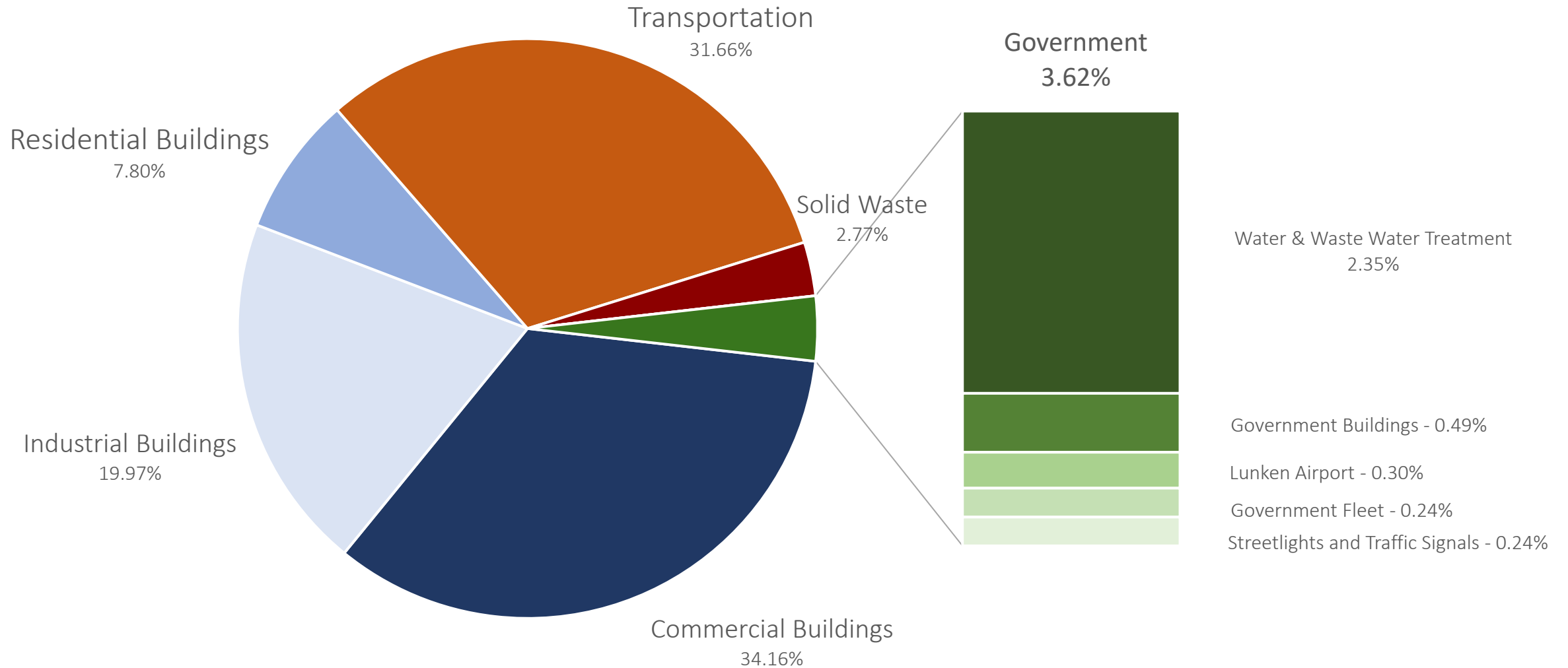
Sustainability. Equity. Resilience.



