

City of Cincinnati



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

BYLAWS

Adopted March 27, 2024
Amended April 24, 2024
Amended November 20, 2024
Amended January 28, 2026

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Cincinnati Environmental Advisory Board (“Board”) is to act as a resource for the City in its ongoing commitment to enact policies, practices, and procedures that combat climate change, improve the health and well-being of our citizens and our environment, and position the City as a leader in sustainability policy and city-level climate change initiatives. The Board shall oversee and advise on implementation of the City’s Green Cincinnati Plan (“Plan”), working with the staff of the Office of Environment and Sustainability (“OES”) to solidify prioritization, timelines, partners, and potential funding sources for the Green Cincinnati Plan’s recommendations.

The Board shall promote awareness of environmental and sustainability issues in the City and serve as a public advocate for OES by recommending policies and strategies to implement the recommendations of the Green Cincinnati Plan; measuring implementation of and impact to the community and region; preparing and distributing reports which shall be filed with the Clerk of Council and the City Manager, including a report, at least annually, regarding the City’s progress in implementing the recommendations of the Green Cincinnati Plan; and providing advice and guidance regarding environmental and sustainability issues and policies. The Board shall engage community partners, stakeholders and advocates to implement the goals of the Green Cincinnati Plan and make recommendations to City staff and Council.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Members of the Board are appointed by the City Manager. There shall be a minimum of nine and a maximum of 19 members on the Board.
- B. Members’ terms on the Board begin January 1. Upon the expiration of the initial term of each member, each member’s term may be renewed for up to two additional three-year terms.
- C. Vacancies shall be filled by the City Manager. A person appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve the remainder of the vacated term, which shall serve as the newly appointed member’s initial term.

- D. If a member's term expires, the member shall "hold over" and continue to serve until they are reappointed or replaced, but the hold over period shall not last for more than a period of six months at which time the person's membership on the Board shall terminate.
- E. Members may be removed from the Board by the City Manager at any time for any reason.
- F. Every member of the Board is expected to attend a minimum of two-thirds of the meetings of the Board in any calendar year. Any member who fails to meet this minimum requirement will be presumed to have resigned. The Secretary will provide notice to the board member after 2 absences notifying them of their attendance status.

ARTICLE III. OFFICERS

- A. The Board shall elect a Chair, a Vice Chair, and any other officers it deems necessary. Officers shall serve terms of one year, with terms beginning March 1 and ending at the end of February of the following year.
- B. The Chair shall be a voting member of the Board and shall count towards a quorum.
- C. The Chair shall run all Board meetings. The Chair shall represent and speak on behalf of the Board unless the Board designates another member.
- D. If the Chair is unavailable, the Vice Chair shall act as the Chair and have all authority of the Chair.
- E. There are no limits on the number of terms an officer may serve.
- F. Members appointed to fill a vacancy in an office shall serve the remainder of the term of the vacant office. If the Board has not filled a vacancy within three months, the City Manager may fill the vacancy.
- G. Upon the expiration of a term of office, the officer shall continue serving as an officer as long as the officer is still a member of the Board until a new appointment to the office is made, or until the person is no longer a member of the Board, whichever is sooner.
- H. The Chair is authorized to appoint members to committees of the Board.

ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS

- A. The Board is a public body subject to the Ohio Open Meetings Act and the Public Records Act. All meetings shall be open to the public to attend.
- B. The Board shall meet at least once per quarter. From time to time the Board may establish a regular meeting schedule that shall be posted on a City-sponsored webpage and as required by law.

- C. The Chair shall be responsible for setting the Board's meeting agenda after consultation and input from the Director of OES ("Director"), provided that any member may raise any matter for discussion related to the Board's business during a meeting.
- D. A quorum of the Board is a majority of the active members. Any action of the Board requires an affirmative vote of at least a majority of the members present.
- E. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or the Director in accordance with the law.
- F. An agenda shall be published for each Board meeting and sent to members in advance of the meeting.
- G. Minutes shall be prepared for each meeting and circulated to all members and OES prior to the meeting following the meeting for which the minutes were prepared.
- H. Members of the public may provide comments to the Board or its committees in writing to OES staff or in person at a public meeting. Written comments shall be submitted to OES no later than 4:00p.m. on the business day before the meeting, and shall be distributed by OES to all Board or committee members. Comments made during a public meeting are referred to as "Public Comment." A person providing Public Comment is limited to two minutes. Public Comment shall be limited to items of interest before the Board, and shall only be permitted prior to the commencement of the business portion of the meeting.
- I. The Board or its committees may invite any person to speak or present to the Board or its committees, who shall not be restricted by the content or time limitations applicable to Public Comment. The City Manager, City elected officials, and City employees representing the City may speak at any meeting of the Board or its committees without limitation.

