



QUICK GUIDE TO THE Green Cincinnati Plan 2023



Welcome

Welcome to the 2023 Green Cincinnati Plan (GCP) Quick Guide! The GCP, led by the City of Cincinnati's Office of Environment & Sustainability (OES), is our community's vision for a sustainable, equitable, and resilient Cincinnati. With the GCP, the primary goal is to reduce our carbon emissions 50% by 2030 and work towards 100% carbon neutrality by 2050. In pursuit of these goals, the GCP's 40 high-impact strategies and 130 priority actions across 8 focus areas is built on the latest science as well as Cincinnati's climate action planning efforts since 2008. These strategies and actions are a result of an inclusive and intentional community-wide, community-driven, collaborative effort.

The Plan is a roadmap for re-inventing our city—re-inventing the ways we construct our buildings, power our homes, utilize transportation, grow food, interact with and honor nature, and allocate resources. Reinvention gives the opportunity to reflect on the way things were done in the past and consider how they can be done better in the future.

Priority communities, which historically have had less access to funds and political capital, continue to suffer disproportionate effects of climate change. The GCP centered equity in its development and intended implementation to ensure that the goals, strategies and actions benefit and equip priority communities. People are at the center of this plan.

OES would like to acknowledge Mayor Aftab, City Manager Sheryl Long, City Council, Chairperson Owens, the GCP Steering Committee, along with all the city departments, organizations and residents who participated in creating the 2023 Plan. We thank you!



Climate Change

Why is Climate Change Happening?

The use of fossil fuels for industrialization has spurred human prosperity and economic growth for many, but not all, over the last 150 years. Burning fossil fuels to power our lives has led to increasing concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, which are causing changes in our climate.

The local impacts of climate change in Cincinnati—rising heat, increased storm intensity and frequency, worsening impacts on health and agriculture, increased costs to municipal government—are significant and inequitably experienced.

While addressing carbon emissions takes a global effort, with 70% of emissions coming from urban areas, Cincinnati recognizes that cities play a unique role. Focused efforts to decarbonize locally will improve the quality of life, economic well-being, and long-term sustainability of our City and region.

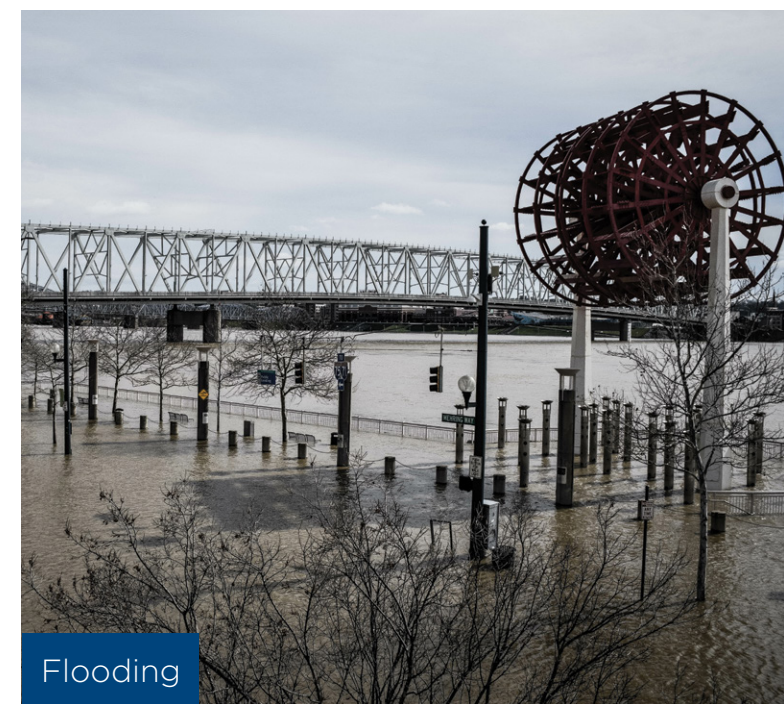
Climate Change is an Equity Issue and a Risk-Multiplier

The climate crisis acts as a risk-multiplier, making existing problems worse. Residents who are poor, homeless, or living with chronic health conditions are at greater risk. Neighborhoods with fewer trees and more impervious surfaces (such as parking lots and roads) experience greater temperature increases and more overland flooding than other neighborhoods. Such vulnerable populations and neighborhoods are often predominantly low-income communities of color where residents have been systematically denied a voice and access to services and resources.