Cincinnati Carbon Profile

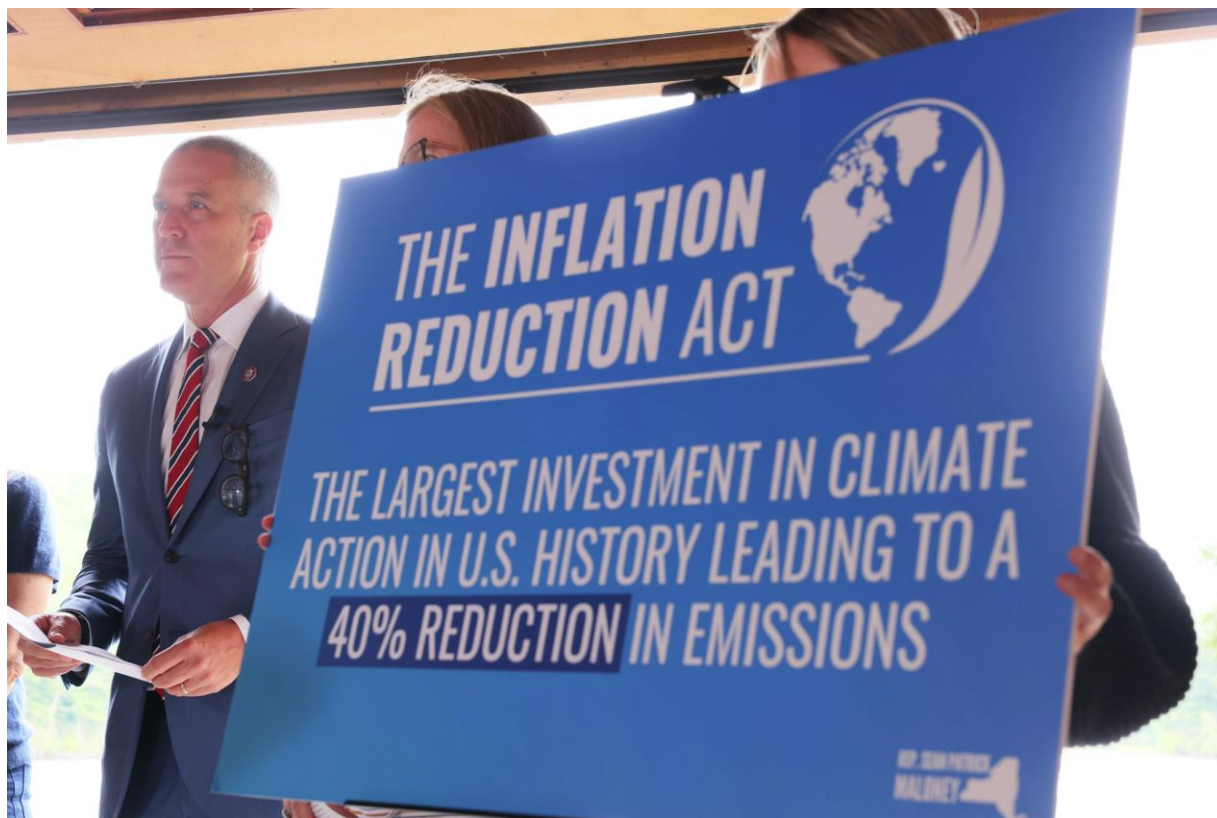
5.9M

metric tons of carbon
emitted in Cincinnati in 2021





Federal funding opportunity



- **Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act - \$1.2T**
- **Inflation Reduction Act- \$369B**
- **Justice 40 –** requirement that 40% of federal funding goes to communities most in need



Green Cincinnati Goal:
Secure \$25M of funding toward
GCP implementation by 2028



Phase 1: Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) submitted to EPA in March

