



City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Agenda - Final-revised

Climate, City Services & Infrastructure

*Chairperson Meeka Owens
Vice Chair Ryan James
Councilmember Mark Jeffreys
Councilmember Seth Walsh*

Tuesday, August 4, 2026

10:00 AM

Council Chambers, Room 300

PRESENTATIONS

JULY FLOODING IMPACTS

Assistant Chief Matthew Flagler, Cincinnati Fire Department

Director Oliver Kroner, Office of Environment & Sustainability

Director Diana Christy, Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati

Deputy Director Jason Fleming, Greater Cincinnati Water Works

Assistant City Manager Cathy Bailey, City Manager's Office

BUILDING ENERGY BENCHMARKING OVERVIEW

Director Oliver Kroner, Office of Environment & Sustainability

Energy Manager, Rob McCracken, Office of Environment & Sustainability

AGENDA

PRESENTATIONS

1. [202602556](#) **PRESENTATION** submitted by Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager, dated 8/4/2026, regarding the July 2026 Flash Flood Response.
Sponsors: City Manager
Attachments: [Transmittal](#)
[Presentation](#)
2. [202602545](#) **PRESENTATION**, submitted by Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager, dated 8/4/2026, regarding Building Energy Benchmarking Overview.
Sponsors: City Manager
Attachments: [Transmittal](#)
[Presentation](#)

ORDINANCE

3. [202602517](#) **ORDINANCE (EMERGENCY)**, submitted by Councilmember Owens, from Emily Smart Woerner, City Solicitor, **ORDAINING** new Chapter 1051, "Building Energy Benchmarking," of the Cincinnati Municipal Code to require annual energy benchmarking and reporting for certain large publicly and privately owned buildings and to provide for the administration and enforcement of a building energy benchmarking program.

Sponsors: Owens

Attachments: [Transmittal](#)
[Ordinance](#)

MOTIONS

4. [202602491](#) **MOTION**, submitted by Councilmembers Albi, Walsh, Cramerding and Owens, **WE MOVE** that the Administration provide a report within 60 days to City Council regarding the costs, timelines, and best practices associated with roadway resurfacing and reconstruction throughout the City of Cincinnati. (BALANCE ON FILE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE) (STATEMENT ATTACHED)

Sponsors: Albi, Walsh, Cramerding and Owens

Attachments: [MOTION](#)

5. [202602494](#) **MOTION**, submitted by Councilmember Owens, **WE MOVE** that the City Administration take into all needed steps to establish a technical committee to identify the components of future building energy policies, as in alignment with Report #202601935. (BALANCE ON FILE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE) (STATEMENT ATTACHED)

Sponsors: Owens

Attachments: [MOTION](#)

6. [202602473](#) **MOTION**, submitted by Councilmembers Walsh, Owens, Cramerding, James and Albi, **WE MOVE** that the Administration, in coordination with the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD), evaluate the feasibility of implementing: 1. Expanded green infrastructure solutions to reduce stormwater runoff. (BALANCE ON FILE IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE)

Sponsors: Walsh, Owens, Cramerding, James and Albi

Attachments: [Motion](#)

ADJOURNMENT

August 4, 2026

To: Members of the Climate, City Services & Infrastructure Committee

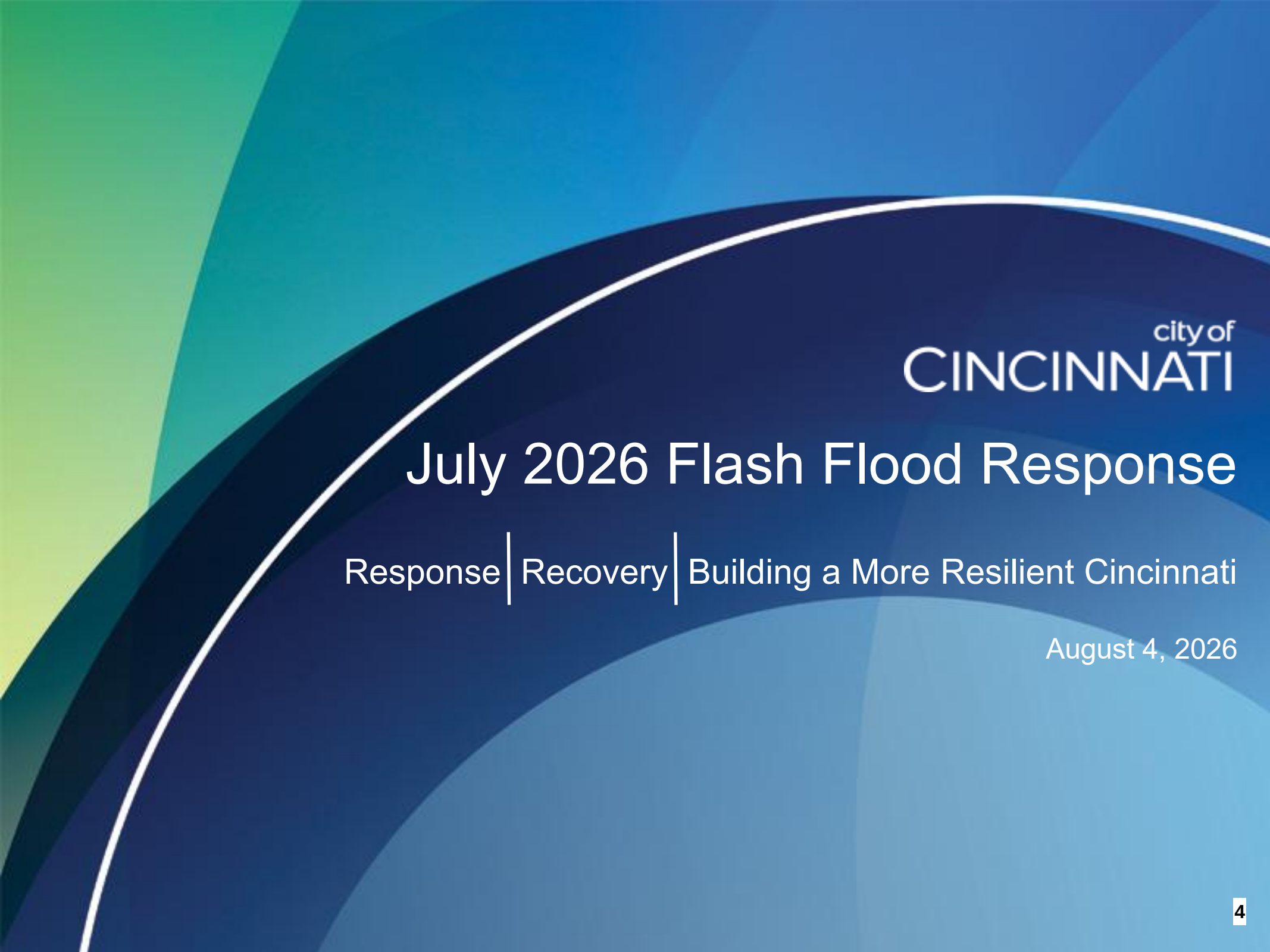
From: Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager

Subject: Presentation – July 2026 Flash Flood Response

202602556

Attached is the presentation regarding the July 2026 Flash Flood Response.

Cc: Diana Christy, Director, Metropolitan Sewer District
Matthew Flagler, Assistant Fire Chief, Cincinnati Fire Department
Jason Flemming, Deputy Director, Greater Cincinnati Water Works
Oliver Kroner, Director, Office of Environment & Sustainability



city of
CINCINNATI

July 2026 Flash Flood Response

Response | Recovery | Building a More Resilient Cincinnati

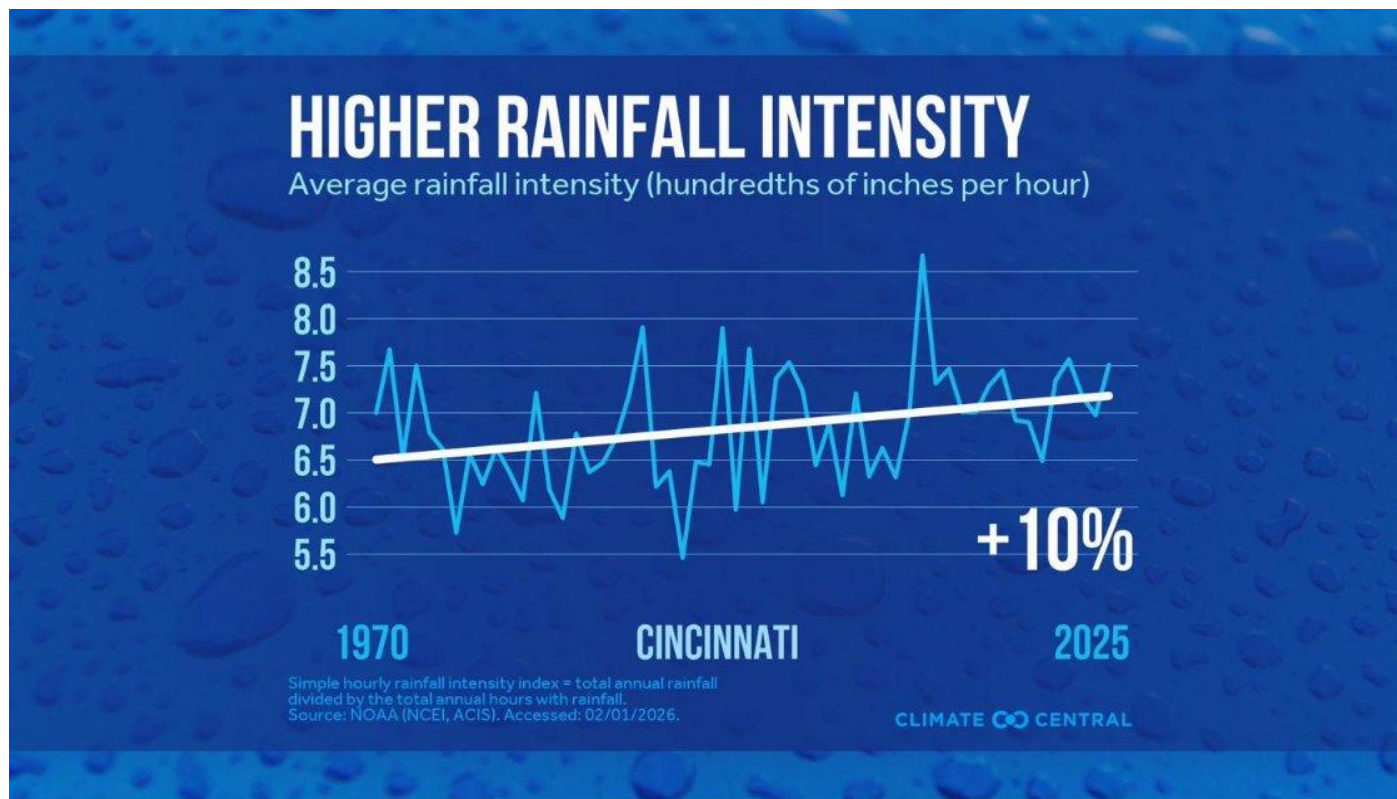
August 4, 2026

Purpose

- Climate Context
- Summarize the July flash flood events
- Review the City's coordinated response
- Highlight ongoing recovery efforts
- Discuss lessons learned and future resilience initiatives

