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Councilmember

April 22, 2024

## MOTION

### *Leveraging Text Messaging Technology to Improve Resident Communication*

We MOVE that the City Administration prepare a report within 60 days to assess the feasibility of leveraging opt-in text messaging as a technology to better communicate with residents. Report should include the following details:

- Any costs associated with acquiring new technology and/or impact on ETS staffing
- Potential text messaging vendors or IT solutions
- Legal concerns associated with public record requests
- Research on peer cities who have used text messaging to communicate with residents

## STATEMENT

According to our 2023 City of Cincinnati Resident Survey, 61% of residents are either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the quality of City services. One key area where residents see the greatest need for improvement is the effectiveness of City communication with the public (39% “satisfied or “very satisfied”).

At a national level, the General Services Administration (GSA) launched a pilot with local governments to leverage customized opt-in text messages - “Research shows that 97% of U.S. adults with an annual income of less than \$30,000 have a cellphone, and Notify.gov builds on previous pilots by various organizations that show success in communicating with the public through more than just mail. In fact, some government pilots saw a 20% to 50% increase in case maintenance and cross-program enrollment when programs used texts, emails, and phone calls, in addition to regular mail.”<sup>1</sup>

The City of Cincinnati should explore how leveraging text message technology could improve communication by sending residents reminders of upcoming community council events, budget hearings, updates on local road projects or other relevant communication.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gsa.gov/blog/2023/12/14/gsa-launches-pilot-partnerships-to-help-people-get-benefits-through-text-messaging>

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