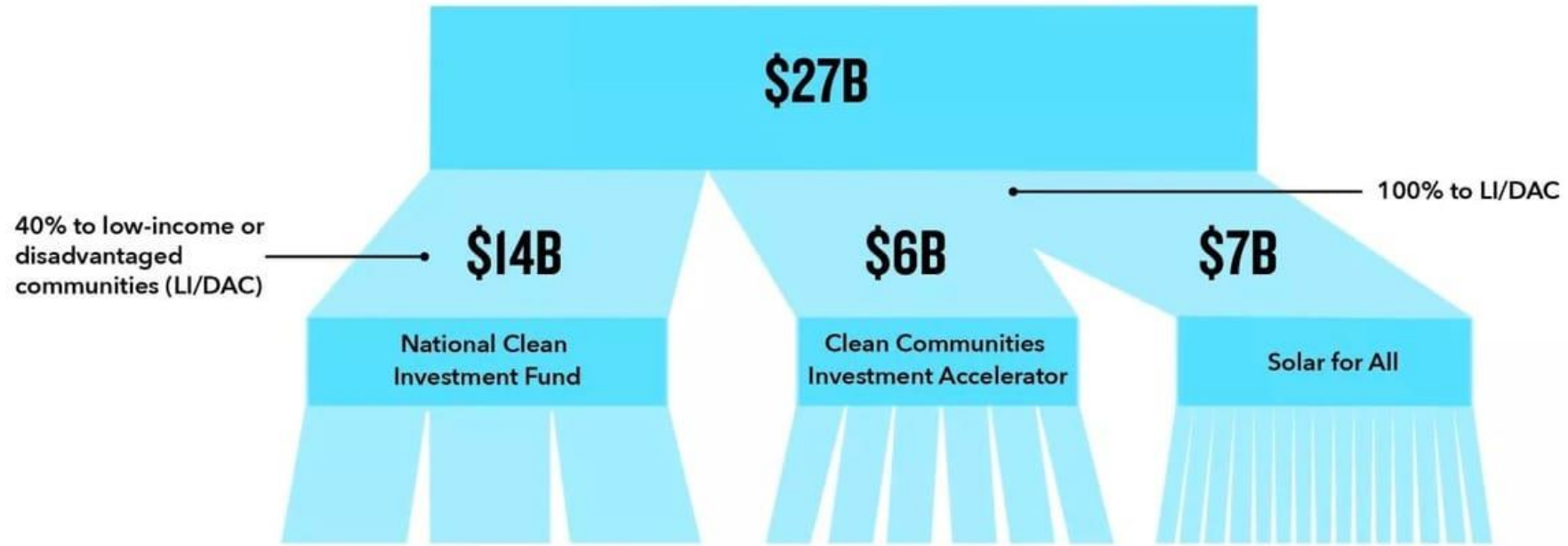
Phase 2:

**Total Cincinnati MSA Application led by OKI:
\$180M**

1. Low-income energy efficiency: \$23M
2. Renewable energy on public and non-profit buildings: \$48M
3. Transit improvements and incentives: \$67M
4. Industrial Decarbonization: \$25M
5. Food and Organic waste diversion: \$15M
6. Tree planting: \$2.5M

GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND (GGRF)

A critical tool for filling gaps in access to green capital, with almost 70% of funds dedicated to projects in low-income and disadvantaged communities that lack access to financing.



PROJECT EXAMPLES



Community-Owned Solar



Small Business Loan - Transportation



Existing Building Decarbonization



Single-Family Home Loan

Green Banks

- \$20B of green bank funding announced
- Both of the applications the City supported received funding:
 1. **Coalition for Green Capital** - includes Ohio Air Quality Development Authority
 2. **Power Forward** - includes LISC, United Way, Habitat for Humanity



EPA Announces \$7 Billion Solar for All Grants

- Significant funding for low-income solar
- Two applications Cincinnati supported
 - Ohio Air Quality Development Authority - \$156M
 - Industrial Heartland Solar Coalition - \$156M
- Expected local investment of ~\$20M, benefitting 3,000 low-income households

BLOOMBERG AMERICAN SUSTAINABLE CITIES

What:

- Invest in transformational solutions and practices that will deliver **climate and racial wealth equity** outcomes for communities.
- Advance **new models of collaboration** by strengthening the capacity of cities, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders to work together to **co-create and implement solutions**.
- Leverage and **mobilize public, private, and philanthropic resources** to advance climate resilience and racial wealth equity.