Climate Context

Increasing Storm Intensity



+10%

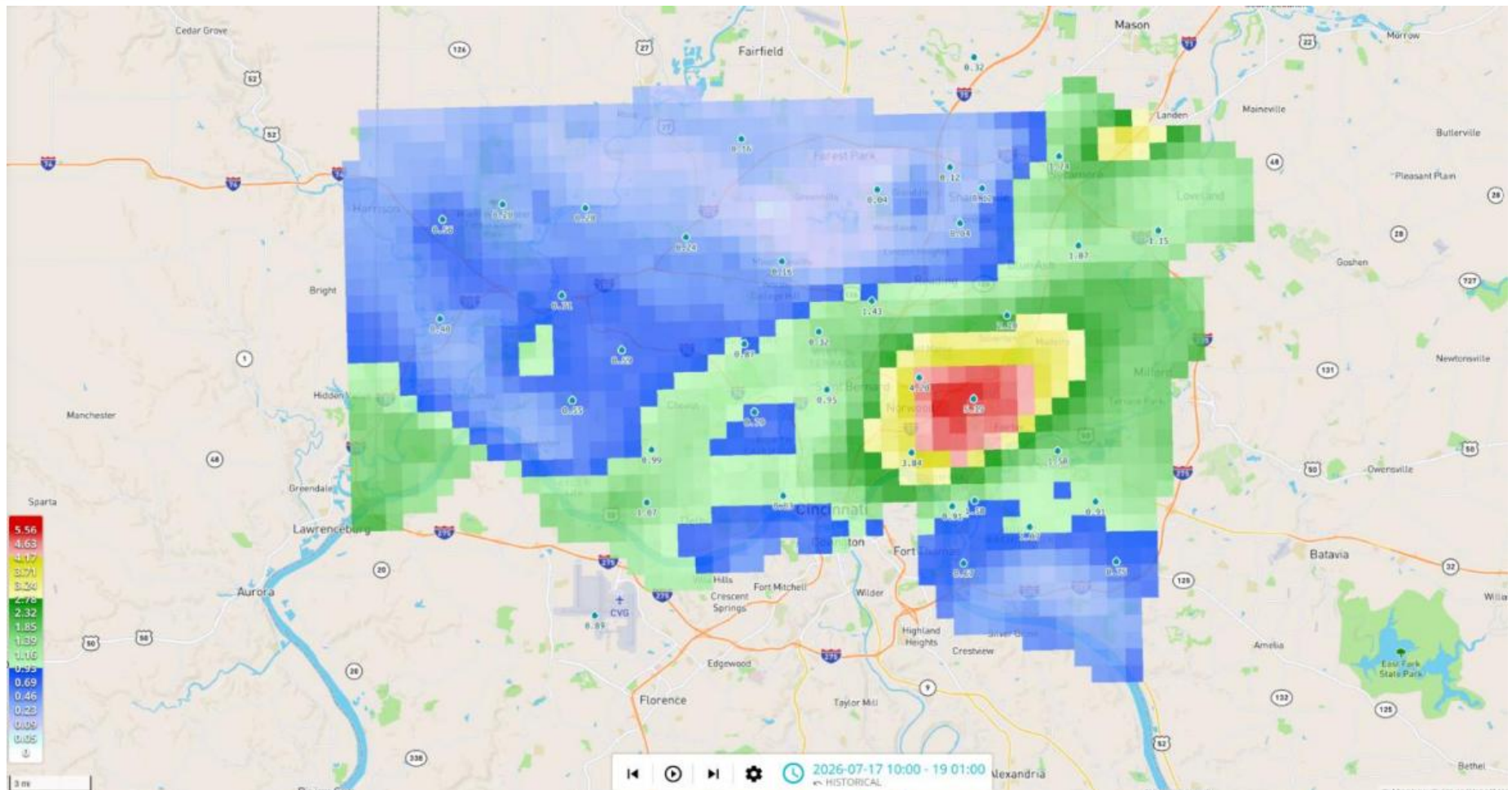
Average hourly rainfall intensity in Cincinnati, 1970–2025

+0.26"

Increase in annual precipitation per decade in Ohio since 1896

Climate Context

Rainfall is increasingly localized and delivered faster

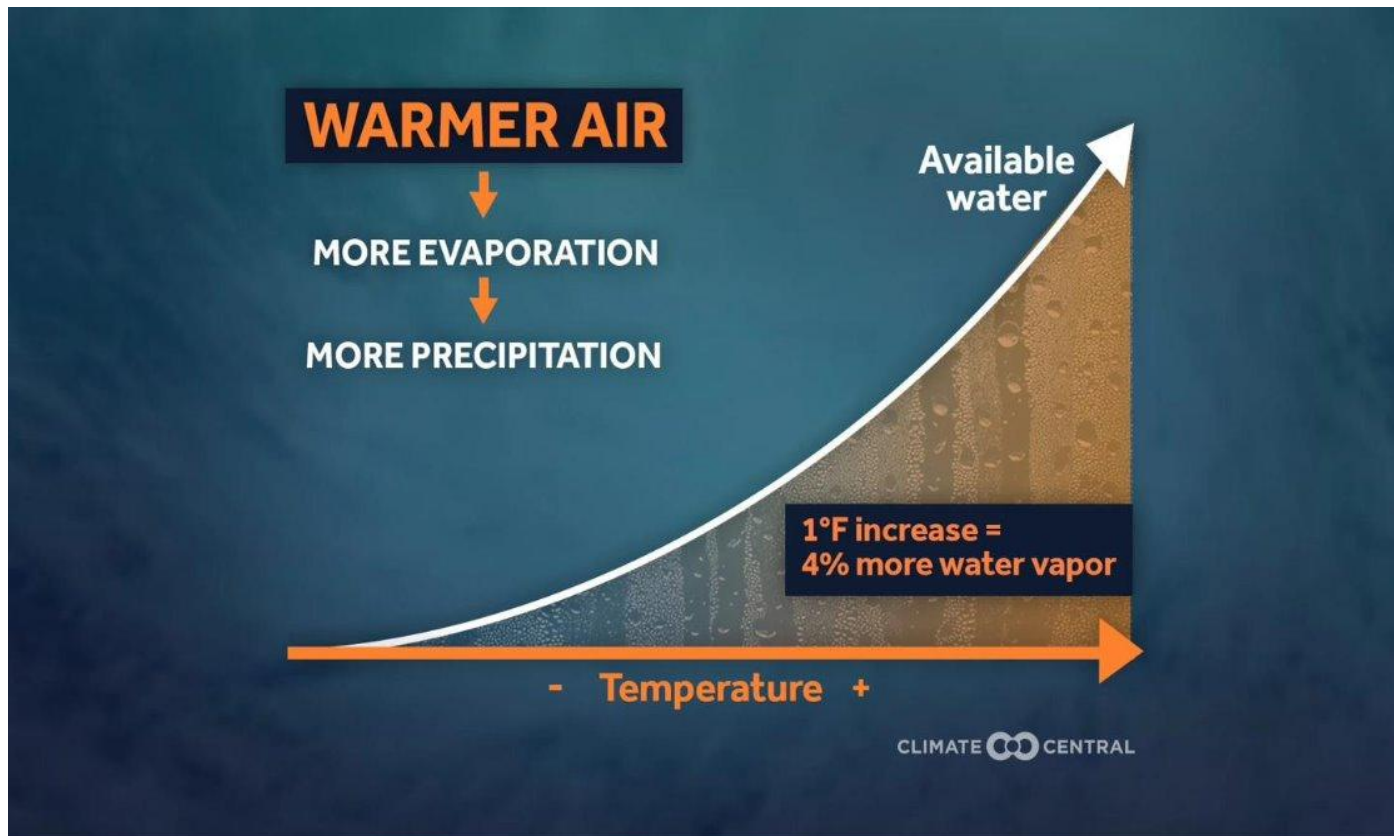


Rainfall totals over the Cincinnati area on evening of July 17. Areas around Hyde Park, Oakley, Madisonville and Kennedy Heights show highest levels of accumulation.

Source: MSD

Climate Context

Warmer Air Holds More Water

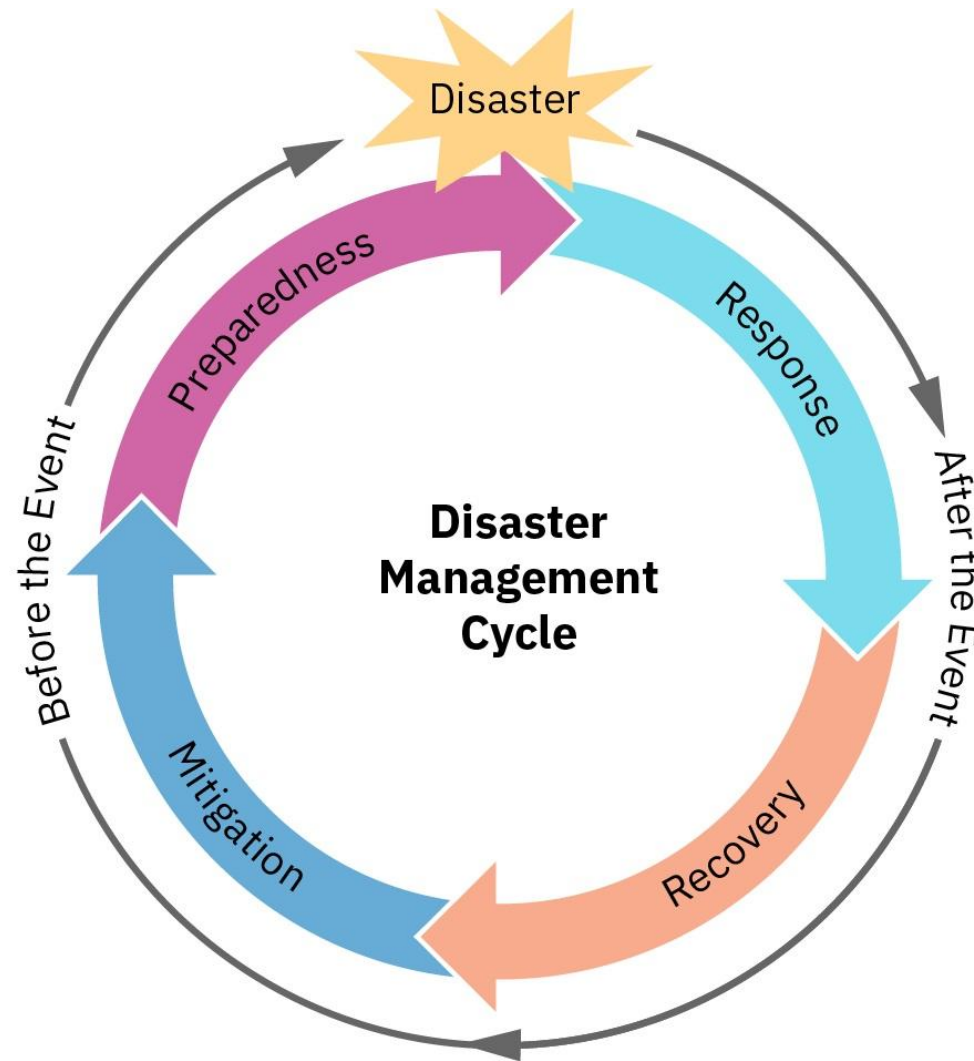


+4%

More water vapor in the air for every 1°F of warming

- **Heat is the engine.** Warmer surfaces and warmer air drive more evaporation.
- **Humidity provides the fuel.** Air masses now carry more water vapor to work with.