The presence of these environmental and equity challenges means that there is also a great opportunity for Cincinnati to emerge as a national and global leader in implementing scientifically sound, people-centered solutions to the climate crisis that lead to equitable results.



Rising Temperatures



Flooding



Landslides

Creating the Plan

Central Pillars

The Green Cincinnati Plan has three central pillars that serve as tenets, upon which the goals, strategies, and actions of the eight Focus Areas are built:

Sustainability

Creating and maintaining conditions to meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, acknowledging dependence on the natural environment.

Resilience

A tenacious ability for individuals and communities to collaboratively anticipate, accommodate, and positively adapt to thrive amidst changing climate conditions through social cohesion, partnerships & resources.

Equity

Just and fair inclusion in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. In sustainability work, equity must be recognitional, procedural, distributional, restorational, and transformational.



Focus Areas

The 2023 GCP is organized around eight key Focus Areas that play a significant role in driving systems change. With a problem as complex as climate change, breaking it down into parts makes driving action and momentum possible. Focus areas include:

- **Buildings & Energy**
- **City Operations**
- **Community Activation**
- **Food**
- **Mobility**
- **Natural Environment**
- **Resilience & Climate Adaption**
- **Zero Waste**

Setting Goals

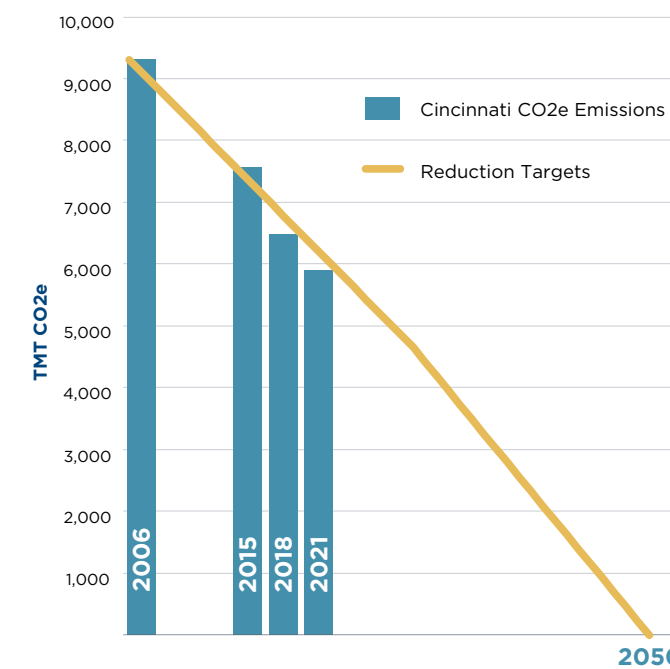
With recent developments in the science of climate change, it has become apparent that the world will need to accelerate decarbonization. With the adoption of this plan, Cincinnati commits to 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030, and 100% community-wide carbon neutrality by 2050.

Key Decarbonization Strategies

- **Clean Energy**
- **Building and Vehicle Electrification**
- **Getting People Out of Cars**
- **Zero Waste**

The City of Cincinnati Government is committed to leading by example, yet it is also important to note that the government accounts for less than 4% of the emissions of Cincinnati. Achieving carbon neutrality will require an all-hands-on-deck approach, with concerted effort from individuals and institutions. With a vision of a zero-carbon future, this climate action plan identifies the near-term steps Cincinnati must take to achieve this aspirational goal.

Cincinnati Carbon Emissions Reduction Targets



Important Themes & Supporting Documents

Co-creation of a community vision requires listening, collaboration, and compromise. With more than 3,000 resident recommendations, the focus area subcommittees synthesized the input from multiple sources.

From the thousands of voices that contributed to this planning process, several cross-cutting themes repeatedly emerged as key community priorities across multiple focus areas of the Plan.