How:

- 3 Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation staff embedded in Cincinnati for 3 years
- \$300-500K of financial support to accelerate climate equity work
- Technical Assistance from suite of partners including: PolicyLink; NRDC; Elevate; Delivery Associates



Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities Proposed Cincinnati Focus Areas

- 1. Quality Green Job Development:**
Developing programs with partners that focus on creating green jobs and a workforce prepared to benefit in clean energy and sustainable industries, specifically targeting BIPOC communities for training, business development, and living wage jobs in these same communities. This would provide economic opportunities while advancing climate goals.
- 2. Support for Minority-Owned Businesses:**
Creating and expanding support programs for minority-owned businesses, especially Black businesses, in green industries. This includes access to capital, training, and mentorship to foster growth and sustainability in alignment with climate goals.
- 3. Addressing energy poverty:**
 - a. Improving Energy Performance of Multi-Family buildings:** Expanding programs to reduce the energy costs of low-income rental housing.
 - b. Community Solar Projects:** Utilizing IRA funding opportunities to accelerate community renewable energy projects to deliver clean energy and cost savings to low-income households.
- 4. Climate Resilience in Vulnerable Communities:**
Developing strategies to enhance climate resilience in communities most affected by climate change (urban heat, sewer backups, overland flooding) with a focus on public health, informed by deep community engagement.



GREEN CINCINNATI PLAN

Seeds of Change

Grant Program

Purpose:

To encourage residents and partners to initiate community-led projects that bring the Green Cincinnati Plan to life.

Priority:

To support resident-driven solutions that focus in large part on impacting those communities most affected by climate change.

Project support:

\$1,000 to \$20,000

Round 1: OPEN CALL

- 39 proposals received totaling \$462,000 – 4x the amount available!
- Funding decisions communicated mid-June; projects complete by Dec. 2024

Round 2: YOUTH-LED EFFORTS

- Coming mid-summer!
- Supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies Youth Climate Action Fund