Emergency Management Framework



Emergency management framework used to manage disasters before, during, and after an incident.

Incident Overview

- Timeline
- Initial impacts
- Neighborhoods affected



July storms produced intense rainfall over a short period, resulting in widespread flash flooding across several Cincinnati neighborhoods.

Three Incidents in One

Flash Flooding Caused Damage in Multiple Modes

OVERLAND FLOODING



DEFINITION

Excess surface water that flows over the land and roads, unable to enter drainage systems. Flash floods.



COMMON CAUSES

- Intense downpours
- Saturated ground
- Clogged or overflowing storm drains and catch basins
- Rising creeks and rivers

SEWER BACKUPS



DEFINITION

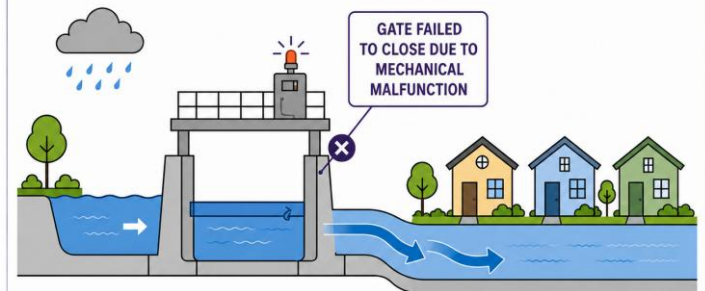
Rainwater entering the sanitary sewer system, causing a backup into homes.



COMMON CAUSES

- Heavy or intense rainfall
- Combined stormwater conveyance
- Sewer capacity constraints – storm events can exceed any sewer system's design capacity

FLOODGATE FAILURE



DEFINITION

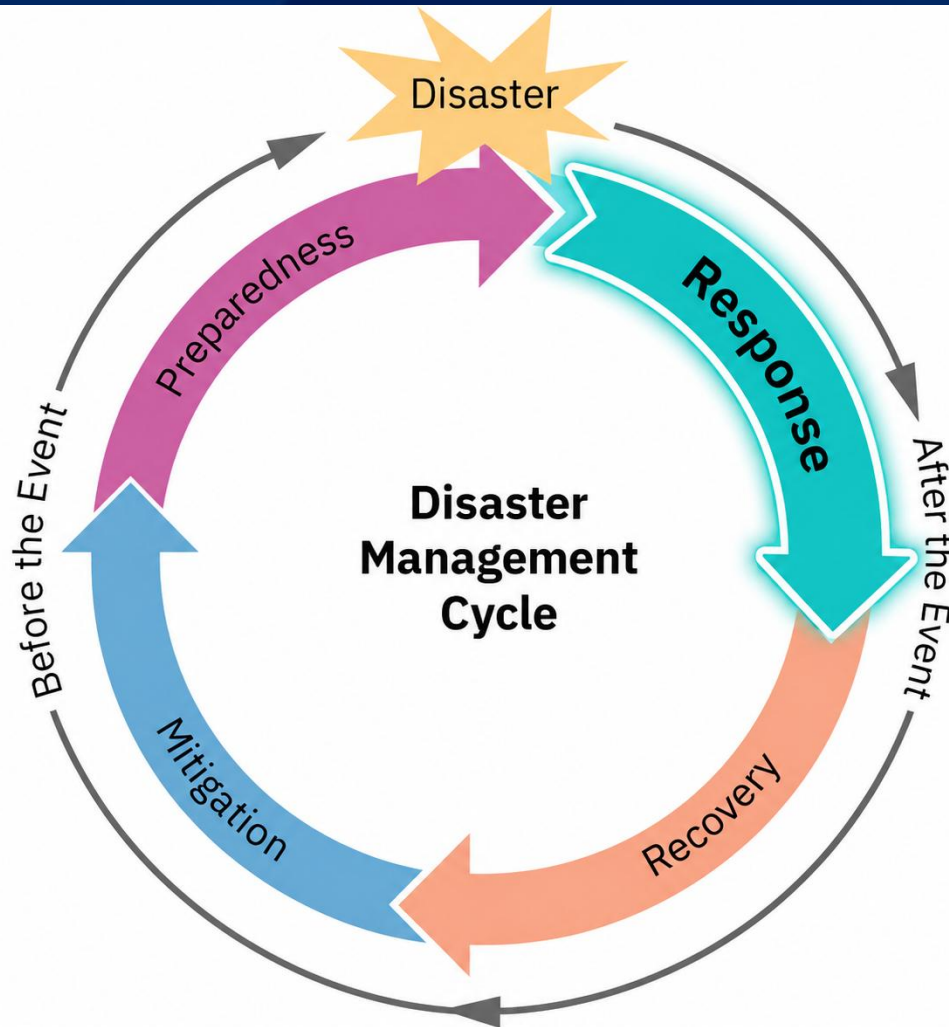
Floodgate designed to close and prevent creek flooding.



FAILURE

- Gate did not close due to mechanical malfunction.
- Creek water bypassed the gate and may have contributed to flooding on approximately 40 nearby properties.

Although all were flood impacts, each required a different operational response and recovery strategy.



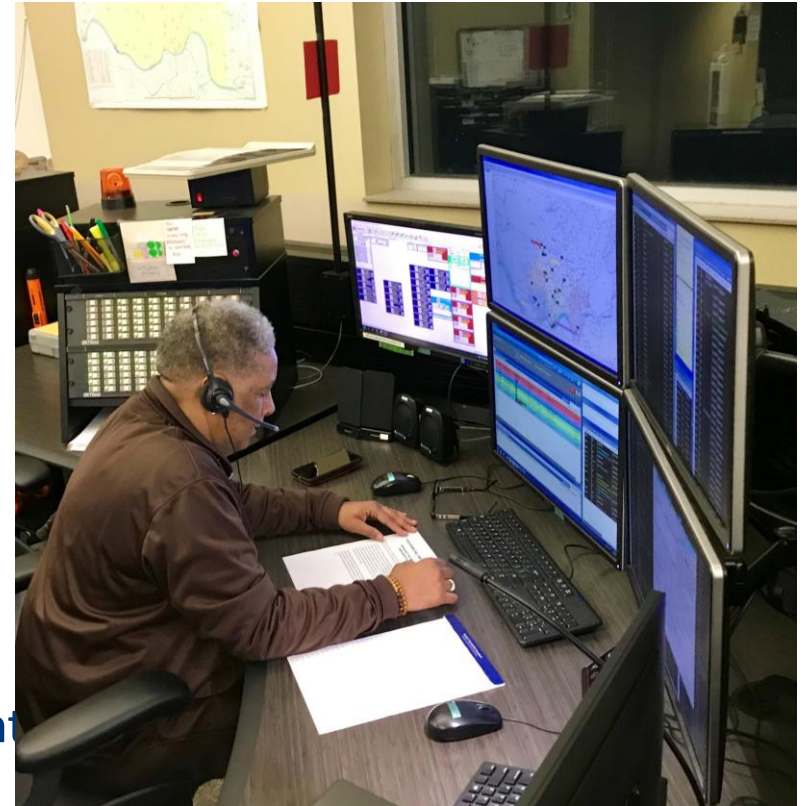
RESPONSE

Emergency Communications Center - ECC

Connecting Residents with Emergency Services

Key Contributions

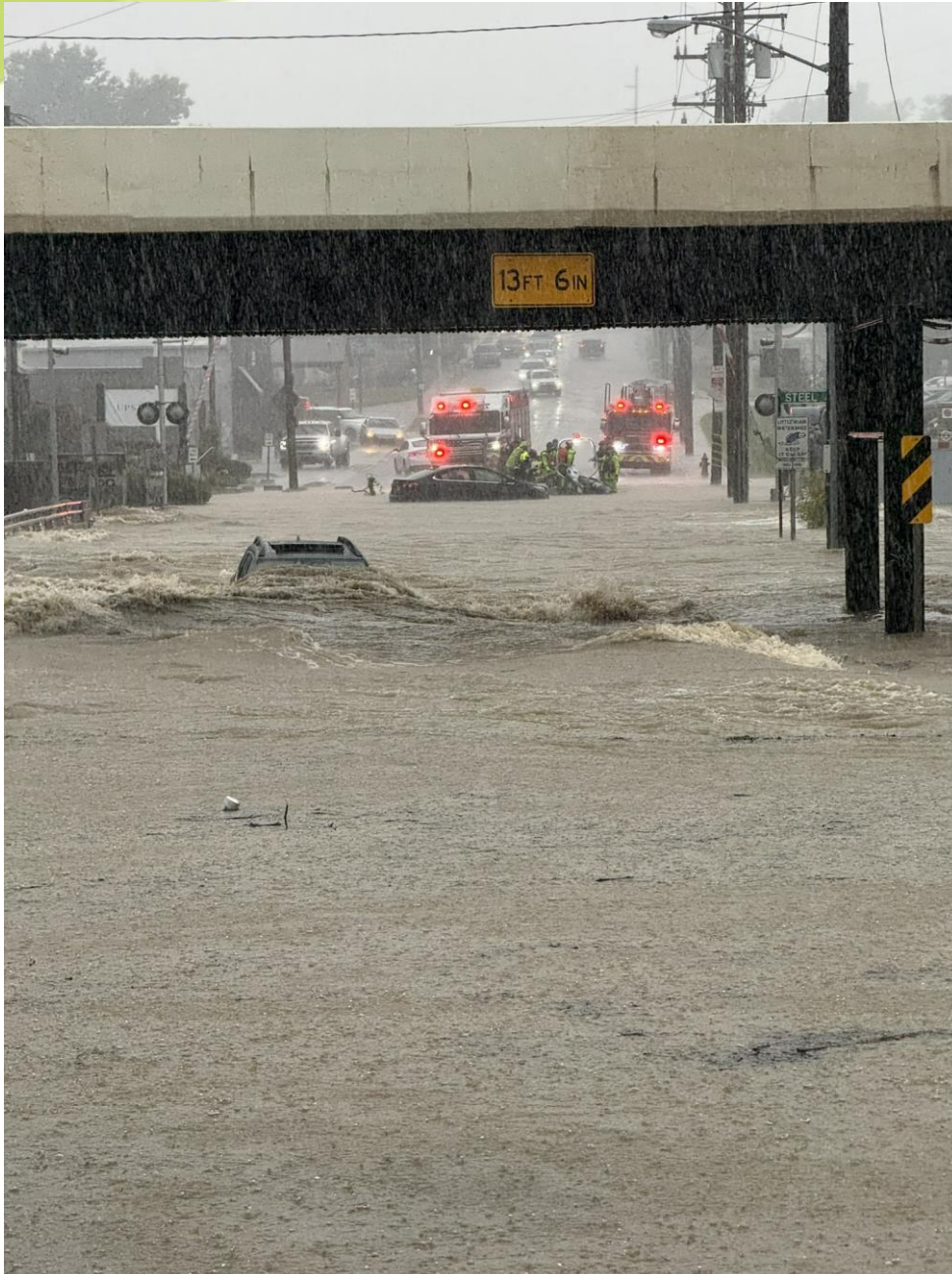
- Managed a rapid increase in 911 call volume
- Prioritized life safety emergencies
- Coordinated dispatch of Fire, Police, and EMS resources
- Expanded 311 operations to support additional community needs and reduce demand on 911
- Maintained communications throughout the incident



