

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT RUBRIC

RATIONALE

Public subsidies and incentives like tax abatements, zoning changes, and public land belong to the taxpayers and exist for the public good.

We believe that this kind of public investment in private development is only worth it if the project brings significant public good that is otherwise difficult to realize. We think that the careful, smart use of these tools can aid Cincinnati in addressing its well-documented equity problem across class and race.

DEMANDS

Our initiative calls upon the City of Cincinnati to take the following actions:

APPROACH

Solutions to inequities should be baked into how we do public business. The Rubric provides a path to leverage our incentives for real community benefits. It offers:

- a transparent way to **evaluate** development projects in areas like housing affordability, jobs and wages, and community input to help us **negotiate** the best return for the community
- a grassroots strategy to realize community gains and a policy framework to **demand change** of City decision-makers
- an opportunity to **raise the bar** city-wide, while allowing for flexibility in scoring to meet different neighborhood needs and facilitate more even development across the city.



REQUIRE

that projects meet neighborhood minimum Rubric scores in order to receive substantial tax breaks, public land, or zoning changes

For wealthy and quickly gentrifying neighborhoods, projects should earn a minimum score of 75%.

For other neighborhoods, the City should work with community councils to set a minimum score between 50% and 75%.



ENFORCE

compliance with the agreed-upon standards for the full duration of the subsidies offered

Failure to comply should result in termination and/or repayment of subsidies



RE-EVALUATE

the changing investment needs of each neighborhood, and adjust scores accordingly

This should be done in collaboration with each community council on an annual basis, and should be informed by relevant data provided by the City.

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT RUBRIC

Cincinnati aspires to be a fair and equitable place to live. This evaluation tool stems from an effort to make sure this goal is at the forefront of our public decisions about development. It is designed to score proposed development projects by their contributions toward equity across class and race in our city.

The Rubric's four main categories form its core. Jobs and Labor and Community Input apply to all projects; Housing Affordability and Community Footprint are applied based on certain criteria. Each category is scored on a 4-point scale.

Any project that scores at least 50% of points across all applicable main categories is eligible to earn Extra Credit points, based on the criteria listed.

This tool is intended for use by a number of different folks—citizens, community councils, developers, and city officials.

Citizens and Community

Use the Rubric to learn about and impact projects proposed in your neighborhood and city.

Get involved! Ask questions, suggest solutions, and make informed decisions when you are asked for your support.

This information is power—use your civic voice to steer our city in the right direction!

Developers

Use the Rubric to better understand how projects fit with necessary progress steps toward equity in Cincinnati.

Apply it to your own projects. Offer communities honest assessments, and commit to delivering community benefits in return for public subsidies, incentives, and support.

City Officials

Use the Rubric to ensure a return for our public resources that advances our city's equity.

Incorporate this framework into our legislation and public practice, and invest in basic structures for monitoring and accountability.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

This section is meant to be used for projects that include significant residential development. When evaluating a project that does not include residential units, the 1-point column criteria may be used to award a bonus point.

0 pts.	1 pt.	2 pts.	3 pts.	4 pts.
<p>Project is exclusively market rate, and no significant contribution will be made to Affordable Housing Trust Fund</p>	<p>Project is exclusively market rate, but includes significant financial contribution (equal to 10% of project's tax liability on top of existing CPS and VTICA payment requirements) to Affordable Housing Trust Fund.</p>	<p>EITHER At least 25% of project units are affordable at 60% Area Median Income (AMI) or less OR At least 10% of project units are affordable at 30% AMI or less</p>	<p>EITHER At least 35% of project units are affordable at 60% AMI or less OR At least 15% of project units are affordable at 30% AMI or less</p>	<p>EITHER At least 65% of project units are affordable at 60% AMI or less OR At least 30% of project units are affordable at 30% AMI or less</p>
<p>Note: These affordable units must be priced and reserved for income-qualified tenants, using HUD calculations and adjustments for the area's median gross income.</p>				
<p>Two bonus points are awarded if the on-site affordable units are financed without the use of dedicated public funding/resources for affordable housing. Check here if this applies.</p>				

Score:

JOBS AND LABOR

This section is meant to be used for all projects.
A score of 3 or 4 is only attainable for projects that will generate a significant number of new, post-construction jobs.