Round 3: TBD! Stay informed by visiting here regularly! >>>>> >>>>>>>> >>>>>>>>





GREEN CINCINNATI PLAN
Seeds of Change
Grant Program

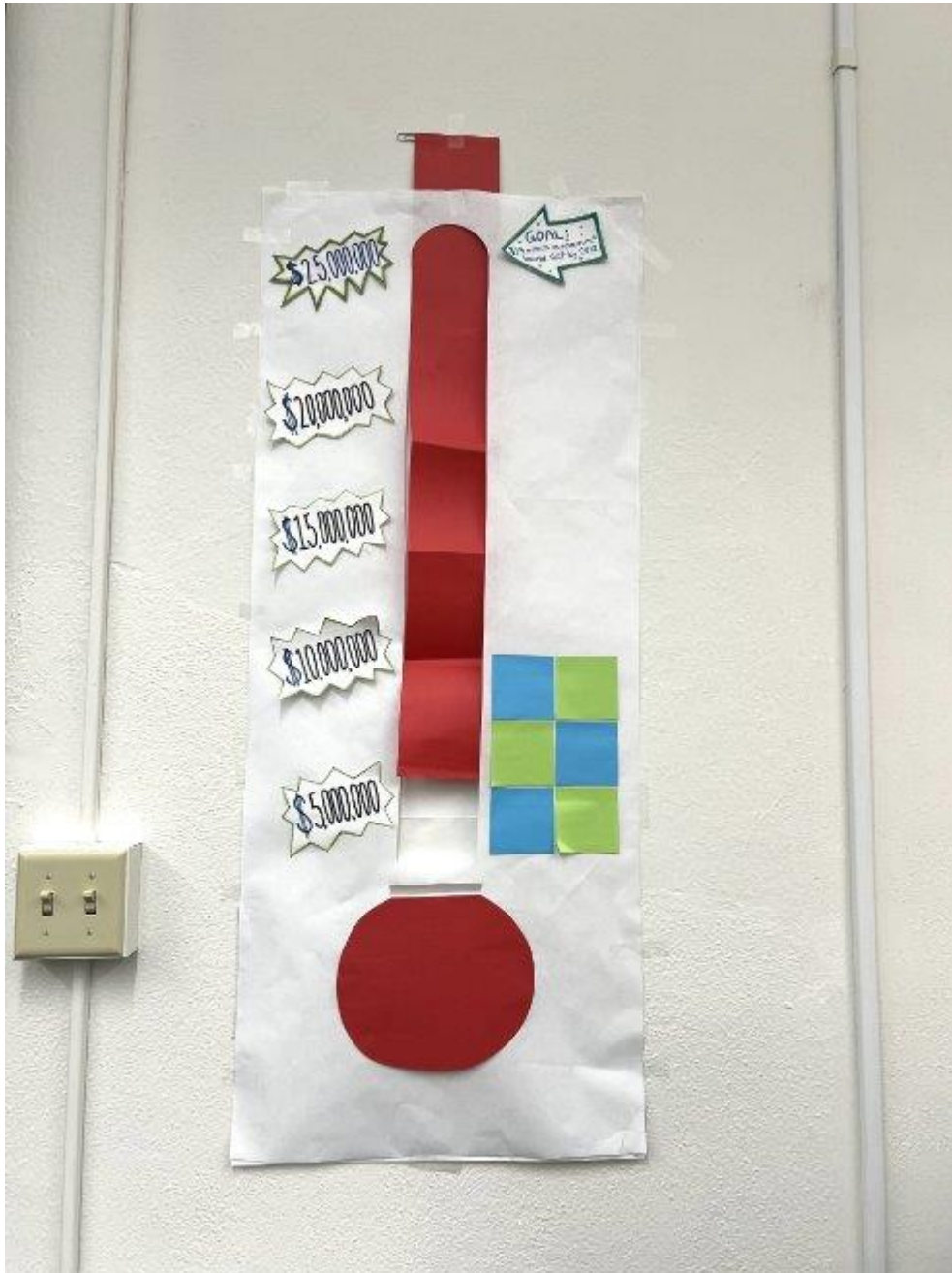
YOUTH CLIMATE ACTION FUND

Supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies



The Youth Climate Action Fund will support Cincinnati youth, ages 15 to 24, in designing, producing, and overseeing urgent climate solutions.

- The Youth Climate Action Fund spans 100 cities, 38 countries, 6 continents, and represents over 62 million residents.
- Cincinnati will receive \$50,000 to distribute as microgrants through the Seeds of Change Grant Program this summer to youth led and youth serving initiatives.
- After distributing initial funds, Cincinnati will be eligible to receive an additional \$100,000 to grant out.



Federal Funding

- **Goal:** \$25M secured for GCP implementation by 2028
- **Secured:** ~\$30M
 - Workforce development
 - Heat pump installations
 - Building Performance Standards
 - Composting
 - Brownfield Remediation
 - Solar for All
- **Major Opportunities ahead:**
 - Community Change - \$2B



