



Kevin Flynn
Councilmember

201500222

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MOTION

WHEREAS, a culture of sustained community engagement enhances city government's democratic processes, transparency and effectiveness; expands its range of options; improves the quality of its decisions; and enlists the problem-solving capacities of the general public and organizations outside city government; and

WHEREAS, City Council acknowledges that those affected by local government agencies' decisions should have the opportunity to participate in making those decisions; and

WHEREAS, there have been dramatic changes in technology, especially through broadcast media and the Internet, allowing for greater transparency of government decision-making and operations; and

WHEREAS, City Council has embraced building stronger communities by increasing community engagement as a priority in Plan Cincinnati, and by adopting community engagement mission and vision statements (Item No. 201401166).

WE MOVE that the City of Cincinnati hereby adopts the following definitions, policy, and principles to be implemented throughout city government, including the Mayor and City Council; the City Administration; City boards, commissions and committees; City partner governmental agencies; and City partner businesses and nonprofits.

Section 1: Definitions

- a. "Community engagement" includes equivalent terms such as "public engagement," "citizen participation," "citizen engagement," or "civic engagement" and legal notice requirements. Community engagement methods include, but are not limited to, any form of in-person, or technology-aided, or online communication that provide for discussion, dialogue, and/or deliberation among participants that encourages all to participate in meaningful and proactive ways in the City's decision-making process.
- b. "Policy process" is defined as "A course of action produced as a response to a perceived problem or issue involving a constituency, formulated by a deliberative political process and adopted, implemented and enforced by a public agency."



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- c. A “citizen” is a person who by virtue of living or working in Cincinnati, is affected by and has a stake in decisions made by the City of Cincinnati.

Section 2: Community Engagement Policy

- a. It is hereby declared to be city policy that active engagement and participation—to assemble, to deliberate and to take action on public problems or issues—of community members is important and highly valued by the city.
- b. The purpose of this community engagement policy is to provide broad, inclusive, deliberative and meaningful participation in the policy process with the general public and stakeholders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. This policy should be broadly construed to promote the fullest opportunity for citizens to participate meaningfully and proactively in governance, the policy process and to provide their city government and all related authorities with the benefits of their collective expertise and information.
- c. The city, including its offices departments and partner authorities, may use any process that meets the principles for community engagement set forth in Section 3 in addition to notice and comment public hearings required by law.
- d. The city shall adopt and make publicly available a community engagement policy manual to guide the city and its partners in the use of strategies satisfying the community engagement principles set forth in Section 3.

Section 3: Community Engagement Principles

- a. **Responsibility of and Right to Involvement:** Those who are affected by a decision have a right and responsibility to be involved in the problem-solving/decision-making process regarding that decision.
- b. **Careful Planning and Preparation:** Actively pursue citizen groups, through adequate and inclusive planning and outreach, ensuring that the engagement design and the needs of the participants are met. Citizens are provided with the information they need to participate in a meaningful, that is, consequential way (see the IA2P Spectrum of Public Participation and Health Canada Public Involvement Continuum attached to this motion), and are involved in designing how they participate.
- c. **Inclusion and Demographic Diversity:** Actively reach out to equitably



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incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas, and information to lay the groundwork for quality outcomes and democratic legitimacy. Seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in the decision.

- d. **Collaboration and Shared Purpose:** Support and encourage participants, including government, community institutions, and other key stakeholders to work together to advance the common good. Promote sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the long-term needs and interests of all citizens.
- e. **Openness and Learning:** Help everyone listen to each other, explore new ideas unconstrained by predetermined outcomes, learn and apply information in ways that generate new options.
- f. **Transparency and Trust:** Be clear and open about the process and provide a public record of the organizers, sponsors, outcomes, and range of views and ideas expressed.
- g. **Impact and Action:** Ensure each participatory effort has potential to have a real impact and that participants are aware of that potential. Communicate how everyone's input affected the decision-making.
- h. **Sustained Engagement and Participatory Culture:** Establish and maintain a culture of ongoing and quality community engagement (see the Spectrum and Continuum below) within departments, offices, programs, local agencies, business partners and institutions.
- i. **Accountability for Results and Financial Support:** City leaders and staff are held accountable for ensuring meaningful community engagement in the policy making and work of city government and providing the resources to ensure ongoing success.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Administration work to embed these policies and principles, in a cost neutral manner, including developing any necessary changes to the Cincinnati Administrative Code or Administrative Regulations, and that any actual costs incurred be drawn from and not exceed funds already set aside for community engagement.

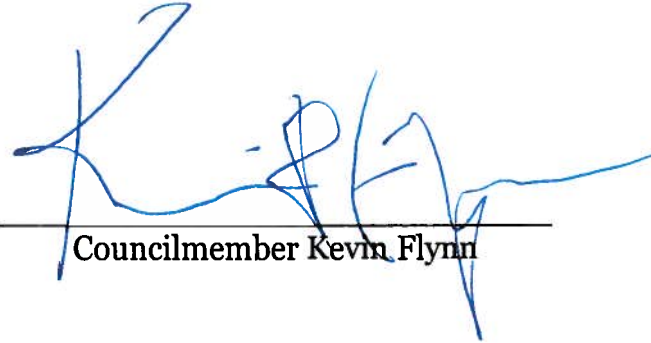
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STATEMENT

Plan Cincinnati, adopted by City Council on November 21, 2012, commits to building a robust public life; an active, engaged citizenry; and stronger communities by increasing community engagement. To develop this concept in greater detail, the Citizen Engagement Action Team authored *Strength in Unity: A Proposal to Create a Flourishing Citizen Engagement Culture in the City of Cincinnati* and submitted it to City Council. In response to this report, City council adopted the following vision and mission statements for community engagement:

Vision

To be a thriving Cincinnati where all are engaged as empowered participants in shaping our shared future

Mission

To strengthen the culture of community engagement in Cincinnati by providing opportunities for all to participate in meaningful and proactive ways in the City's decision-making processes

Since that time, a working group comprised of members of the Citizen Engagement Action Team, the City Administration, and Council staff has been working on developing the next steps in creating a sustained culture of community engagement that enhances our city government's democratic processes, increases transparency and effectiveness, improves the quality of the city government's decisions, and elicits the problem-solving capacities of the general public and nongovernmental organizations. This motion is the product of that effort.