Key Community Priorities

- ✓ **Preparing green workforce**
- ✓ **Prioritizing equity**
- ✓ **Leveraging the landmark federal funding opportunities**
- ✓ **Emphasizing and building social cohesion**
- ✓ **Fostering public awareness and education for successful change**

These themes span all eight Focus Areas as well as the three pillars of Sustainability, Equity, and Resilience. They demonstrate how the community's vital voice helped shape the 2023 GCP and where the most common ground lies. The themes showcase the importance of integrating action at the grassroots community-level to move the City forward.



View & Download Supporting Documents

View the 2023 Green Cincinnati Plan in its entirety, the GCP Equity Framework, and more on the OES GCP website.



www.greencincinnatiplan.org

Making It Happen

Who

The 2023 GCP is a commitment to action. It articulates an ambitious vision for the City—one that activates our community, strategically invests resources for impact, and does our part to protect the natural environment. In order to realize this vision, the City and partners must take action. To this end, the City shares a four-pronged approach to GCP implementation:

- **Lead by Example** The City will continue to lead by example by greening government operations and looking for efficiency gains that save Cincinnati money.
- **Partner with Champions** Cincinnati is home to businesses, nonprofits, and other institutions that will help move Cincinnati toward a sustainable, equitable, and resilient future. Often these organizations are better positioned than the City to execute strategies and actions. The City commits to partnering with these “Champions” and supporting their GCP-related initiatives. The role of Champions in helping to accomplish the goals of the GCP cannot be overemphasized.
- **Equity in Implementation** The Equity Commitment is a fundamental accountability statement made by the GCP Steering Committee aiming to give inspiration and guidance. Plan implementation will be informed by recent and disaggregated data and led alongside those with lived experience of environmental injustice.
- **Track & Communicate Progress** Each GCP Focus Area identifies quantitative goals in order to drive accountability, learning, and adaptation over time. Working with “Champion” community partners, the City will track progress on each Goal on an annual basis. All Goals within the GCP are intended to be completed in 5 years, unless otherwise stated.

The City's Office of Environment and Sustainability (OES) will report progress quarterly to the City Council, and in addition, the City has partnered with ClimateView to provide an accessible, up-to-date dashboard of Cincinnati's progress.

Funding

Implementing the GCP will require significant investment. Fortunately, the federal government passed two key pieces of legislation, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), that created over \$1.6 billion in funding opportunities.

These resources mark the largest investment in climate change by the federal government allowing for great gains in public transit, transportation infrastructure, electric vehicles, clean energy infrastructure, landslide prevention, environmental remediation, and more.

Federal Equity Aims

IIJA and IRA are aligned to create good-paying union jobs, tackle the climate crisis, and advance environmental justice and equity. President Biden also commissioned the Justice40 initiative (J40), a whole government effort to ensure that federal agencies deliver at least 40% of the overall benefits from federal investments to disadvantaged communities. Cincinnati's GCP adheres to the same commitment—to ensure that at least 40% of sustainability dollars benefit priority communities in the city.

We look forward to working together to accomplish our plan!



FOCUS AREA

Buildings & Energy

VISION

Adoption of clean energy sources and energy efficiency measures by 2050 that result in net-zero emissions from buildings, contributing to a healthy, equitable, and resilient future for our City.

Goals

Strategies

Priority Actions

Energy Efficiency

Reduce building emissions 30% from 2021 levels by 2030.

Decrease energy usage in new and existing buildings through adoption of energy efficiency and electrification technologies

- Improve building performance by implementing policies like benchmarking, building performance standards, or other relevant energy standards
- Partner with local organizations to offer financing tools such as a loan fund, Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE), or Green Bank to support investment in energy efficiency
- Recognize the role embodied carbon plays in the built environment and align incentive programs to encourage the reuse of existing buildings

Electrification

Electrify 20,000 households by 2030.

Electrify buildings with carbon-free energy

- Reduce reliance on natural gas by developing programs to encourage the adoption of heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, and induction stoves
- Create incentives to encourage developers to electrify new buildings or install infrastructure so buildings can easily convert to all-electric in the future
- Educate the community and corporate partners about tax credits and other programs available to assist with the transition to more energy-efficient technologies

Energy Poverty

Reduce the number of households experiencing energy poverty 10% from 2022 levels by 2028.

