

# Glossary

## Acronyms

**BIL:** Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

**BIPOC:** Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

**C-PACE:** Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy

**CSN:** Climate Safe Neighborhoods

**CSOs:** Combined Sewer Overflows

**DORA:** Designated Outdoor Refreshment Areas

**EPA:** Environmental Protection Agency

**GCP:** Green Cincinnati Plan

**GWORV:** Groundwork Ohio River Valley

**IJJA:** Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act

**IRA:** Inflation Reduction Act

**J40:** Justice40 Initiative

**MUFPP:** Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

**NAACP:** National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

**OES:** Office of Environment & Sustainability

**PPAs:** Power Purchase Agreements

**PM:** Particulate Matter

**SORTA:** Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority

**USDA:** United States Department of Agriculture

## Glossary of Key Terms

The report acknowledges that many of the terms used in this document have complex and evolving meanings based on time, context, location, community and evolution of sustainability policy. What follows are meanings and definitions directly pulled and cited from government, academic, nonprofit or community sources as relevant to the goals of the 2023 Green Cincinnati Plan.

**Brownfields:** vacant and underutilized properties which are contaminated or polluted largely due to past industrial use.

**Carbon Footprint:** “The total amount of greenhouse gases produced to directly and indirectly support human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tons of carbon dioxide. (CO<sub>2</sub>)”<sup>27</sup> A person or entity’s carbon footprint is the sum of all emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide), which were induced by their activities in a given time frame. Usually a carbon footprint is calculated for the time period of a year.

**Carbon Neutrality:** “Achieving a state of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by balancing those emissions so they are equal (or less than) the emissions that get removed through the planet’s natural absorption;”<sup>28</sup> can be done by purchasing a carbon offset, such as paying to plant new trees or investing in ‘green’ technologies such as solar and wind power. It is important to use an approach that addresses social outcomes as well as climate emissions in order to ensure that carbon neutral approaches are effective and refrain from shifting the burden to others.

**Circular Food Economy:** means moving towards a food system that builds natural capital and allows nature to thrive by mimicking natural systems of regeneration so that waste becomes a contaminant-free feedstock for another life cycle.<sup>29</sup>

**Climate Adaptation:** “Climate adaptation is the adjustments societies or ecosystems make to limit the negative effects of climate change or to take advantage of opportunities provided by a changing climate.”<sup>30</sup>

**Climate Migrants:** people who must or choose to leave their homes because of climate-related shocks and stressors.

**Climate Resiliency:** climate resiliency is the capacity of social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event, trend or disturbance caused by climate change; where communities respond and reorganize in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation.<sup>31</sup> Climate-resilient pathways can be seen as iterative, continually evolving processes for managing change within complex systems.<sup>32</sup>

**Climate Vulnerability:** the extent to which social systems are susceptible to climate change impacts; all neighborhoods hold varying levels of sensitivity to climate change and risks of impact.

**Displacement (residential):** the process by which a household is forced to move from its residence because of conditions beyond their control. Displacement can be physical (as building conditions deteriorate) or economic (as costs rise). It pushes households out, or it might prohibit them from moving in, called exclusionary displacement.<sup>33</sup> [Displacement Explainer Video: <https://www.urbandisplacement.org/pushedout>]

**Energy Poverty:** a term that describes when more than 6% of a household's income is spent on utilities; high energy burdens are correlated with aging infrastructure, economic hardship, and difficulty moving out of poverty—these communities also experience acute systemic inequalities, barriers, and limited access to public and private resources.

**Energy Efficiency:** use of technology and practices that require less energy to perform the same function. For example, using a light-emitting diode (LED) light bulb or a compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb that requires less energy than an incandescent light bulb to produce the same amount of light.<sup>34</sup>

**Equity:** just and fair inclusion in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. In sustainability work, equity must be recognition, procedural, distributional, restorational, and transformational.