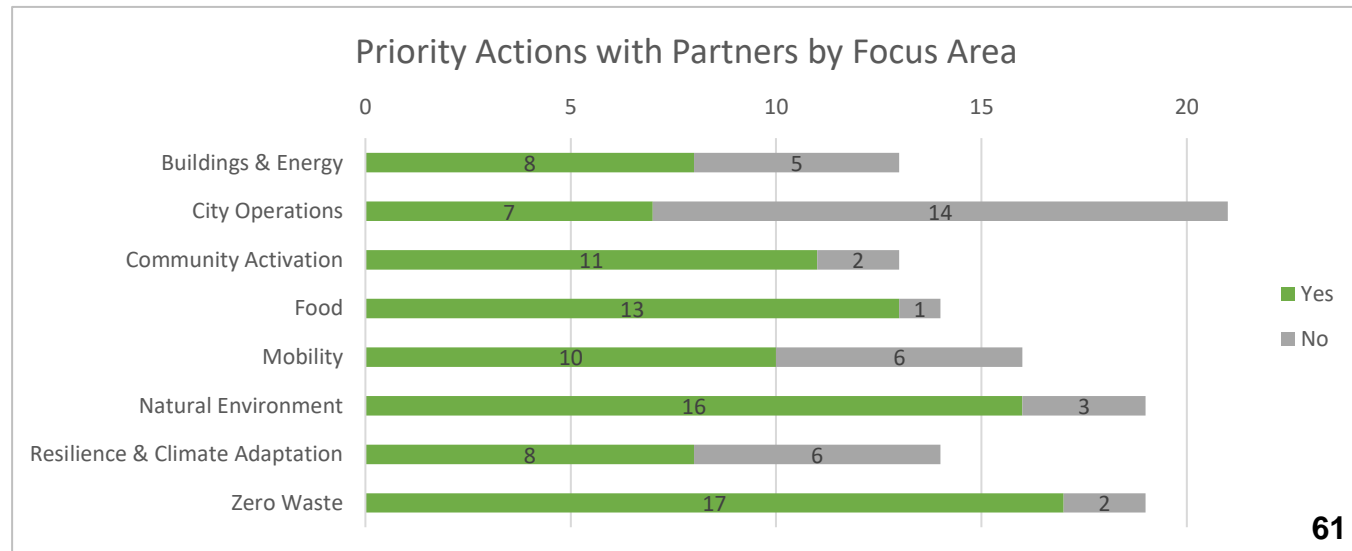
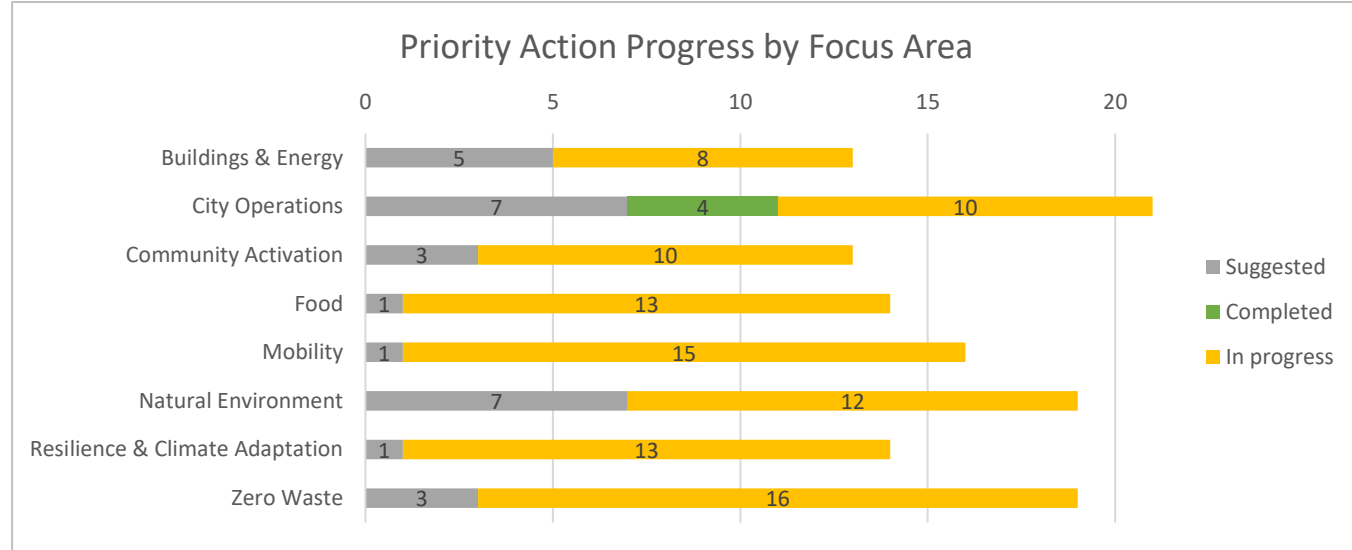
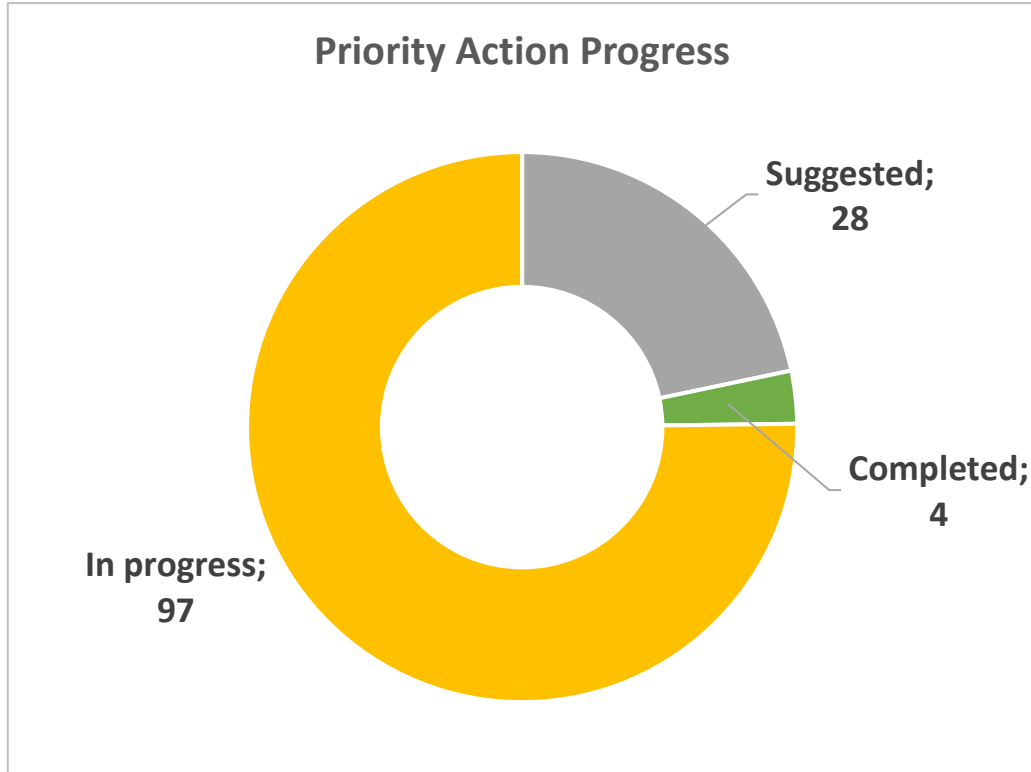
Climate Resilience & Adaptation Collaboration

