



AFTAB PUREVAL

City of Cincinnati, Office of the Mayor

May 25th, 2023

Dear Members of Council:

I am transmitting to you a copy of the Recommended Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Biennial Budget for your review. Our City is making a copy of this document available to the public on the website.

Our City Government has made exceptional advancements toward empowering the voice of community stakeholders in the budget process. Last year, City Council's Budget and Finance Committee held the first-ever public hearing to gather feedback prior to a published recommended budget. This year, the Budget and Finance Committee expanded that effort, holding three public meetings in Evanston, Saylor Park, and Northside to provide more meaningful opportunities to ensure a budget that represents the values of our residents. Prior to this, in partnership with the Healthy Neighborhoods Committee, our City Administration presented budget process education at two public meetings and one virtual opportunity. This budget is a strong embodiment of the attention and strategic thinking that has gone into empowering the voices and values of Cincinnatians.

We are building upon our work to ensure that Cincinnati's public safety workers have the appropriate staffing to keep residents safe. This budget includes allocations for three classes of police recruits, totaling 160 positions, and four classes of fire recruits, totaling 200. While staff funding is only a part of our work to improve public safety, the City of Cincinnati is committed to providing the resources necessary. At the same time, we are once again leaning into a comprehensive, innovative approach. The Alternative Response to Crisis pilot, launched last year, has demonstrated a tremendous impact on our ability to free up police resources for the prevention of violent crime. In this budget, we are establishing a permanent allocation for the program while doubling its capacity to provide a non-police response to non-violent 911 calls. Through our investment in the programs that are making a proven impact, such as this budget's \$1 million investment in the Career Pathways Initiative, we are continuing to push forward a strategy focused on equity and the root causes of violence.

Our holistic approach extends to Cincinnati's other major priorities. On top of an additional \$1.5 million in funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, this budget helps our City execute on critical housing equity programs, including funding for our new special code enforcement unit to hold negligent landlords accountable, funding to support tenants with access to legal counsel, and a dramatic increase in funding for home repair and improvement.

Directly responding to the needs and priorities of residents has been a top priority. With our leveraged support for the organizations that make transformative differences in our neighborhoods, the City has implemented a new, results-driven approach. Their updated application and decision-making process has guided our City dollars towards the most effective impact possible.

This framework is present throughout the budget. For the first time, we are allocating dedicated funds to community budget requests, irrespective of the departments involved. From a traffic study in Bond Hill, to speed control in Mt. Airy, to park improvements in Sedamsville and South Cumminsville, we are supporting neighborhoods throughout Cincinnati in solving their stated challenges. In the first year of this new process, 25 neighborhoods have received a combined \$5.82 million in support of their requests, marking the City's largest ever investment in Community Council priorities.

Cincinnati, like our peer cities, has faced unprecedented budgetary challenges due to changing economic conditions and COVID-19. Our expenses are growing more quickly than our revenues – our projected deferred capital maintenance exceeds \$400 million over the next five years, and just this year, our projected income tax revenue has been reduced by \$7.5 million. As we collectively work to adapt to these challenges, we are making important decisions to ensure our fiscal sustainability while making critical investments in building our future.

This strategy includes a continued investment in equitable growth for all our residents. We have raised our commitment to supporting City employees through the pension, increasing the contribution in this budget by \$2.2 million. And with \$6 million in tax credits from the Cincinnati Southern Railway Board, I will be introducing an ordinance alongside this budget to allocate those funds and \$5 million in re-appropriated FY 2023 funds – to make a range of forward-looking investments to secure our future. This includes needed support for street rehabilitation and City facilities improvements, the Regional Safety Complex, and a significant increase in our support for the Safe and Clean program, Boots on the Ground, and the Neighborhood Catalytic Capital Improvement Program.

Through this proposal, we are also pushing forward in an unprecedented way on our vision of equitable financial opportunity. My introduced ordinance will include launch funding for three groundbreaking pilot programs to promote financial freedom among Cincinnatians. These include \$1.5 million in medical debt relief for an estimated 30,000 residents, a guaranteed income study to explore how we can support financial stability for our most vulnerable residents, and a child savings account to support young Cincinnatians as they grow and pursue their dreams.

As with all our work, these investments are a strong reflection of our values. Thanks to clear and transparent cooperation between this Council, my office, and the City Administration, we are proud to present a community-informed budget that helps drive Cincinnati towards a bright future. Our collective work to seek public feedback is not finished, and I look forward to continued community engagement and a thoughtful deliberation.

Sincerely,



Mayor Aftab Pureval,
City of Cincinnati

Mayor's FY 2024 Recommended Budget Adjustments	Amount
Infrastructure Improvements	
Facilities - Deferred Capital Maintenance	\$2,000,000
Street Rehabilitation Supplement	\$2,000,000
Regional Safety Complex City Contribution	\$2,250,000
FY 2024 Bike Plan Implementation	\$400,000
CRC Facilities - Skate Park Match	\$250,000
Total Infrastructure Improvements	\$6,900,000
Financial Freedom	
Medical Debt Relief	\$1,500,000
Child Savings Accounts	\$375,000
Guaranteed Income Pilot Match	\$250,000
Total Financial Freedom	\$2,125,000
Community Empowerment Funds	
Boots on the Ground Fund Program	\$500,000
Safe & Clean Program	\$500,000
Neighborhood Catalytic Capital Improvement Program – Early Action Grants	\$500,000
Total Community Empowerment Funds	\$1,500,000
Leveraged Support (One-Time)	
Elementz	\$25,000
Q-Kidz	\$25,000
MORTAR	\$40,000
Center for Closing the Health Gap	\$100,000
Total Leveraged Support (One-Time)	\$190,000
Grand Total	\$10,715,000