Reduce energy costs for tenants and homeowners experiencing energy poverty to improve housing affordability

- Grow and expand programs such as WarmUp Cincy to support low-income renters, homeowners, and landlords of affordable housing with the installation of weatherization, energy efficiency, and healthy home upgrades
- Implement and fund programs to install solar on low-income housing
- Create policies that will increase the energy efficiency of residential single and multi-family buildings in order to decrease energy poverty

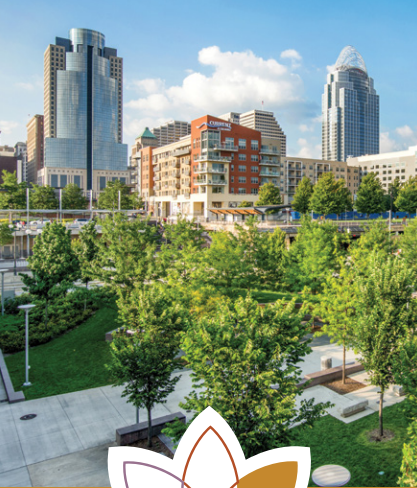
Clean Energy

Obtain 40% of electricity load from clean energy sources by 2030.

Provide residents and businesses with continual access to power from clean energy sources

- Support programs like Solarize that encourage adoption of rooftop solar
- Partner with local organizations to offer financing tools such as a loan fund, Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE), or Green Bank to support investment in renewable energy
- Continue to pursue wind and solar power purchase agreements (PPAs) to secure enough electricity to support City operations and the City's aggregation program
- Identify energy storage options like batteries, pumped storage, or hydrogen storage to maximize utilization of clean energy and improve grid reliability





FOCUS AREA

City Operations

VISION

A City that leads by example, centering community voice in the inter-departmental design and implementation of programs and policies.

Goals

Strategies

Priority Actions

Climate Equity Budgeting

Center Justice40 in the City's budget and program design, ensuring at least 40% of spending benefits priority communities.

Use a budget & procurement process that aligns and accelerates the City's climate equity priorities

- Implement participatory and priority-based budgeting
- Develop annual funding for sustainability investments like a Municipal bond to capitalize on climate incentives of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)
- Streamline procurement to enhance the impact of federal funding by utilizing cooperative purchasing including Omnia, GSA, Sourcewell
- Continue to develop a framework for supporting green jobs with a focus on youth
- Hire a grant writer to assist in pursuit of federal funding with focus on the Justice40 Initiative to address environmental justice issues
- Create policy for the procurement of sustainable goods for internal City supplies and materials, informed by a city audit to develop strategic priorities

Center and activate community voice in designing climate and equity policies and programs

- Crowdsource climate solutions with programs like hackathons to tackle complex issues
- Improve communication and accessibility of sustainability programs and progress to the public
- Join and leverage Government Alliance on Race & Equity to advance climate equity programs
- Update the Climate Equity Indicators report every 5 years to design programs to target benefits to priority communities

Transportation

400 electric vehicles in the city fleet by 2028.

Electrify and right-size the city fleet

- Conduct an electric vehicle (EV) charging needs assessment for city fleet & install necessary infrastructure at city facilities, partner with County at shared facilities
- Conduct a needs assessment to right-size the city fleet
- Continue to electrify the city fleet and equipment including lawn equipment

100% of employees have access to sustainable transportation options.

Enable green transportation

- Offer remote work flexibility to reduce commuting
- Develop HR incentives for employee use of public transit, biking, & walking

Energy

100% Renewable Energy for city operations by 2035.

30% energy efficiency improvements by 2030.

Invest in high-performance and resilient city facilities

- Establish prioritized facilities as "Resilience Hubs"—centers for community gathering during emergency, equipped with solar and backup power to provide relief during emergencies
- Pursue additional utility-scale clean energy with requests for proposal (RFP)
- Organize facility managers to create a sustainable facility policy for new city buildings
- Continue to strategically pursue energy efficiency for city facilities
- Convert streetlights to LED including electrifying gas lights
- Publish energy benchmarking data for city facilities on Cincy Insights

FOCUS AREA

Community Activation

VISION

All residents know about and are empowered to take action to address the systemic issues underlying climate change and environmental injustice through individual and collective action.

