

City of Cincinnati



801 Plum Street, Suite 350
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Phone (513) 352-5243
Email evan.nolan@cincinnati-oh.gov

Evan Nolan
Councilmember

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MOTION

WE MOVE that the City Manager immediately commence the creation of an Office of Strategic Growth (OSG) inside the City Manager's office with shared jurisdiction over:

- (i) the current operations, roles, and responsibilities of what is presently structured as the Department of Community and Economic Development, the Department of Planning and Engagement, the Department of Buildings and Inspection, and any other City departments engaging with third parties in community and economic development and workforce development activity, as such departments exist today and as they evolve, including through the review and recommendations of the OSG;
- (ii) the City Administration's coordination and collaboration with critical third-party partners, such as the Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority, REDI Cincinnati, JobsOhio, community development corporations, neighborhood community councils, and developers across the city;
- (iii) providing a single point of contact for outside parties pursuing development activities that require engagement with multiple departments within the City Administration to facilitate the navigation of those various City departments and requirements – facilitation that improves turnaround times and avoids acting as a gatekeeper or adding any layers of approval; and
- (iv) clear communications that outline processes for working with the City Administration on development activities and the development resources available, like tax incentives, grant programs, workforce development programs, and employers looking to expand and hire;

WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Manager take the necessary steps within 90 days to launch the OSG within the current Operating Budget for fiscal year 2026;

WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Administration prepare and provide a report within 90 days detailing the necessary additional staffing and budget requirements to fully empower the OSG to sustainably execute on its duties and responsibilities in pursuit of the City's strategic objectives and growth goals, so that such requirements can be taken into consideration by Council for updating the 2027 Operating Budget;

WE FURTHER MOVE that the City Administration prepare and provide a report within 120 days with a plan and budget to complete a comprehensive strategic review of the City's development

processes by the end of calendar year 2026 to understand all the structural and cultural roadblocks to development that currently exist within the City Administration and to focus on growth-minded reform, cutting the “red tape”, and identifying the most efficient and effective processes for approving and executing proposed projects, developments, applications, and other community, economic, and workforce development engagements involving the City Administration, which shall include engagement with city development leaders, including for-profit and non-profit developers, as well as community development corporations and other public partners to better identify the current issues and comparisons to our peers.

Councilmember Evan Nolan

Statement

This Council is committed to the goals of growing our city and growing our city more equitably and desires to implement a pro-growth strategy within the City Administration that establishes and embraces goals and metrics to retain our current population, to attract new residents from outside the city, to increase the jobs and employment opportunities in the city, and to promote opportunities to increase income for current and new residents of our city.

This Council acknowledges and appreciates the work the City Administration has done to help bring an end to six decades of population decline and promote the steady growth of our city population since 2010.

This Council recognizes and appreciates the contributions of the Cincinnati Futures Commission and its collaborative work to produce *A Vision for the Future of Cincinnati – Final Report* (published in April 2024, the “Futures Commission Report”), including the recommendations to attract investment in our city to stimulate and sustain community and economic development and workforce development activity and spur the growth of our city.

In response to a request by the Mayor and City Council in May 2024 to address the recommendations set forth in the Futures Commission Report (#202401283), the City Administration produced a report, the *Cincinnati Futures Commission – Response and Next Steps* dated August 7, 2024 (#202401865), in which the City Administration requested a “collective statement of strategic objectives for this [goal of equitable] growth from the Mayor and Council” to better “enable the City Administration to offer specific recommendations about administrative structure, staffing, capital investments, and measurable metrics to track progress in achieving these objectives.”

In September 2024, City Council responded to the request from the City Administration and approved an Economic Development Policy Motion (#202402025) that provides “a consolidated written statement of City Council’s strategic objectives for economic development” titled *Writing the Next Chapter of Cincinnati’s Future & Growth*, which this Council recognizes and intends to supplement through additional strategic planning with the City Administration in calendar year 2026.

This Council recognizes the hard work and progress made by the City Administration in pursuit of the articulated strategic objectives yet also recognizes that fully achieving our city’s aggressive growth goals over the next ten years requires systematic, structural, and cultural changes.