ARTICLE V. COMMITTEES

- A. Most of the work of the Board is conducted through committees. The Board may create, abolish, or rename and reconstitute committees that the Board deems appropriate.
- B. All Board committees are public bodies subject to the Ohio Open Meetings Act and the Ohio Public Records Act. All committee meetings shall be open to the public to attend. Minutes shall be taken of each committee meeting, which shall be approved at the next regular committee meeting. A copy of committee meeting minutes shall be provided to the Board and OES.
- C. The Board Chair shall select a Committee Chair for each committee.
- D. Committee Chairs shall select a Committee Vice Chair to act in place of the Committee Chair when they are not available. If a vacancy occurs in the office of Committee Vice Chair for more than 60 days, the Board Chair may appoint the Committee Vice Chair.
- E. Committees shall establish a meeting schedule that shall be posted on a City-sponsored webpage and as required by law.

- F. Each committee shall report to the Board at each regular Board meeting.
- G. A quorum of a committee shall be a majority of active members of the committee. Actions of each committee shall be by a majority vote of active members of the committee.
- H. Each Board member shall serve on at least one committee. Committee members are subject to appointment or removal of the Board Chair.
- I. Committees shall strive to achieve the three pillars of the Green Cincinnati Plan of sustainability, resilience, and equity. Committees may be established by amendment of these Bylaws, and shall include the following committees which reflect the structure of the Green Cincinnati Plan:

SUSTAINABILITY

- **Buildings & Energy:** Ensuring energy efficient buildings and clean energy for a healthy, equitable, and resilient city. Includes strategies and actions to reduce building emissions through energy efficiency, electrification, renewable energy sources, and reducing energy poverty.
- **City Operations:** Designing city functions to operationalize sustainability and center climate equity. Includes strategies and actions which show a city leading by example to center community voice in inter-departmental design and implementation of policies and programs, such as right-sizing city fleet, electrify city fleet and facilities, activating community voice in climate equity policies and programs.
- **Community Activation:** Empowering residents to play a central role in creating climate solutions. Includes strategies and actions to advocate for, educate, and outreach with the community for climate goals and actions.
- **Mobility:** Enabling accessible and sustainable transportation and mobility options. Includes strategies and actions to increase public transit use, increase use of zero-emission vehicles, increase use and access for biking and walking in the city, supporting 15-minute neighborhoods.
- **Food:** Growing an equitable food economy that serves all of Cincinnati. Includes strategies and actions to increase local food production and distribution, eliminate food deserts, implement the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, reduce food waste, and create job pathways in food and agriculture.

ENVIRONMENT

- **Natural Environment:** Enhancing ecosystems and green infrastructure to improve health and well-being. Includes strategies and actions to increase tree canopy, improve air quality, increase greenspaces, preserve and restore ecosystems, and increase native biodiversity.
- **Resilience & Climate Adaptation:** Anticipating, preparing, and responding to the challenges of changing conditions. Includes strategies and actions to mitigate the

affects of stormwater and heat island effect, community planning and social cohesion, pollution reduction and adaptive land use.

- **Zero Waste:** Protecting human health and the environment by diverting waste from landfills. Includes strategies and actions to increase landfill waste diversion through recycling, diverting organic waste, composting, and reducing litter and illegal dumping.

J. Each committee shall maintain focus on the “Three Pillars” of the Green Cincinnati Plan:

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

ARTICLE VI. CONDUCT

- A. The Board and each member thereof act as a representative of the City of Cincinnati, its elected and appointed officials, and all of the City’s departments, divisions, and employees. Each member shall conduct themselves with grace and integrity. Members of the Board shall abide by all applicable local, state, and federal laws, including but not limited to the Ohio Open Meetings Act, the Ohio Public Records Act, and rules of Ethics.
- B. If a member has a conflict of interest on any matter before the Board or a committee, the member shall recuse themselves from any discussion, deliberation, or vote on the matter. A conflict of interest may exist if a member, including but not necessarily limited to the member’s family, business, or business partner, has, or is likely to have, a financial or pecuniary interest affected by a decision of the Board or its committees.
- C. Other than the Board Chair, no Board member is authorized to represent or speak on behalf of the Board, the City, or any of its agents without express authorization of the City Manager. If any member desires to express their personal viewpoint on any subject, the member shall make it clear that they are expressing their personal viewpoint and not that of the Board or the City or any of its officials, departments, or employees.
- D. The Board’s recommendations and actions shall be based solely on a concern for accuracy and for the general welfare of the citizens of Cincinnati, and not on the interests of particular individuals or enterprises.

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the active members of the Board, provided that a proposed amendment must be placed on the agenda for the meeting of the Board and circulated by City staff to all Board members at least one week before the meeting.