- Extreme Weather Town Hall 6PM May 21
 - Inter-departmental efforts to address extreme weather
 - Featuring:
 - Office of Environment & Sustainability
 - Buildings & Inspections
 - Metropolitan Sewer District
 - Greater Cincinnati Waterworks





Progress Tracking





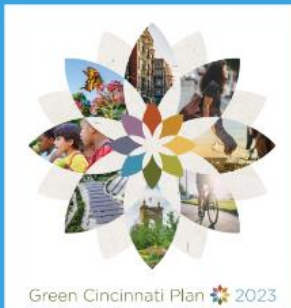
Transition for Cincinnati

Emissions 2021
5.67 MMT

Breakdown of emissions 2021
5.67 MMT

Transition pathway 2021-2050

The emissions will decrease from 5.67 MMT (2021) to 44.41 TMT (2050) according to this pathway



Green Cincinnati Plan 2023

Cincinnati on the Path to Carbon Neutral

The **2023 Green Cincinnati Plan (GCP)** outlines a comprehensive set of 40 high-impact Strategies and 128 Actions to address climate change and build a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient future. The Plan is organized into eight Focus Areas that articulate the City's Visions, Goals, Strategies, and Actions in response to the climate crisis across the following systems: Buildings & Energy, City Operations, Community Activation, Food, Mobility, Natural Environment, Resilience & Climate Adaptation, and Zero Waste.

Show full text ▾