Goals

Strategies

Priority Actions

Advocacy

Achieve \$25 million in resources toward GCP priorities by 2028 with at least 40% benefiting priority communities.

Increase use of advocacy as a lever to creatively and strategically solve problems

- Advocate for the passage of a City Budget that supports GCP priorities with at least 40% benefiting priority communities
- Build and present a case for long-term funding mechanisms that drive emissions reductions and reallocate resources generated to reduce disparate impacts
- Support codification of climate justice and racial equity in City decision-making mechanisms
- Continue to strengthen regional partnerships - like OKI and the Regional Climate Collaborative—to better coordinate, share, and build strategic advantage
- Increase investment in advocacy, lobbying, grantseeking, and partnership development to increase local receipt of federal/state resources

Education

100% of public schools have safe and accessible outdoor learning spaces by 2028.

Strengthen the breadth and depth of school based environmental opportunities

- Increase school/environmental org partnerships to grow environmental education and climate justice opportunities at schools, including hands-on outdoor learning spaces like Green Schoolyards, with priority given to schools in priority communities
- Support schools to increasingly model sustainable practices inclusive of operations, buildings, fleet, and grounds in alignment with the US Department of Education’s Green Ribbon Schools pillars or similar standards

4,000 individuals trained for green economy jobs by 2028 (800/year).

Amplify the workforce to meet the demands of the green economy

- Partner with the local Workforce Investment Board, educational institutions, employers, County, State and more to amplify equity-focused, green workforce training and career pathways
- Continue to grow paid, hands-on learning opportunities, and jobs in the green economy with an emphasis on preparing youth and the unemployed and/or difficult to employ for living wage jobs

Outreach

25 priority community members equipped to co-lead the 2028 GCP refresh.

Increase the capacity of residents, communities, and businesses to drive solutions to climate change

- Create and support more opportunities like Climate Safe Neighborhoods (CSN) for residents to identify local environmental issues; empower residents and partners to implement community-based solutions
- Support the Youth Environmental Council to mobilize the next generation
- Support the launch of a one stop shop - physical and virtual - to support residents in making lifestyle changes through informing and incentivizing efforts
- Support business owners and the start-up community to build and enact market solutions to address environmental issues, with a focus on women and minority-owned enterprises



FOCUS AREA

Food



VISION

The food system in Cincinnati will have equitable food access for everyone, a local (within 100 miles) agricultural production and distribution network, living wage jobs in the farming and food sectors, and will eliminate all food waste from the landfill. This circular food economy will disrupt and dismantle the long history of systemic racism, oppression, and inequity and environmental degradation in the food system.

Goals

Strategies

Priority Actions

Local Food

Increase local food consumption, distribution, and production by 100%.

Use regional (within 100 miles) ecological agriculture to increase food production, distribution, consumption, and climate adaptation

- Increase funding for neighborhood gardens and urban agriculture managers
- Develop a network of neighborhood distribution sites for local food
- Restore & adapt underutilized spaces (vacant lots, indoor space & rooftops) for food production & ecological benefits and promote regenerative agriculture best practices

Food Access

Eliminate food deserts in Cincinnati and create food sovereignty in all 52 neighborhoods.

Use a variety of systems to create equitable access to nutritious, affordable food in every neighborhood, prioritizing communities that need it most and creating food sovereignty

- Increase options for food access within food desert neighborhoods, including but not limited to farmers markets, food co-ops, Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), corner stores, buying clubs, mobile markets, delivery services, community gardens and food pantries
- Provide city & regional funding for community-driven and innovative food initiatives
- Increase utilization of locally-grown food at neighborhood food access points
- Engage community members on the impact of dietary choices on climate change, environment, & health—elevate the benefits of plant based options

Food System

Implement 5 of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) Recommendations by 2028.

Use the MUFPP framework, working with public and private stakeholders, to develop a sustainable food system in Cincinnati that is inclusive, resilient, safe, diverse, and environmentally friendly

- Develop a comprehensive Food System Plan for Cincinnati, taking into consideration its urban/rural connections and preparation for potential large-scale disruptions due to climate change
- Implement the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact related to good governance, sustainable diets & nutrition, social & economic equity, food production, food supply & distribution and food waste

Food Waste Prevention

Decrease food going to the landfill 50% by 2030.