*Every emergency response began with the
Emergency Communications Center.*

Cincinnati Fire Department

Protecting Life During the Flood



Key Contributions

- Responded to hundreds of emergency incidents, including 165 rescue and water emergencies
- Conducted **48 civilian rescues**
- Established Unified Command in Oakley
- Coordinated regional mutual aid resources
- Completed primary searches of affected areas

Cincinnati Police Department

Protecting the Community

Key Contributions

- Assisted evacuations
- Secured affected neighborhoods
- Established road closures
- Supported rescue operations
- Assisted Unified Command



Emergency Management Division

Coordinating our City Response

Key Contributions

- Coordinated Emergency Operations Center activities
- Maintained citywide situational awareness
- Coordinated resource requests and interagency support
- Organized damage assessment planning
- Coordinated with Federal/State/Local partners



Coordinated Immediate City Response

Department	Primary Response Mission
Emergency Communications Center	Receive emergency calls and dispatch resources
Cincinnati Fire Department	Rescue, EMS, fire suppression, incident command
Cincinnati Police Department	Public safety, evacuations, traffic control
Emergency Management Division	Coordination, situational awareness, resource support
Metropolitan Sewer District	Intake of SBU calls and initiating investigation process
Buildings and Inspections	Respond to areas of concern to determine whether there are immediate risks

While each department had a distinct mission, their coordinated efforts enabled the City to protect lives, stabilize the incident, and transition into recovery.

RECOVERY

As floodwaters receded, the City's focus shifted from protecting lives to helping residents recover, restoring services, and assessing damage.

Metropolitan Sewer District

Serving residents affected by sewer backups

Key Contributions



- Emergency on-call support activated to respond quickly
- Investigated nearly 2,000 reported sewer backups
- Evaluated system performance during the storm
- Coordinated and scheduled approved customer cleaning
- Now assessing claims for damages covered under SBU Program



Stormwater Management Utility

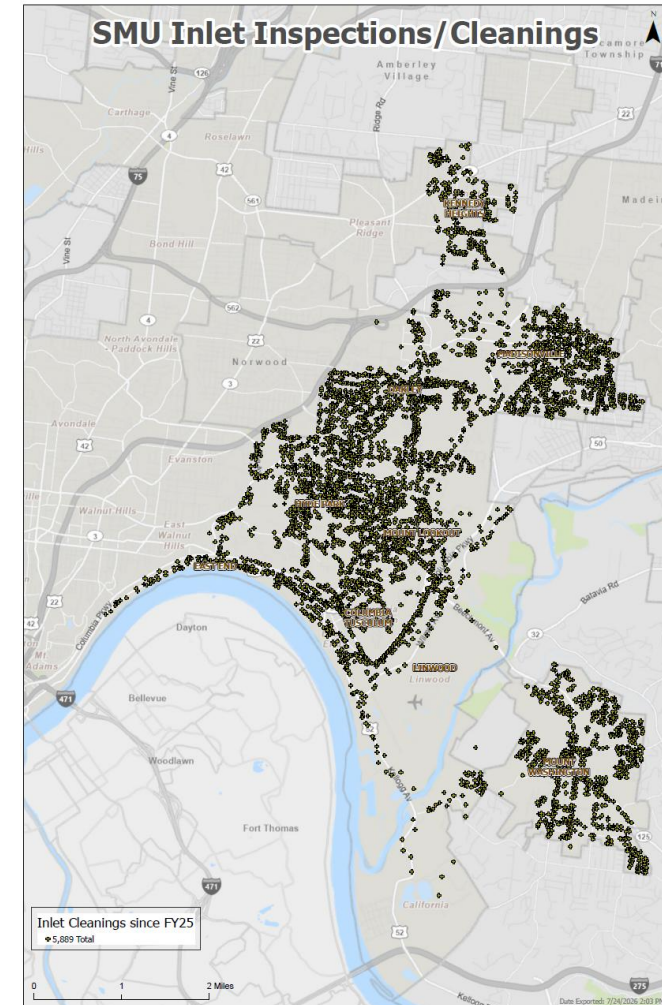
Managing Surface Water and Drainage

Inspections and Cleaning Inlets – 16 communities

- All inlets (~9,300) in sixteen impacted communities are being systematically inspected and cleaned when necessary. Completion expected by the end of next week.

Customer Assistance – Duck Creek/Madison floodgate

- Estimated 40 properties directly impacted (48 owners and tenants).
- Completed initial outreach to all properties with assistance information.
- Direct assistance may include temporary housing, large appliance replacement, and real property damage assessment.
- A dedicated representative is assigned to answer questions about claims process for reimbursement of damage-related expenses.
- Employees of impacted local businesses are being assisted and guided through the damage claim process for automobile and personal property damage reimbursement.



Department of Public Services

Restoring Public Infrastructure

Key Contributions

- Cleared debris from roadways
- Restored access to impacted neighborhoods
- Repaired damaged public infrastructure
- Supported traffic control and recovery operations



Buildings and Inspections

Assessing Building Safety



Key Contributions

- Conducted post-flood damage assessments
- Evaluated structural safety
- Coordinated with property owners
- Documented impacts for recovery planning

Damage Assessment and Assistance

Assistance Process

- Damage Assessments done by B&I
- Submitted to FEMA via State of Ohio - Ongoing
- Ohio and FEMA will make a determination
- Disaster eligibility unlikely, other programs are possible

Emergency Management Division

Key Contributions

- Coordinated volunteer damage assessment teams
- Connected residents with available recovery resources
- Coordinated information sharing among City departments
- Worked with state, county, nonprofit, and volunteer partners
- Supported recovery planning and transition to mitigation

Community Recovery

Neighbors helping neighbors

Community Support

- Conducted neighborhood damage assessments
- Connected residents with available assistance
- Supported information sharing
- Coordinated volunteer resources



Recovery Process

Recovery Activity	Status
Damage Assessments	✓
Building Inspections	✓
Roadway Restoration	✓
Sewer Investigations	✓
Community Assistance	Ongoing
Mitigation Planning	Underway

Recovery continues long after emergency response ends and requires sustained coordination across City departments and community partners.

MITIGATION AND PREPAREDNESS

July flooding reinforced the importance of reducing future risk while strengthening the City's preparedness for increasingly frequent extreme weather events.

What We Learned

Lessons from the July Floods

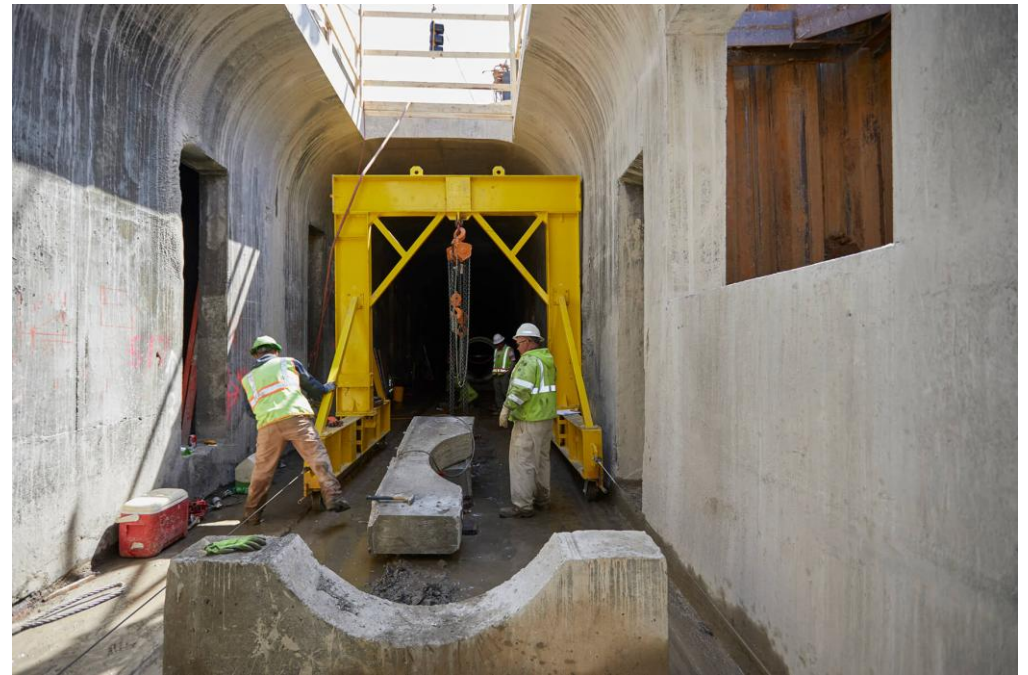
- City emergency services are well-trained and prepared to respond
- Strong relationships with established partners helped in quick deployment of resources to flood victims
- Review whether additional investment and oversight of SMU would have positive impact
- Identifying potential improvements requires regional collaboration.



Building a More Resilient Cincinnati

Ongoing Initiatives

- Green Cincinnati Plan
- Climate adaptation and resilience planning
- Stormwater infrastructure improvements
- Floodgate evaluation and modernization
- Continued interdepartmental coordination



Looking Ahead

Preparedness

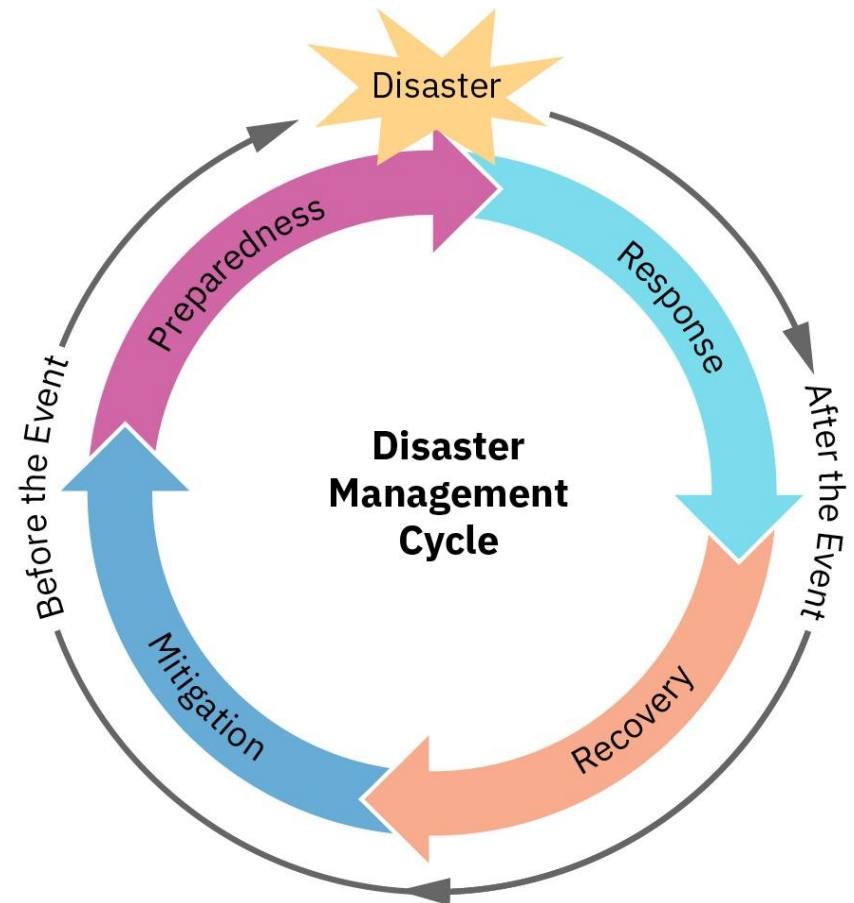
The City continues to prepare for future events through:

- Emergency planning and exercises
- Weather monitoring and situational awareness
- Interagency coordination
- Public preparedness and communication
- Continuous improvement based on lessons learned



Closing

- Strong Coordinated Response
- Collaborative Recovery
- Investing in Future Resilience



QUESTIONS?

