



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meeka D. Owens", is written over a horizontal line.

Meeka D. Owens
Cincinnati City Council

December 13, 2022

MOTION

Direction to City Administration for Infrastructure Grant Applications

WE MOVE that, as the Administration applies for grants and funds being distributed as part of the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), it applies the following policy guidelines and priorities:

1. Grant applications should prioritize infrastructure improvements that promote connectivity and equity, create green infrastructure, and/or maximize climate mitigation.
2. The City's grant applications should also seek out funding for workforce development in preparation for projects that will be coming, in fields such as welding, electric work, carpentry, and other career paths that are expected to expand with the new available funding.
3. Engage with Metro regarding the Reinventing Metro introduction of Bus Rapid Transit to the region, while ensuring that the needs of the community are met.
4. The City should pursue grants to support the maintenance, operation, and planning of the streetcar.
5. Promotion of green programs, particularly green transit such as bicycles, buses, and electric vehicles. Cincinnatians should be able to access multimodal transit and access other areas of the City without having to drive a car.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Administration integrate the principles of Justice40 and climate equity into City strategy when applying for all federal and state funding for infrastructure projects, even those that are not through the IIJA and IRA. The City should inform its decisionmaking by using resources such as the federal Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool and Cincinnati Climate Equity Indicators Report 2021. Grant applications should particularly focus on projects in communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution and the effects of climate change.

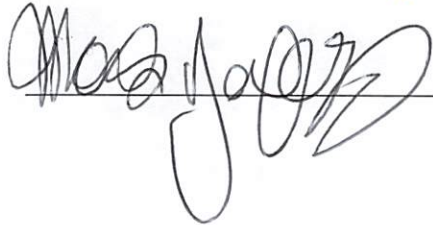
Here, "underserved communities" should meet the definition of grant applications with a Justice40 element, or in the alternative where no definition is applied, it should refer to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systemically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civil life, exemplified by Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer

(LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Administration provide a report within ninety (90) days to outline strategies for achieving these goals and maximizing the City's outcomes from the IIJA and IRA. This report should also consider whether additional staff or contractor(s) are needed to help the City maximize its grant applications and recommend potential sources of funding for any additional staff.



Councilmember Meeka D. Owens



STATEMENT

In the last year and a half, the Federal government has passed landmark legislation that will transform the scope of infrastructure and climate in the United States. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) together allocate hundreds of millions of dollars over the next ten years. These funds are directed towards projects spanning from roadways and bridges to bike lanes and emission-reducing home improvements.

The Biden Administration has also released Executive Order 14008, establishing the Justice40 Initiative and committing 40 percent of these funds towards environmental justice and racial equity. This investment will help confront decades of underinvestment in disadvantaged communities, and bring critical resources to communities that have been overburdened by legacy pollution and environmental hazards.

Leaders in Cincinnati are working collaboratively and thinking boldly about what we can achieve in our region. Already, \$127 million has been committed to replace the Western Hills Viaduct and the City has received a \$20 million grant from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability & Equity (RAISE) program. The RAISE grant will promote pedestrian safety and help the environment while connecting residents in the West End, Queensgate, and Lower Price Hill to the job hubs in Over-the-Rhine and the Central Business District.

As the Federal government releases more funding opportunities, it is important that Cincinnati's applications maintain a strategic alignment with the Council and Mayor's priorities for the future of our City. This motion seeks to outline those priorities for the Administration and public so we can build a better Cincinnati together.