Increase efficiency of the food system and minimize environmental impact through prevention, reuse/recovery, education, and best practices for surplus food

- Continue to support local food rescue, food security & food justice organizations through establishment & support of food access points and increased donation infrastructure for collection, transformation & distribution of surplus food
- Expand food waste prevention education and best practices for residential and business sectors*

Jobs

Increase quantity of jobs in food and agriculture sectors by 20% by 2028.

Create pathways to growth and ownership for farmers and food entrepreneurs in city food and agriculture sectors

- Grow food-related employment opportunities & training for youth, (i.e. food gleaning & redistribution, Climate Corps, AgriCorps, etc)
- Develop career pathways & higher education opportunities with links to create living-wage farmer & food sector jobs
- Train farmers and gardeners to increase success, including adaptation to a changing climate

*See Zero Waste Focus Area for goals, strategies, and priority actions related to composting.



FOCUS AREA

Mobility



VISION

Prioritize people by building sustainable, safe, and accessible mobility options that meet the needs of people who live, work, or visit Cincinnati.

Goals

Strategies

Priority Actions

Public Transit

Increase the number of passenger miles traveled using public transit 25% by 2030.

Provide reliable public transportation options and an improved rider experience to connect residents to the places where they need to go

- Continue to design bus routes and bus stop shelters to ensure convenient and consistent service with reliable connections
- Develop regional bus rapid transit routes along key corridors
- Explore the use of HR incentives to encourage public transit use
- Create more neighborhood mobility networks and transit hubs where residents can connect by bike, walking, and bus
- Explore the expanded use of passenger rail for urban and regional transportation

Zero-Emissions Vehicles

Increase the use of zero-emission vehicles in the City to 25% by 2030.

Support the transition to zero-emission mobility options

- Install public, streetside electric vehicle (EV) charging stations
- Develop policies to ensure that vehicle charging infrastructure is available to all residents including those who live in multi-family buildings and in homes without driveways
- Continue to support Metro in its efforts to invest in carbon-free buses (electric/hydrogen)
- Develop policies and incentives to ensure new construction is prepared for EV charging

Bicycling & Walking

Increase the number of residents within 0.25 mile of safe bike and pedestrian infrastructure 50% from 2022 levels by 2030.

Improve bike and pedestrian connectivity so that residents can safely access the places they need to go

- Continue to invest in Complete Streets to improve connectivity between neighborhoods
- Continue to improve sidewalk connectivity and maintenance in neighborhoods where connectivity/walkability is lacking
- Complete the CROWN bike network and connect it to neighborhoods
- Expand access to Red Bike's traditional and electric bikes to more neighborhoods and increase participation in the Red Bike Go program
- Continue to leverage Vision Zero to install bike lanes and traffic calming measures to reduce speeds and improve safety

Connected Communities

Build a policy framework that supports the creation of connected communities.

Modify land use regulations to support development along transit corridors

- Promote "15 Minute Neighborhoods" with mixed residential (including multi-family) and commercial zoning to increase transit connectivity as well as density and affordability
- Embrace zoning reform that increases density near transit, reduces or eliminates parking requirements across the City, and minimizes the use of surface parking lots



FOCUS AREA

Natural Environment



VISION

Cincinnati will invest in the creation, preservation, and regeneration of ecosystems and green infrastructure through policy and resource allocation to improve and protect the health and well-being of our diverse residents and the natural environment. We will inspire people, government, and business to value the natural environment to drive transformation.

Goals

Strategies

Priority Actions

Tree Canopy

Maintain 40% urban tree canopy while expanding canopy to 40% residential, 25% mixed-use/industrial, and 10% Central Business District.

Improve preservation, health, and maintenance of trees in existing urban canopy

- Focus city tree planting in neighborhoods with highest heat island effect as measured in the Climate Equity Indicators Report or most recent data
- Provide incentives and support for the use of carbon crediting and/or carbon offset programs to fund tree planting, maintenance, land conservation, and forest rehabilitation
- Plant more native tree species through education with non-profits, nurseries, and schools
- Implement policies that protect existing trees during development efforts

Air Quality

Improve air quality so that Air Quality Index “Healthy Days” are increased by 30% by 2028.