August 4, 2026

To: Members of the Climate, City Services & Infrastructure Committee

From: Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager

Subject: **Presentation – Building Energy Benchmarking Overview**

Attached is the presentation regarding Building Energy Benchmarking Overview.

Cc: Oliver Kroner, Director, Office of Environment & Sustainability

Building Energy Benchmarking Overview

Climate, City Services & Infrastructure
8.4.2026

What is Energy Benchmarking?

Benchmarking compares a building's energy use to similar buildings and helps identify opportunities to reduce operating costs and improve performance.

Key Things to Know:

- Focuses on existing large buildings
- Uses utility meter data
- Helps building owners understand their building's energy performance relative to similar buildings
- Implemented in over 40 cities in the U.S. including Columbus, Pittsburgh, St. Louis
- Cities with benchmarking see 3-8% annual reductions in energy usage

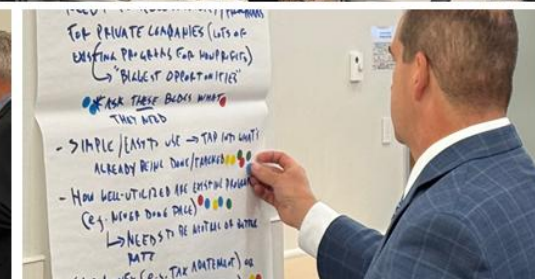
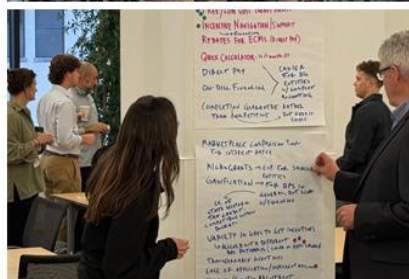
Stakeholder Engagement

University of Cincinnati received DOE grant to lead benchmarking development across Ohio.

Four stakeholder sessions in 2025 were held with over 50 participants to discuss building energy policy concepts.

Policy Report and three presentations to Committee.

Additional outreach to key stakeholders.



Benchmarking Benefits

Building Owners

Better understanding of energy costs and opportunities for savings

City Government

Better building-stock data for planning and incentive development

Tenants

Access to more efficient and comfortable spaces

Community

Reduced emissions and energy waste

Benchmarking Ordinance Overview

DOES

Require annual energy reporting for covered buildings

Create transparency on building energy performance

Support Green Cincinnati Plan goals

Establish a foundation for future grid planning and policy decisions

DOES NOT

Require immediate building upgrades

Restrict building operations

Apply to most small businesses

Impact homeowners

Proposed Policy Rollout

Property Types	Initial Reporting Date
City Properties Greater than 10,000 square feet	June 1, 2027
Properties Greater Than 100,000 square feet • Commercial – Office, Education, Retail, Warehouse, Medical, Data Centers • Multi-family – Apartments, Condominiums	June 1, 2028
Properties Greater Than 50,000 square feet	June 1, 2030

Not Subject to Ordinance: State and Federal Buildings, Industrial buildings

Streamlining Data Collection

To make compliance as simple as possible, partners have developed software to automate utility data reporting.

Owners may:

- Enter data directly
- Authorize the City to obtain data on their behalf



Continued Building Owner Outreach

Collect Building Contact Information

- CoStar, Auditor, BOMA, OSG, Chamber

Conduct Outreach

- Letters, emails, calls
- Public Meetings

Provide Support

- Reporting assistance
- Benchmarking tool setup
- Education



Thank You

- Economic Development
- Fire
- Fleet Services
- Health
- Neighborhood Councils
- Parking
- Parks
- Police
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Streetcar

W. Owens

Date: August 5, 2026

To: Councilmember Meeka Owens

From: Emily Smart Woerner, City Solicitor *EESW/EEF*

Subject: **Emergency Ordinance – Energy Benchmarking Policy**

Transmitted herewith is an emergency ordinance captioned as follows:

ORDAINING new Chapter 1051, “Building Energy Benchmarking,” of the Cincinnati Municipal Code to require annual energy benchmarking and reporting for certain large publicly and privately owned buildings and to provide for the administration and enforcement of a building energy benchmarking program.

EESW/EEF/MSS(dbr)
Attachment
4918-0549-2922

City of Cincinnati

An Ordinance No. _____

MSS

EESW/EEF

2026

ORDAINING new Chapter 1051, “Building Energy Benchmarking,” of the Cincinnati Municipal Code to require annual energy benchmarking and reporting for certain large publicly and privately owned buildings and to provide for the administration and enforcement of a building energy benchmarking program.

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 37-2023, passed by Council on April 12, 2023, adopted the 2023 Green Cincinnati Plan, including its goal of reducing community-wide carbon emissions by fifty percent by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050; and

WHEREAS, buildings represent a significant source of carbon emissions within Cincinnati; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 Green Cincinnati Plan identifies reducing emissions from buildings as a priority and sets a goal of reducing building-sector emissions by thirty percent from 2021 levels by 2030, including through the implementation of policies such as energy benchmarking; and

WHEREAS, energy benchmarking is the practice of annually measuring and reporting a building’s energy use per square foot, providing building owners, tenants, policymakers, and the public with information necessary to understand building energy performance, identify opportunities for efficiency improvements, and reduce operating costs; and

WHEREAS, research and experience from jurisdictions across the United States have shown that benchmarking programs can reduce energy consumption, increase market transparency, improve asset value, and support long-term planning for energy infrastructure and affordability; and

WHEREAS, the City, in partnership with the University of Cincinnati, convened a working group of building owners, operators, industry professionals, and community stakeholders to evaluate building energy policies; and

WHEREAS, stakeholder feedback indicated that understanding building energy use is essential for reducing emissions, lowering energy costs, and informing future energy use policy while recognizing the operational diversity and complexity of large buildings; and

WHEREAS, the stakeholder working group concluded that energy benchmarking is an appropriate and foundational first step for improving understanding of the City’s building stock and informing future energy efficiency and emissions-reduction strategies; and

WHEREAS, data analysis conducted as part of the City’s Building Energy Policy Initiative demonstrates that a small number of the largest buildings in Cincinnati account for a disproportionate share of total building emissions; and

WHEREAS, Council finds that establishing an energy benchmarking program for large buildings will advance the City's public health, safety, welfare, environmental sustainability, and economic competitiveness by providing reliable data to support energy-efficiency investments, energy affordability initiatives, and future policy development; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Cincinnati, State of Ohio:

Section 1. That new Chapter 1051, "Building Energy Benchmarking," of Title X "Environmental Code," of the Cincinnati Municipal Code is ordained as follows:

Sec. 1051-1. – Definitions

For the purposes of this chapter, the words and phrases defined herein have the meaning set forth below, unless a different meaning is clearly indicated by the context.

Sec. 1051-1-A. – Aggregated Whole-Building Data.

"Aggregated whole-building data" means energy data that has been summed for an entire property, which may include a single metered tenant or a group of separately metered tenants.

Sec. 1051-1-B1. – Benchmark.

"Benchmark" means to input and submit the total energy used by a property for the previous calendar year, as well as other descriptive information for a property, into the benchmarking tool, as required by this chapter. Total energy used by a property does not include separately metered uses that are not integral to building operations, as determined by the director.

Sec. 1051-1-B2. – Benchmarking Report.

"Benchmarking Report" means a subset of information input into the benchmarking tool and benchmarking information generated by the benchmarking tool and submitted to the director, as determined by the director.

Sec. 1051-1-B3. – Benchmarking Score.

"Benchmarking score" means the numeric rating generated by the ENERGY STAR® portfolio manager tool, or any additional or alternative tool designated by the director, as a measurement of a property's energy efficiency.

Sec. 1051-1-B4. – Benchmarking Tool.

"Benchmarking tool" means the federally provided tool ENERGY STAR® portfolio manager, or any additional or alternative tool designated by the director, used to track and assess the energy use of certain properties relative to similar properties.

Sec. 1051-1-B5. – Building.

“Building” means any structure consisting of foundations, walls, columns, girders, beams, floors, and roof, or a combination of any number of these parts, with or without other parts or appurtenances that are heated and cooled.

Sec. 1051-1-C1. – Condominium.

“Condominium” means a property that combines separate ownership of individual units with common ownership of other elements such as common areas.

Sec. 1051-1 -C2. – Covered City Property.

“Covered City property” means a property that exceeds 10,000 square feet in gross floor area, which the City owns or for which the City regularly pays all or the majority of the annual energy bills.

Sec. 1051-1-C3. – Covered Non-City Property.

“Covered non-City property” means a property, other than a covered City property, that exceeds 50,000 square feet in gross floor area.

Sec. 1051-1-C4. – Covered Property.

“Covered property” means any covered City property or covered non-City property. The term “covered property” excludes:

- (a) Residential properties that contain or consist of fewer than four dwelling units in total and their related accessory structures; and
- (b) Industrial properties.

Sec. 1051-1-D1. – Data Quality Checker.

“Data quality checker” means the function in ENERGY STAR® portfolio manager, or a similar function in any additional or alternative benchmarking tool designated by the director, that applies a set of data accuracy checks to identify potential data entry errors and determine whether a building differs from typical operational patterns.

Sec. 1051-1-D2. – Data Transparency Information.

“Data transparency information” means information generated by the benchmarking tool and descriptive information about the physical property and its operational characteristics that is shared with the public. The information shall include but is not limited to:

- (a) Descriptive information:
 - (1) Property address;

- (2) Primary use;
 - (3) Gross floor area; and
 - (4) Number of years the property has been benchmarked and the last approval date, if applicable.
- (b) Output information:
 - (1) Site energy use intensity;
 - (2) Weather normalized site energy use intensity; and
 - (3) Annual energy use.