0 pts.	1 pt.	2 pts.	3 pts.	4 pts.
Project offers no commitment to ethical labor standards beyond basic applicable labor laws	<p>BOTH Project abides by Cincinnati's Wage Theft Ordinance and all other applicable labor laws</p> <p>AND</p> <p>All contractors used throughout the construction process meet Ohio Prevailing Wage Contractor Responsibilities</p>	<p>BOTH Criteria in 1-point column are met</p> <p>AND</p> <p>All contractors used throughout the construction process meet Cincinnati's Responsible Bidder criteria and requirements</p>	<p>BOTH Criteria in 1-point column are met</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Post construction, owner of development and all commercial tenants pay a majority of their employees at least the local living wage rates established by the City of Cincinnati, AND meet the criteria for federal Section 3 Business Concerns</p>	<p>BOTH Criteria in 1-point column are met</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Post construction, owner of development and all commercial tenants pay all adult employees at least the local living wage rates established by the City of Cincinnati, AND meet the criteria for federal Section 3 Business Concerns</p>

Score:

COMMUNITY INPUT

This section is meant to be used for all projects.

0 pts.	1 pt.	2 pts.	3 pts.	4 pts.
Developer does not meet the criteria outlined in the other point sections in this category.	<p>BOTH In addition to presentation at community council, developer holds a public input session that meets the following standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Held during evening or weekend hours• Advance notice given to community council and other community anchor institutions• Held at location within short walking distance of development site• Held at ADA accessible venue <p>AND Project plans thereafter reflect a good faith effort to incorporate the resulting community input, and are re-presented at community council</p>	<p>BOTH</p> <p>Criteria in 1-point column are met</p> <p>AND</p> <p>An alternative input mechanism (example: survey) is made easily accessible to all stakeholders based within 5 minutes walking distance to development site</p>	<p>BOTH</p> <p>Criteria in 1-point column are met</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Secures project support from a majority of non-profit organizations in the development neighborhood (and/or adjacent neighborhoods) that primarily serve people with low incomes</p>	<p>BOTH</p> <p>Criteria in 1-point column are met</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Local residents with low incomes hold at least 20% of positions within the project's governing board with decision-making power over project design, siting, development, and management</p>

Score:

COMMUNITY FOOTPRINT

This section is meant to be used if the proposed development site, at the time of the developer's purchase, includes any assets serving a public/community need or good. Such assets may include, but are not limited to: recreation space; green space; social gathering space; neighborhood-serving business; social services; and housing. These assets are to be determined through resident input, and final scoring is to be determined by the community council.

0 pts.	1 pt.	2 pts.	3 pts.	4 pts.
<p>Project offers no plans to preserve or replace existing community asset(s)</p>	<p>Project replaces and relocates the asset(s), at equal or greater value</p> <p>IF, AND ONLY IF, BOTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new location is within five minutes walking distance of site <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust support for the relocation plan is secured from residents and community stakeholders in the immediate area <p><small>*In order to earn this point, a minimum of 3 points should be earned in the Community Input category</small></p>	<p>Project arranges for the continued existence of the asset(s), in place and at levels of capacity, affordability, and accessibility comparable to, or better than, those pre-development</p>	<p>BOTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project meets criteria in 2-point column <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates design plans with existing asset(s) to support and strengthen use and quality of community benefit 	<p>BOTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project meets criteria in 3-point column <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developer contributes significant in-kind or financial contribution (equal to 10% of project's tax liability on top of existing CPS and VTICA payment requirements) to further the positive community impact of the asset(s)

Note: If there are multiple existing assets on site, this section should be applied holistically. Some assets may be prioritized in order to advance overall equity and resident benefits; if this happens at the expense of less important assets, the project should be scored based on its treatment of the priority asset(s).

Score:

EXTRA CREDIT

This section is meant to account for important community benefits not represented in the main four sections. Projects that score a minimum of 50% in the main four sections are eligible to earn Extra Credit points according to the corresponding criteria. Extra Credit points will be counted in the project's total score. Each Extra Credit category occupies a row below. Projects may not score points in more than one column per category.