1. **Recognition Equity** identifies and acknowledges injustices affecting specific populations that various institutions have created, including government.<sup>35</sup>
2. **Procedural Equity** addresses power structures and access to participation in decision-making. A key to this is ensuring equitable, inclusive, and meaningful engagement and asking how our engagement shifts power, builds trust, and ensures accountability, both structurally and intergenerationally.<sup>35</sup>
3. **Distributional Equity** addresses the distribution of burdens and benefits and deploys targeted resources to reduce inequities across different populations.<sup>35</sup>
4. **Restorational Equity** makes commitments to correct past harms and facilitate repair including revitalizing degraded relationships, land, and other resources.<sup>35</sup>
5. **Transformational equity** addresses underlying structural conditions that cause social and racial injustices while cultivating accountability, reducing harm, and preventing future unintended consequences.<sup>35</sup>

**Focus Area Action Plans:** overarching structures for organizing and intentionally implementing climate action work from 2023 to 2028, which include the following components:

- **Visions** articulate the long-term aim of the Focus Area.
- **Goals** represent the benchmarks against which progress toward the Vision will be tracked.
- **Strategies** explain how the City and its partners will move to achieve the Goals.
- **Priority Actions** describe specific steps that can be taken to enact the Strategies.

**GCP Equity Framework:** an evolving guide to support integration of equity in the GCP climate action planning and implementation process; built by the GCP Equity Committee through collaborative process and expert sources.

**Greenhouse Gases (GHGs):** gases in the earth's atmosphere that trap heat and are both naturally produced and human-made; the primary GHGs are carbon-dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases, all of which carry varying levels of heat trapping capacity.<sup>36</sup>

**Green Infrastructure:** use of natural features or planned ecological systems to manage water by mimicking the natural water cycle. A few examples of green infrastructure include green roofs, bioswales, green medians, wetlands, parks, permeable pavement, and landscape gardens.

**Green Jobs or Workforce:** jobs that produce goods or provide services that benefit the environment.

**IJA/BIL:** The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58, also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law”) is a \$1.2 trillion once-in-a-generation investment in our infrastructure that will help grow the economy, enhance U.S. competitiveness, create good jobs, and build our safe, resilient, and equitable future. Climate related provisions include funding for electric vehicles, charging infrastructure, public transit, clean energy, energy grid improvement, water, disaster preparedness, brown-field mitigation, and more.

**IRA:** The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) is a landmark United States federal law which aims to curb inflation by reducing the deficit, lowering prescription drug prices, and investing \$391 billion into domestic energy production while promoting clean energy. The IRA represents the largest federal investment in climate change mitigation in history.

**Landfill Diversion:** the prevention and reduction of generated waste through source reduction, recycling, reuse and composting.

**Priority Communities:** communities where climate mitigation and efforts to close gaps are likely to be most impactful due to historic and systematic discrimination, vulnerability to climate related events and disasters, and capacity to adapt to these challenges. Determining prioritization will vary depending on the issue area of focus.

**Resilience:** the tenacious ability for individuals and communities to collaboratively anticipate, accommodate, and positively adapt to thrive amidst changing climate conditions through greater social cohesion, strong partnerships, and access to resources.

**Social Cohesion:** connection between individuals within a similar geographic area that influence their collective ability to cooperate to achieve shared well-being. The stronger the social cohesion in a given community the more they will be able to prevent and respond quickly to challenges.

**Sustainability:** creating and maintaining conditions to meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; acknowledges that human survival and well-being depends on our natural environment.

**Transit Corridors:** stretches of transportation infrastructure that provide high-quality transit service—including but not limited to light rail, streetcar, and bus rapid transit (BRT)—while fostering a pedestrian scale in which walking and biking actively complement public transit. Transit corridors also tend to promote economic development as a secondary benefit.

**Urban Tree Canopy:** a measurement of the layer of leaves, branches and stems of trees that shelter the ground when viewed from above—this measurement is expressed as a percentage of ground area that is covered by tree crowns and relates to the branching spread of the trees in an urban forest.<sup>37</sup>