Sec. 1051-1-D3. – Department.

“Department” means the office of environment and sustainability or its successor.

Sec. 1051-1-D4. – Director.

“Director” means the director of the office of environment and sustainability or the director’s designee.

Sec. 1051-1-E1. – Energy.

“Energy” means power, whether derived from electricity, natural gas, steam, fuel oil, solar, thermal, wind, or any other source, including chilled water, sold by a utility to a covered property owner, or power otherwise generated by a covered property owner, to power building or property systems including heating, cooling, lighting, and water heating, as well as other building or property operations end-uses as determined by the director.

Sec. 1051-1-E2. – ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager.

“ENERGY STAR® portfolio manager” means the federally provided benchmarking tool used to track and assess the relative energy performance of properties.

Sec. 1051-1-G. – Gross Floor Area.

“Gross floor area” means the total square footage of a building or buildings constituting a property, measured between the outside surfaces of the exterior walls, including but not limited to lobbies, tenant areas, common areas, meeting rooms, break rooms, atria, restrooms, elevator shafts, stairwells, mechanical equipment areas, basements, and storage rooms. It excludes areas such as exterior or interior spaces, including but not limited to balconies, patios, exterior loading docks, driveways, covered walkways, outdoor play courts, parking, crawl spaces, and attics, that are neither heated nor cooled.

Sec. 1051-1-I. – Industrial Property.

“Industrial property” means a property primarily used for manufacturing or other industrial purposes for which benchmarking would not meaningfully reflect building energy use characteristics due to the intensive use of energy in the actual manufacturing, production, or processing of a good, commodity, or other material. Industrial property excludes properties where energy use beyond powering building operations is used primarily to power and enable the use of computers, servers, and related equipment that does not produce tangible goods or commodities.

Sec. 1051-1-O. – Owner.

“Owner” means any of the following:

- (a) An individual or entity possessing title to a property;
- (b) The board of the owners’ association, in the case of a condominium;
- (c) The master association, in the case of a condominium where the power of an owners’ association is exercised by or delegated to a master association;
- (d) The board of directors, in the case of a cooperative apartment corporation; or
- (e) An agent authorized to act on behalf of any of the above.

Sec. 1051-1-P. – Property.

“Property” means any of the following:

- (a) A single building;
- (b) One or more buildings held in the condominium form of ownership, and governed by a single board of managers; or
- (c) A campus of two or more buildings which are owned and operated by the same party, have a single shared primary function, and which are behind a common master utility meter or served by common mechanical or electrical systems, such as a chilled water loop, which would prevent the owner from being able to determine the energy use attributable to each of the individual buildings.

Sec. 1051-1-T. – Tenant.

“Tenant” means a person or entity occupying or holding possession of a building or part of a building or premises pursuant to a rental or lease agreement.

Sec. 1051-1-U. – Utility.

“Utility” means an entity that distributes or sells energy or energy services, including but not limited to natural gas, electricity, chilled water, or thermal energy services.

Sec. 1051-3. – Collecting and Entering Benchmarking Data.

- (a) Each year the owner of each covered property shall collect and enter into the benchmarking tool all data needed to benchmark the entire property for the previous calendar year. Aggregated whole-building data for the property's energy use shall be compiled using one or more of the following methods:
 - (1) Obtaining aggregated whole-building data from each utility that provides energy service to the property;
 - (2) Collecting energy usage data from all tenants; or
 - (3) Reading a master meter.
- (b) The director is authorized to develop an alternative program through which the owner may comply with requirements of subsection (a) by granting the City or its contractor or partner permission to collect the required data on the owner's behalf and enter it into the benchmarking tool using forms and procedures developed by the director. Permitting the City or its contractor to collect and enter benchmarking data on the owner's behalf does not relieve the owner of any of the verification or audit requirements of section 1051-5 or the benchmarking requirements of section 1051-7.
- (c) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to permit a property owner to use tenant energy usage data for purposes other than compliance with benchmarking report requirements, nor shall the reporting requirements of this chapter be construed to excuse property owners from compliance with federal or state laws governing direct access to tenant utility data from the responsible utility.

Sec. 1051-5. – Verification

- (a) The owner shall verify the accuracy of the data submitted directly by the owner or obtained on the owner's behalf using forms and procedures developed by the director.
- (b) If the owner becomes aware at any time that any information submitted as part of the benchmarking report is inaccurate or incomplete, the owner shall, within thirty days of becoming aware of the inaccuracy or omission:
 - (1) Amend the information within the benchmarking tool; and
 - (2) Submit an updated benchmarking report to the director.
- (c) The owner shall employ a third-party, approved by the director, to audit and verify the accuracy of all data used to benchmark a property every three years. The audit shall review the two immediately past benchmarking reports and their underlying data as well as the currently due benchmarking report and its underlying data, and

be submitted concurrently with the benchmarking report due for the relevant calendar year using forms and procedures developed by the director.

Sec. 1051-7. – Benchmarking Reporting.

- (a) For each covered property subject to this chapter, the owner shall submit an annual benchmarking report in an electronic format through the benchmarking tool by the applicable deadline established in section 1051-9.
- (b) The benchmarking report shall include all information entered into the benchmarking tool as required by section 1051-1-B2.
- (c) The owner of each covered property shall ensure that all data entered into the benchmarking tool is based on aggregated whole-building data for the calendar year being reported.
- (d) Before submitting a benchmarking report, the owner shall:
 - (1) Run all data quality checker functions available within the benchmarking tool;
 - (2) Ensure that all required data has been accurately entered into the benchmarking tool; and
 - (3) Correct any missing or inaccurate information identified by the data quality checker.
- (e) The director is authorized to develop an alternative program through which the owner may comply with the requirements of subsections (a) through (d) of this section by granting the City or its contractor or partner permission to generate the benchmarking report on the owner's behalf using the benchmarking tool. Permitting the City or its contractor to generate the benchmarking report on the owner's behalf does not relieve the owner of any of the verification or audit requirements of section 1051-5 or the data collection and entering requirements of section 1051-3.

Sec. 1051-9. – Benchmarking Schedule and Data Transparency.

- (a) The owner of each covered property shall generate, complete, and submit a benchmarking report to the director annually for each covered property according to the schedule established in this section.
- (b) The initial benchmarking report for each covered property shall be submitted in accordance with the following schedule:

Property	Initial Benchmarking Calendar Year	Initial Reporting Date
Covered City Properties	2026	June 1, 2027
Covered Non-City Properties Greater Than 100,000 square feet	2027	June 1, 2028
Covered Non-City Properties Greater Than 50,000 square feet	2029	June 1, 2030

- (c) After the initial benchmarking report, the owner of each covered property shall submit a benchmarking report to the director annually by June 1 of each year.
- (d) Beginning in the year after a covered property is first required to submit a benchmarking report, the director shall make the property's data transparency information available to the public.
- (e) The director shall make updated data transparency information available to the public annually thereafter.

Sec. 1051-11. – Exemptions from Benchmarking.

The owner of a covered property may apply to the director for an exemption from the benchmarking and data transparency requirements of this chapter if the property meets one or more of the following conditions:

- (a) The property did not have a certificate of occupancy or temporary certificate of occupancy for the entire calendar year;
- (b) The property was issued a demolition permit during the prior calendar year; or
- (c) Compliance with the benchmarking or data transparency requirements of this chapter would disclose trade secrets as defined by Ohio law.

Sec. 1051-13. – Maintenance of Records.

- (a) Each owner shall maintain the data entered into the benchmarking tool and supporting documentation, including but not limited to energy bills and reports or forms received from tenants or utilities pursuant to this chapter, for three years from the time of submission of the related benchmarking report to the director.
- (b) Upon request of the director, records required to be maintained under this section shall be made available for inspection and review by the department at the department's offices.

Sec. 1051-15. – Violations and Enforcement.

- (a) It shall be unlawful for any entity, person, tenant, or owner to:
 - (1) Fail to comply with the requirements of this chapter; or
 - (2) Misrepresent any material fact in a document required to be prepared or submitted pursuant to this chapter.
- (b) The director may establish late fees and penalties for an owner's failure to submit data required by this chapter, failure to submit reports required by this chapter, or failure to verify submitted information required by this chapter. Such fees and penalties shall be set forth in the rules and regulations authorized by section 1051-17 and shall become effective as set forth in that section.

Sec. 1051-17. Rules and Regulations.

The director shall adopt such rules and regulations as are deemed necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. Such rules and regulations, including such late fees and penalties as the director may determine, shall become effective upon their approval by the city manager and posting on the City's website.

Section 2. That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

Passed: _____, 2026

Aftab Pureval, Mayor

Attest: _____
Clerk



202602491

Anna Albi
Councilmember

July 28, 2026

Administration to Provide Report on Street Paving

WE MOVE that the Administration provide a report within 60 days to City Council regarding the costs, timelines, and best practices associated with roadway resurfacing and reconstruction throughout the City of Cincinnati.

The report should include, but not limited to, the following:

1. An explanation of factors that most significantly influence roadway repair costs, including but not limited to: current cost per mile for road paving and breakdown approximate material costs, labor costs, utility coordination and relocation, stormwater and drainage improvements, engineering and design, inflation and supply chain impacts, and traffic control and maintenance of traffic requirements.
2. The amount of funding currently allocated toward preventative road maintenance.
3. The year-over-year cost increase in road paving/maintenance expenses, and the factors driving any increases.
4. An overview of the typical project timeline from identification of a roadway need through design, bidding, permitting, construction, and project completion,
5. Historical data comparing roadway construction and resurfacing costs over the past ten years.
6. A review of innovative and cost-effective roadway preservation and rehabilitation techniques, such as: preventative maintenance strategies, seal coating, microsurfacing, cape seal, cold in-place recycling, full-depth reclamation, mill-and-overlay alternatives, rapid paving materials design-build or other alternative project methods and emerging technologies that improve efficiency and shorten project delivery, while maintaining roadway quality and longevity.

7. Recommendations regarding whether alternative procurement methods, project bundling, technology investments, pavement management strategies, or operation changes could reduce costs, accelerate project completion, and maximize taxpayer value.

WE FURTHER MOVE, referencing the September 10, 2025, report on Preventative Road Maintenance to Minimize Potholes (Reference Documents #202501584), that the Administration provide an update on the allocation of Cincy on Track funding for preventative road maintenance, as it was recommended that the Street Rehabilitation Program increase from 10% to 20%.

STATEMENT

The purpose of this report is to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce costs where feasible, adopt best practices to ensure Cincinnati is maximizing every public dollar invested in maintaining and improving its transportation infrastructure.

As Cincinnati continues to invest significant public resources into transportation infrastructure, City Council seeks to better understand how these investments can achieve the greatest possible impact. This report should examine the full lifecycle of roadway projects to identify opportunities from greater efficiency, innovation, and cost savings.

By evaluating emerging technologies, alternative construction methods, and data-driven management strategies, the Administration can provide recommendations that enable Cincinnati to repair more streets, complete projects more quickly, improve roadway conditions, and ensure taxpayers receive the greatest value from every infrastructure dollar invested.