Increase air quality studies and education and reduce pollution from air emissions

- Expand monitoring of air quality and nuisance odors incorporating citizen science in priority neighborhoods
- Provide services, resources, and education for residents in priority neighborhoods on air quality alert system, sources of poor air quality, and air quality regulations
- Support and fund the development of natural corridors and tree barriers along streams and rivers, interstates, and highways
- Strengthen air emissions regulations

Green Space

Increase access to greenspaces so that every resident has a greenspace within a .5 mile walk by 2028.

Increase the quantity and quality of greenspaces in neighborhoods with low distribution of greenspaces

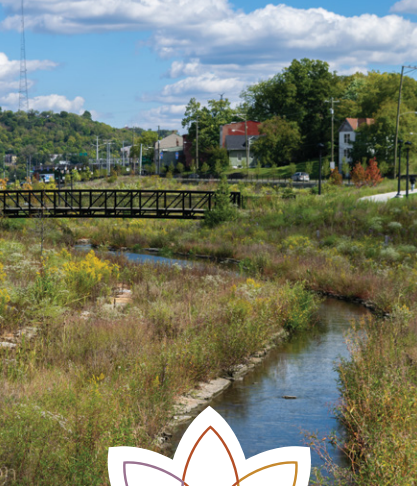
- Create new greenspaces, including use of vacant properties and underused parking lots, ensuring that space will not be redeveloped
- Continue to improve infrastructure to increase walkability and access to greenspaces
- Grow greenspace workforce through youth and BIPOC involvement in natural area restoration and education
- Increase funding for maintenance of greenspaces
- Implement policies which promote and protect public greenspaces in new developments

Increase preservation and restoration of aquatic ecosystems & urban forests

- Remove invasive species and restore, maintain, and preserve forests, wetlands, riparian areas, and natural corridors along waterways, hillsides, and low canopy neighborhoods
- Implement policies that restrict development in forested and/or biodiverse areas
- Increase use of green infrastructure to mitigate the effects of stormwater, sewer overflows, overland flooding, and contaminated stormwater in waterways

Increase biodiversity and health of native species in the City

- Complete Biodiversity Assessment for Cincinnati, incorporating citizen science
- Support pollinator gardens, native plants, and education, including allowing the use of native grasses and pollinator plants in residential areas, and Low Mow or No Mow practices
- Reduce pesticide and fertilizer use/over-use through education, regulation, and innovation



FOCUS AREA

Resilience & Climate Adaptation



VISION

We are a city that will take bold action to heal past environmental, racial, and economic injustices, and that will continue to adapt, innovate, and respond to vulnerabilities to create a climate-ready, resilient, and socially cohesive community.

Goals

Strategies

Priority Actions

Stormwater & Heat Adaptation

Complete 25 green infrastructure projects by 2028 in extreme heat and overland flood vulnerable communities.

Reduce extreme heat, overland flooding, landslides, and water pollution vulnerabilities by incentivizing, improving, and increasing green infrastructure and other mitigating methods

- Incentivize green infrastructure projects in communities with extreme heat and flood vulnerabilities
- Equitably restructure sewer rates based on permeable land surface and other contributing factors
- Create a “sponge city” with more and diverse green infrastructure in public and residential places including green roofs, bioswales, green medians, wetlands, parks, permeable pavements, and landscape gardens
- Continue to decrease sewer backups, sewer overflows, and overland flooding (flash flooding) by supporting sewer infrastructure improvements in priority communities
- Partner with priority communities to identify opportunities to address property damage caused by overland flooding and hillside instability
- Ensure all rental housing has at least one room with adequate air conditioning
- Use heat reflective materials when appropriate (roads, parking surfaces, and roofs, etc.)

Community Planning & Social Cohesion

Complete five climate adaptation and resilience projects per year by 2028 that create 10 green jobs per project.

