



AFTAB PUREVAL

City of Cincinnati, Office of the Mayor

May 23rd, 2024

Dear Members of Council:

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

Our City Administration has produced a recommended budget that explicitly delivers on our goals and values, as well as the policy direction received from Council: investing in public safety, prioritizing our future fiscal health, delivering excellent and equitable basic services, growing economic opportunity, and supporting thriving neighborhoods. Thanks to a strong process of community engagement and deliberate, performance-based decision-making, this budget reflects the priorities and needs of our residents.

Our City Government's most persistent challenge remains the reality that expenses are growing more quickly than revenues. Despite strong financial footing in this budget – thanks to Cincinnati's economic growth and the strategies our City has implemented – we still project long-term deficits that will only grow without action. The Cincinnati Futures Commission, with this challenge in mind, has recently returned a comprehensive set of recommendations surrounding our goals of equitable growth and fiscal sustainability. While the work continues to vet specific recommendations, many goals and items in the report are already reflected in the investments our City Administration makes in this budget.

This includes a strong commitment to public safety staffing, resources, and facilities – with funding for two 50-person CPD recruit classes, funding to help CFD reach full strength, and additional overtime funds to ensure a strong police presence at Cincinnati's largest special events and busiest hot-spots. On top of this, \$2 million is allocated for the final phase of the Public Safety Facilities Master Plan, which will ensure efficient capital planning and resource deployment as our City continues to invest in quality facilities.

Data-driven decision-making, to optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of City expenses, is a core focus of City Manager Long's Administration and this budget. A new fleet management system has already been rolled out to track City vehicles, and funding is now being allocated for a management analyst to identify and address usage and repair needs.

Additionally, our Administration is recommending strategic investments – aligned with both the recommendations of the Futures Commission report and the guidance of this Council – to ensure departments are effectively resourced to support our common goals. This includes funding for four new full-time Parking Enforcement Officers, to ensure strong parking management and revenue generation, as well as major investments in B&I staffing and training.

Cincinnati is on a path to building the kind of growth we need in order to thrive as a community, and this budget continues our work to ensure we are supporting that growth through increased economic development investments, prioritization of infrastructure improvements, and support for the organizations on the ground promoting equitable economic opportunity. To further support these goals, I will be introducing proposals alongside this budget aimed at our strategic priorities.

That includes a continuation of Boots on the Ground and the Safe and Clean Fund, two programs that have a proven track record for empowering neighborhood-level organizations in their work to promote safe, cohesive communities. Paired with the City's investments in youth programming and public spaces throughout our communities – such as our CRC pools, which will now be fully open for the first time since the pandemic – we are implementing a comprehensive approach to providing safe spaces and engagement opportunities for our residents.

Additionally, I am proposing investments to further our economic development and growth strategies, particularly in historically underinvested communities. This includes operational support for Community Economic Advancement Initiatives' work to bring new housing and economic activity to Roselawn, support for the Port's expanded work around residential and industrial mixed-uses, and funding for the Mill Creek Corridor Planning Study. On top of this, I am recommending support for major revenue-generating special events, which will continue to put Cincinnati on the map and drive visitors to our hotels, businesses, and restaurants: including Black Tech Week, BLINK, Forbes 30 under 30, and the upcoming River Roots festival.

Thanks to the thoughtful, compassionate, community-and-data-informed work of this Council, my office, and our City Administration, we have made remarkable progress in addressing Cincinnati's challenges and opportunities. This budget is a clear and strong continuation of that progress. From our pension contribution increase that now brings the total increase in contributions to over \$10 million since taking office, to an expansion of our contributions to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, to our continued support for comprehensive problem-solving oriented violence prevention, our dollars are being directed toward what our employees and our residents need. There will remain difficult decisions ahead, but we as a City Government are on the right path, and have the right people in place, to secure a bright future for Cincinnati.

Our collective work to seek public feedback is not finished, and I look forward to continued community feedback and thoughtful deliberation in Council.

Sincerely,



Aftab Pureval
Mayor, City of Cincinnati