Anna Alli

Councilmember Anna Albi

Joseph

JEFF CRAMERDING

Michael D. Owens



Climate, City Services, +
Infrastructure

Mayor D. Danner

[Signature]

THE CHIEF OF POLICE

ALL HANDS



202607494

Meeka D. Owens
Cincinnati City Council

July 29th, 2026

Establishing a Technical Committee to Grow Future Building Related Energy Policies

WE MOVE that the City Administration take into all needed steps to establish a technical committee to identify the components of future building energy policies, as in alignment with Report #202601935.

FURTHER WE MOVE that the City Administration have this committee formed by the effectiveness date of an Energy Benchmarking Policy.

FURTHER WE MOVE that the members of this committee be communicated to the Climate, City Services, and Infrastructure Committee.

Councilmember Meeka D. Owens



MANSON

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7/12/19

June 9, 2026

To: Members of the Climate, City Services & Infrastructure Committee

From: Sheryl M.M. Long, City Manager 202601935

Subject: **Summary of Community Feedback on Energy Performance in Large Buildings**

REFERENCE DOCUMENT #202501915

The Council, at its session on October 29, 2025, referred the following motion for report:

WE MOVE that the City Administration prepare a report within the next 30 days stating the findings of the four engagement sessions that have occurred from June 27th, July 29th, August 26th, and September 30th regarding the ideation of a Building Performance Standards Policy for the City of Cincinnati.

FURTHER WE MOVE that the administration provides findings specific to the conversations around the following parts of the ideation process: scope, targets, metrics, timeframes, alternative compliance pathways (ACPs), and more. After these findings are stated, we request that recommendations of all of the previously stated items be made to Council.

FURTHER WE MOVE that the administration prepare an accompanying presentation with this report to share with stakeholders to discuss possible policy recommendations and the findings of the public engagement sessions.

The purpose of this report is to provide City Council with a summary of the community feedback collected as part of the Resilient and Efficient Codes Implementation (RECI) grant. The US Department of Energy grant was awarded to the University of Cincinnati to support exploration of policies to improve energy performance in large buildings in Ohio cities, including Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, and Dayton.

OVERVIEW OF ENERGY PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES IN LARGE BUILDINGS

In May of 2023, City Council adopted the Green Cincinnati Plan (GCP) and a commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050. Recognizing that approximately 30% of emissions come from commercial building operations, the GCP includes the strategic priority action: *“Improve building performance by implementing policies like benchmarking, building performance standards, or other relevant energy standards.”*¹

Many cities, counties, and states across the country have implemented energy policies like energy benchmarking and building performance standards (BPS) to reduce energy consumption, lower energy bills for owners and tenants, and improve the desirability of the local building stock.

¹ 2023 Green Cincinnati Plan, page 63.

Energy benchmarking² refers to the practice of measuring the energy performance of a building over time. This provides owners and occupants with the ability to understand their building's energy performance relative to similar buildings and evaluate smarter, more cost-effective operational and capital investment options. Studies have shown that benchmarking policies can result in a 3 - 8% reduction in gross energy usage over a four-year period.³ Midwest cities with benchmarking ordinances include Columbus, Detroit, St. Louis, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee.

Building Performance Standards (BPS) are a policy that requires existing buildings to meet a stated energy use target by a specified date. BPS uses building utility data to track compliance with the targets. While the policy specifies a target that buildings must meet, it does not prescribe the steps building owners must take to meet it. BPS often get more ambitious over time to ensure continuous improvement of a city's building stock. Studies have shown that BPS policies can lead to a 25-45% total energy use reduction in aggregate.^{4,5} St. Louis, MO and Evanston, IL are two Midwest cities that are successfully implementing BPS.

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Starting in June 2025, a team led by Dr. Amanda Webb of the University of Cincinnati conducted four stakeholder engagement sessions to explore how large building energy policies could be implemented in Ohio.⁶ Over 50 individuals from the buildings and energy sector, including design professionals, engineering firms, and building representatives participated. Each stakeholder meeting provided an opportunity for participants to provide feedback on different components of building energy policies. The table below provides a summary of the policy components, stakeholder feedback, and key takeaways from the meetings.

² See Council Item 202401247 for additional information on energy benchmarking.

³ N. Mims, S. R. Schiller, E. Stuart, L. Schwartz, C. Kramer, and R. Faes, "Evaluation of U.S. Building Energy Benchmarking and Transparency Programs: Attributes, Impacts, and Best Practices," Lawrence Berkeley National Lab. 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2172/1393621>.

⁴ A.L. Webb, C. McConnell, Evaluating the feasibility of achieving building performance standards targets, Energy and Buildings. (2023) 112989. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enbuild.2023.112989>.

⁵ S. Nadel and A. Hinge, "Mandatory building performance standards: A key policy for achieving climate goals," ACEEE, 2020. <https://www.aceee.org/white-paper/2020/06/mandatory-building-performance-standards-key-policy-achieving-climate-goals>.

⁶ Partners included the Ohio Environmental Council, Cincinnati 2030 District, Power a Clean Future Ohio, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, Go Sustainable Energy

Summary of Stakeholder Engagement Feedback on Building Energy Policies

Policy Component	Stakeholder Feedback	Key Takeaways
1. Scope: The type, size, and use of buildings included in energy policies.	Focusing on the largest buildings would deliver the largest benefit with minimal administration. Buildings larger than 50,000 square feet represent 0.7% of the city's building stock but account for 45% of total building emissions.	A building energy policy could include commercial buildings, including multi-family buildings, over 100,000 square feet and all City buildings over 10,000 square feet.
2. Energy Benchmarking: Buildings that are included in the scope report energy usage on an annual basis.	Reporting annual energy usage is a foundational component for other building energy policies.	A benchmarking policy is a good introductory step to building energy policies.
3. Metric: Refers to the unit used to measure performance relative to building energy policies.	Site Energy Usage Intensity is a widely used metric. Reduction in energy usage should be the goal of building energy policies. Using greenhouse gas emissions is complicated.	A technical committee could determine if energy usage reduction or another metric is the best way to measure performance.
4. Timeframe: The period against which compliance with building energy policies is measured.	The timeframe should provide a sufficient runway for buildings to achieve the targets.	A technical committee could determine if a five-year compliance cycle is appropriate for an advanced building energy policy.
5. Performance Targets: Establish the stringency of the performance metrics that buildings must meet.	Targets must be set so they are achievable and account for past upgrades.	A technical committee could establish performance targets during a rulemaking process.
6. Alternative Compliance Pathways: Provide a way for buildings to comply with building energy policies outside of meeting the performance targets.	The policies should be straightforward and feasible enough that the use of ACPs is the exception, not the rule.	A technical committee could determine alternative compliance pathways during the rulemaking process.
7. Incentives: Tools used by building energy programs to help buildings to achieve performance targets.	Incentives, including free or subsidized energy audits, are critical to success.	A technical committee could work with City departments to identify programs that could be created and propose ideas for how existing programs can be enhanced.
8. Compliance and Enforcement: Tools to ensure that building owners work toward the targets established by building energy policies.	The policy should encourage compliance rather than rely on enforcement.	A technical committee could collect stakeholder feedback and propose enforcement mechanisms.
9. Program Resources: Resources provided by jurisdictions to help building owners meet building energy policies.	Building managers need access to resources to improve the operation of their buildings.	A building energy policy could include funding in future budgets to support policy implementation.

POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

Based on stakeholder feedback, there are three steps that Council could consider to advance building energy policies:

1. **Energy benchmarking ordinance** – This ordinance would establish a mandatory benchmarking program for commercial buildings, including multi-family buildings, over 100,000 square feet and all City buildings over 10,000 square feet. These buildings would be responsible for reporting their energy use on an annual basis.
2. **Establish a technical committee to identify the components of future building energy policies** - The technical committee would leverage its knowledge as well as feedback from building sector stakeholders to develop the components of a building energy policy. It would be responsible for presenting its recommendations to Council within an established time frame.
3. **Building Energy ordinance** – This ordinance would incorporate the recommendations from the technical committee and stakeholders to pass a building energy policy for Cincinnati.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON RESEARCH, STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & KEY TAKEAWAYS

The University of Cincinnati (UC) as well as several state and regional organizations worked with the Office of Environment & Sustainability (OES) to conduct four stakeholder engagement sessions over the course of Summer 2025. Over 50 individuals from the buildings and energy sector, including design professionals, engineering firms, and building representatives, participated in one or more sessions. Each meeting focused on a specific topic and included educational components and group activities designed to collect feedback from participants. A summary of each meeting is provided below.

- **Meeting 1 (6/27/25):** Provided an overview of the city's emissions profile and discussed how improved building performance can help Cincinnati meet its climate goals. Reviewed the policy elements of a building energy policy (scope, metric, targets, and timeframe)⁷ and collected feedback from participants on building energy policies and discussion topics for future meetings.
- **Meeting 2 (7/29/25):** Reviewed building data for Cincinnati and discussed how it can inform the building energy policy elements of scope, metric, targets, and timeframe. Participants broke into small groups to workshop ideas for these four building energy policy elements and shared their ideas to identify common themes.
- **Meeting 3 (8/26/25):** Reviewed existing finance, grant, and incentive programs available to building owners that could assist with the cost of energy audits and building improvements needed to comply with a building energy policy. Participants

⁷ ASHRAE. 2023. Building Performance Standards: A Technical Resource Guide. ASHRAE. <https://www.ashrae.org/about/cebd-technical-resources>.

discussed ideas for incentive programs that could be developed or enhanced to support policies.

- **Meeting 4 (9/30/25):** Discussed Alternative Compliance Pathways (ACPs), reviewed examples from other cities, and identified ways that ACPs can create flexibility and increase compliance with building energy policies.⁸ Reviewed enforcement mechanisms used in other jurisdictions and the benefits provided by technical support resources. Participants discussed the compliance and enforcement features needed for successful policy implementation.

Research Findings

Dr. Amanda Webb and her team at UC analyzed commercial building energy data to simulate scenarios that allow for development of a building energy policy model specific to Cincinnati.

The initial scenario looked at the impacts of including all commercial, government, and multifamily buildings greater than 100,000 square feet in a policy. In each subsequent scenario, one policy element (scope, metric, targets, or timeframe) was changed to model the resulting number of buildings impacted and projected emissions savings.

Key findings from the scenario modeling research are:

- Applying a building energy policy to buildings over 100,000 square feet maximizes the emissions savings while minimizing the number of buildings subject to the policy.
- Including properties over 50,000 square feet doubles the number of properties requiring improvement but only leads to 1% more overall emissions savings compared to the baseline.
- Including a carbon-free electricity metric or ACP presents the best opportunity for emissions reduction.
- Setting the site Energy Use Intensity (EUI) performance target between the 25th and 50th percentiles would establish an achievable target and maximize emissions savings.

The research findings were used to inform stakeholder discussions during the engagement sessions.

Stakeholder Feedback and Recommendations

Each stakeholder meeting provided an opportunity for participants to provide feedback on different components of a building energy policy. This section defines the policy elements discussed, summarizes the stakeholder conversations, and provides recommendation based on the stakeholder feedback.