Increase access, stability, and security of mixed-income housing and resilience hubs for local residents and anticipated climate migrants

- Continue to implement affordable and mixed-income housing strategies to stabilize communities
- Develop neighborhood resilience hubs to foster community connection and increase emergency preparedness

Use more community-based assessments, planning, programs, and training to reduce the social impacts of climate vulnerabilities

- Fund and expand the Climate Safe Neighborhoods program to cultivate the social infrastructure for resilient communities and provide green workforce training
- Develop a climate migration response plan

Pollution Reduction & Adaptive Land Use

Revitalize 25 contaminated, industrial properties in neighborhoods of the Lower Mill Creek Valley by 2028.

Mitigate pollution and clean up additional legacy brownfield sites to revitalize neighborhoods and result in healthier communities

- Conduct inventories, assessments, and clean-ups of contaminated industrial sites, referred to as brownfields, in alignment with both community revitalization priorities and city planned reuse
- Address emerging pollutants, including pharmaceuticals and personal care products, that are endocrine-disrupting chemicals, and microplastics

Increase protection of vulnerable lands and infrastructure through policy development

- Protect landslide-prone hillsides and overland flood risk zones through land development policies, such as Low Impact Development



FOCUS AREA

Zero Waste



VISION

Cincinnati will achieve 50% diversion city-wide by 2030, and city-wide zero waste (90% diversion) by 2040 through conservation of resources by responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of materials without threat to human health and the environment.

Goals

Strategies

Priority Actions

Recycling

Increase waste diversion 10% by 2028.

Increase access to recycling for multi-family building residents

- Increase the number of multi-family dwellings with recycling infrastructure
- Minimize recycling contamination through culturally appropriate education, partnerships, workforce champions, and resident feedback

Improve public event and neighborhood business district recycling infrastructure

- Require permitted public events and events held on city property use best available recycling practices and include recycling service costs in the permit fee
- Provide alternatives to single-use plastic items at permitted public events and events held on city property
- Pair garbage cans with recycling containers in all Neighborhood Business Districts and DORA districts and provide necessary services including collection and monitoring

Increase use of alternative recycling and reuse outlets for residential metals, textiles, e-waste, and other emerging recyclable waste streams

- Support and expand neighborhood pick-up locations that connect commercial recyclers to dropped-off recyclable materials, like the Cincinnati Recycling and Reuse Hub
- Create a program that incentivizes commercial recyclers to collect household e-waste, textiles, and reusable items not otherwise collected curbside
- Incentivize recycling and diversion innovation by increasing the cost of waste generation and disposal

Build capacity of the recycling and reuse workforce

- Create “Recycling Valet” workforce and small business development to provide recycling collection, monitoring, and education to multifamily dwellings, special events, and business districts with an emphasis on employment of residents from priority neighborhoods

Organics

Sustainably divert 50% of organics (including yard trimmings and food wastes) from going to the landfill by 2028.

Improve current yard-trimmings collection program and use of biochar

- Conduct education and outreach to increase residential mulching (Just Mow it) to reduce grass clippings and source separation of yard trimmings for collection and composting
- Support the development of local biochar processing, and the utilization of activated biochar for farming, tree plantings, storm water retention, etc

Improve multi-scale composting infrastructure

- Pilot and support small-scale community composting under 500 square feet
- Ensure all organic material collected including yard trimmings and food waste is composted in a sustainable manner
- Support funding, siting, and development of local and regional, large-scale Class II compost facilities

Divert food waste through prevention, reuse/recovery, and composting

- Support the development of anaerobic digesters to divert organics from the waste stream
- Support the creation of curbside food waste collection programs and/or establish food waste drop-off locations in city facilities, communities and schools*

Litter

Decrease litter and illegal dumping by 10% annually through 2028.

Increase programming and outreach for litter and illegal dumping prevention

- Utilize policy and fees to discourage the use of single-use plastics including plastic bags
- Reduce litter and illegal dumping through public communications strategy and stronger enforcement
- Conduct routine neighborhood litter clean-ups, partnering with programs like Adopt A Block

*See Food Focus Area for goals, strategies, and priority actions related to food waste prevention and recovery.



Thank you
to all the community voices
who shaped this plan



See the Green Cincinnati Plan