1. Scope

Defines the types of buildings covered by a building energy policy. It can be based on building size or use.

⁸ M. Duer-Balkind, M. Koolbeck, C. Kelley, The Landscape of Building Performance Standard Pathway Alternatives, Institute for Market Transformation, 2025.
<https://imt.org/resources/the-landscape-of-building-performance-standard-pathway-alternatives/>.

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- Initial roll out of a policy may be more successful if it starts with fewer buildings and expands to include additional building sizes in future compliance cycles.
- Buildings larger than 50,000 square feet represent 0.7% of the city's building stock but account for 45% of total building emissions. Focusing on the largest buildings would impact a substantial portion of emissions with a relatively small compliance burden.
- Small commercial buildings use a lot of energy as well but are typically not included initially in a policy.
- Industrial buildings should be excluded from the initial policy because their energy profiles cannot be tracked or compared in the same manner as commercial building types.
- State and federal buildings should be exempt from the policy.

Key Takeaway: The policy could consider including commercial buildings, including multi-family buildings, over 100,000 square feet and all City buildings over 10,000 square feet. Buildings over 50,000 square feet could be added to the policy in the future. Buildings that Council should consider for exclusion from a policy include federal government buildings, buildings currently in receivership or default, and industrial buildings.

2. Benchmarking

A building energy policy that requires buildings identified in the Scope to report energy usage on an annual basis.

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- Benchmarking can be a good introduction to building energy policies.
- Annual energy usage can be used to help establish a baseline for future policies.
- Benchmarking can help lead to energy efficiency improvements as building owners begin to monitor usage patterns.

Key Takeaways: A benchmarking policy helps introduce building energy policies to local building owners. It encourages building owners to monitor their energy usage which can lead to energy efficiency improvements that benefit tenants and support the local economy.

3. Metric

Defines the unit used to measure performance relative to the building energy policy.

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- **Site Energy Usage Intensity (EUI)** – This metric is determined by dividing the total amount of energy used annually by the building's square footage (but/sq ft). It is a common metric and is calculated by ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, a free and widely used building energy benchmarking tool. Site EUI can be compared to local and national buildings of the same building type.⁹ Participants were in favor of using this metric because it is easy to calculate and familiar to many building owners and managers.

⁹ Property Types available in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager

- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) Intensity** – Calculated by multiplying the amount of each energy source a building uses by an emissions factor to determine total GHG emissions. Participants felt that calculating GHG emissions is complicated and not transparent.
- **Reduction in Energy Usage** – Calculated by determining the amount of energy reduction performed by a building relative to its current performance (or a baseline period). Participants expressed that reducing the amount of energy used by buildings should be the goal of a policy.
- **Percentage of carbon-free electricity used** – Determined by calculating the percentage of the total energy used by a building that is either purchased from carbon-free sources or offset by the purchase of Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). Participants felt that this metric encourages buildings to purchase carbon-free electricity and would help meet the goals outlined in the GCP.

Key Takeaway: A Council-appointed technical committee could develop the appropriate metric for a building energy policy. Reduction in energy usage could be considered as the metric for a local building energy policy. This metric received support during the stakeholder engagement process and is familiar to building managers and the public. Buildings would be measured based on their performance and not relative to the performance of other buildings.

4. Timeframe

Defines the period against which compliance with the building energy policy is measured.

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- The timeframe should provide a sufficient runway for buildings to achieve the targets.
- Participants were supportive of a four-year benchmarking period with a compliance period in year five.
- BPS compliance cycles should align with GCP update cycles if possible.

Key Takeaway: A Council-appointed technical committee could identify the timeline for a building energy policy. The policy could utilize a five-year compliance period. This would require a building to benchmark its energy usage for four years to track progress towards the standard. The building's reported energy use in year five would determine its compliance with the policy.

5. Performance Targets

Establish the stringency of the performance metrics that buildings must meet under a building energy policy. For Site EUI, this is a percentile by building type, and for energy reduction and carbon-free electricity, this is a percentage. Adjusting targets up or down impacts the stringency of the policy and its subsequent compliance rates. They can take two different forms:

- **Fixed targets** – Provide a final goal for buildings to achieve, such as the City's goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. Interim targets are set in the initial policy for each compliance period to ensure a building's progress towards the final goal.
- **Recalculated targets** – Provide a final goal for buildings to achieve, such as the City's goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, but do not set interim goals in the initial policy.

Instead, the interim targets are recalculated after each compliance period to provide flexibility while still pushing buildings towards the final goal.

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- The clarity of a fixed long-term goal aligns with capital cycles.
- Fixed interim targets help with long- and short-term planning.
- There is a need to strike balance between iteration and market certainty.
- Targets must be set so they are achievable and account for past upgrades.
- Recalculated targets offer more flexibility and the ability to adjust future targets based on data.

Key Takeaway: A Council-appointed technical committee could develop targets for a building energy policy. The committee would analyze data and collect stakeholder feedback to determine whether to use fixed or recalculated interim targets and to establish final targets that will help the City achieve its goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. While a portion of multi-family and historic commercial buildings may have difficulty meeting targets, Alternative Compliance Pathways can be designed to provide a way for them to demonstrate compliance with the policy.

6. Alternative Compliance Pathways (ACPs)

Provide a way for buildings to comply with the standard outside of meeting the performance targets and play a critical role in the success of a building energy policy. They recognize that factors such as building age and capital investment timeline impact a building's ability to meet the standard. ACPs provide flexibility and enable buildings to show progress toward the standard.

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- It is important to recognize that buildings have different capital cycles. ACPs should be available to help buildings whose next upgrade may be beyond the current compliance period.
- The policy should be straightforward and feasible enough that the use of ACPs is the exception, not the rule.

Key Takeaway: A Council-appointed technical committee could determine ACPs for inclusion in the policy. Stakeholder feedback will play a critical role in establishing ACPs and identifying building types that should be automatically eligible for ACPs (i.e., historic, low-income multi-family). An example of an ACP for consideration would be a carbon-free electricity metric that increases the requirement for locally produced energy over time.

7. Incentives

Used by building energy policies to help buildings achieve performance standards. The incentives can include innovative programs focused on the policy or existing programs leveraged in new ways to support the policy.

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- Incentives are critical to the success of a building energy policy.
- Free or subsidized energy audits should be available to buildings covered by the policy.

- Existing financing programs like Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) should be promoted to support the policy.

Key Takeaway: A Council-appointed technical committee could work with City departments to evaluate existing City programs to determine if they can be adapted to help building owners comply with a policy.¹⁰ The committee could propose ideas for how incentive programs can be leveraged and created. In addition, the City could identify funds to offer a limited number of subsidized energy audits annually for buildings covered by the policy and support an effort to recognize high-performing buildings.

8. Compliance and Enforcement Mechanisms

Help ensure that building owners work toward the targets established by the building energy policy. Other jurisdictions have developed a variety of enforcement mechanisms, ranging from fines to revocation of certificates of occupancy.

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- The policy should encourage compliance rather than rely on enforcement.
- Develop enforcement mechanisms that can benefit the building in noncompliance, such as requirements for energy audits or retro-commissioning.

Key Takeaway: A Council-appointed technical committee could collect stakeholder feedback and propose potential enforcement mechanisms. The policy, through its ACPs, should provide multiple pathways for compliance that encourage building performance improvements. Enforcement mechanisms should help the buildings in noncompliance meet the targets or the ACPs. This could include requiring non-compliant buildings to pay for an energy audit or complete retro-commissioning to improve building operations.

9. Program Resources

Resources provided by jurisdictions to help building owners meet the building energy policy targets. In addition to City staff that implement the policy, a Building Performance Hub operated by the jurisdiction or a non-profit partner can offer resources to building owners.¹¹

Stakeholders provided the following feedback during the engagement sessions:

- Building managers need access to educational resources to improve the operation of their buildings.
- Staff will be needed to support building owners, connect them with incentives, analyze data, and oversee compliance and enforcement.
- Program resources should be leveraged to reduce utility data reporting burdens.
- The Hub can serve as a technical and educational resource by providing information on energy saving improvements, financing options, and energy audits.

Key Takeaway: A Council-appointed technical committee could evaluate what type of staffing is required to effectively support implementation of a building energy policy. To stand up and run a program would require at least one engagement staff member and at least one

¹⁰ See Council Item 202401247 which outlines incentive programs available to building owners.

¹¹ The Building Energy Exchange in St Louis is administered by USGBC Missouri-Gateway. The Retrofit Resource Hub in Boston is administered by the City of Boston.

data analyst. The City could seek to leverage economies of scale by joining with other cities in Ohio or the region to fund a Hub that can serve multiple jurisdictions. The City must also continue to pursue ways to minimize the burden on building owners by obtaining utility data on their behalf and attracting resources for incentives.

POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

There are three steps that Council could consider to advance energy performance in large buildings:

1. **Energy benchmarking ordinance** – This ordinance would establish a mandatory benchmarking program for commercial buildings, including multi-family buildings, over 100,000 square feet and all City buildings over 10,000 square feet. These buildings would be responsible for reporting their energy use on an annual basis. Compliance would be based on verification of the energy data. The benchmarking data could be used as a baseline for a future BPS.
2. **Establish a technical committee to identify the components of future building energy policies** - The technical committee would leverage its knowledge as well as feedback from building sector stakeholders to draft final building energy policy recommendations to present to Council. The opportunity for additional engagement will allow more stakeholders to offer feedback on policy elements.

The Council-appointed technical committee would be responsible for determining the scope, metric, and timeline for a policy as well as establishing achievable performance targets, both interim and final, and advising on ACPs. In addition, it would advise on compliance and enforcement mechanisms and develop a plan for the allocation of any funds collected from fines. The Committee would be responsible for presenting its recommendations to Council within a set time frame.

3. **Building energy ordinance** – This ordinance would incorporate the recommendations from the technical committee to pass a building energy policy for Cincinnati. The ordinance would include all the policy elements (scope, metric, timeframe, performance targets, and alternative compliance pathways) as well as establish compliance and enforcement procedures.

cc: Oliver Kroner, Director, Office of Environment & Sustainability



202602473

Meeka D. Owens
Councilmember

Seth Walsh
Councilmember

07/28/2026

Motion

To Review the City's Response to Flash Flooding and Prepare for Future Major Weather Events

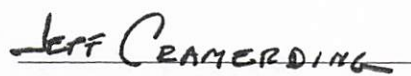
WE MOVE that the Administration, in coordination with the Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD), evaluate the feasibility of implementing:

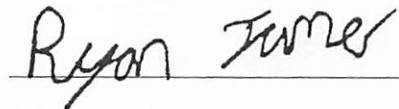
1. Expanded green infrastructure solutions to reduce stormwater runoff;
2. A watershed-based flood mitigation planning approach; and
3. A Flood Resilience Task Force to identify risks and recommend solutions.

BE IT FURTHER MOVED that the Administration report back to City Council within 120 days with implementation recommendations, estimated costs, and potential funding sources, including but not limited to Cincy on Track funds.


Councilmember, Seth Walsh


Councilmember, Meeka Owens


Councilmember, Jeff Cramerding




Councilmember Anna Albi