	1 pt.	2 pts.	3 pts.	4 pts.
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	Owner of development and all commercial tenants meet the contractor requirements and criteria in the City of Cincinnati's Equal Employment Opportunity Program	BOTH • Criterion in 1-point column is met AND • At least one commercial tenant org. within the development qualifies as a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Women Business Enterprise (WBE), or Minority Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) as defined in the Cincinnati Municipal Code	BOTH • Criterion in 1-point column is met AND • Either the developer qualifies, or a majority of commercial tenant orgs. within the development qualify as MBEs, WBEs, or MWBEs as defined in the Municipal Code	ALL OF THE FOLLOWING: • Criterion in 1-point column is met • Project meaningfully incorporates the seven principles of universal design • Project provides space available for use by the general public
PUBLIC SPACE AND INFRASTRUCTURE <small>*Note: In order to earn 3 or 4 points in this category, a project must also earn 4 points in the Community Footprint category and at least 3 points in the Community Input category</small>	Developer makes a significant in-kind or financial contribution (equal to 10% of project's tax liability on top of existing CPS and VTICA payment requirements) to the city in general support of public spaces and amenities	Developer makes a significant in-kind or financial contribution (equal to 10% of project's tax liability on top of existing CPS and VTICA payment requirements) in direct support of a public space or amenity located in a primarily low-income area of Cincinnati	BOTH • As its primary purpose, the project develops or redevelops a public space or amenity AND • The resulting public asset remains public in its ownership and governance, and is accessible, affordable, and welcoming to people of all income levels	BOTH • Criteria in 3-point column are met AND • The resulting public asset is located in a primarily low-income area of Cincinnati

Score:

EXTRA CREDIT

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	1 pt.	2 pts.	3 pts.	4 pts.
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	Project is certified LEED Silver	Project is certified LEED Gold or Platinum	Project is Living Building Petal certified	Project is Living Building Full certified
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS	<p>BOTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developer offers a significant financial or in-kind contribution to a program, project, or org. with the primary purpose of meeting an established community need not already accounted for in this rubric <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cincinnati residents with low incomes will be directly served by this organization 	<p>BOTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project includes a full-time space for a nonprofit or community-based org. with the primary purpose of meeting an established community need not already accounted for in this rubric <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cincinnati residents with low incomes will be directly served by this organization 	<p>BOTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least half of the project is dedicated to full-time use by a nonprofit or community-based org. with the primary purpose of meeting an established community need not already accounted for in this rubric <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cincinnati residents with low incomes will be directly served by this organization 	<p>BOTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project is owned and occupied by a nonprofit or community-based org. with the primary purpose of meeting an established community need not already accounted for in this rubric <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cincinnati residents with low incomes will be directly served by this organization

Score:

EXTRA CREDIT

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	1 pt.	2 pts.	3 pts.	4 pts.
LOCAL ENTERPRISE	No less than 30% of the project's contract work is awarded to Emerging Local Business Enterprises (ELBE) or Small Local Business Enterprises (SLBE), as defined in the Cincinnati Municipal Code	The project provides commercial space to an ELBE or SLBE committed to significant local sourcing and procurement within their business model	EITHER The developer qualifies as an ELBE or SLBE, as defined in the Cincinnati Municipal Code OR The majority of the project's financing comes from a lending institution with at least a moderate rating by Bank Local	The project provides commercial space to a worker-owned cooperative

Score:

PROJECT SCORESHEET

Project:

Developer:

Record and calculate a project's score using this sheet. Use the back of this sheet to convert fractions to percentages.

1. Does this project include housing units? If not, cross out the Housing Affordability category.
2. Is there a significant community asset involved with the proposed development site? If not, cross out the Community Footprint category.
3. Look at the remaining main categories, and add their potential points (listed beside each, on the right). Write the total potential points in the denominator of the fraction at the bottom of the section.
4. Record the scores from each main category, and write them in the spaces below. Add them up and record the subtotal.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY _____ out of 4 points

JOBS AND LABOR _____ out of 4 points

COMMUNITY INPUT _____ out of 4 points

COMMUNITY FOOTPRINT _____ out of 4 points

SUBTOTAL _____ out of _____ points



denominator

5. Look at the subtotal fraction score. Does it equal at least 50%? If so, record any extra credit points below!

EXTRA CREDIT

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION _____

PUBLIC SPACE AND INFRASTRUCTURE _____

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT _____

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS _____

LOCAL ENTERPRISE _____

EXTRA HOUSING POINTS (See Housing Affordability section) _____

6. Add these points to the subtotal above, and write your answer in the total below. Carry down the denominator from above. Extra credit points are counted in the total, but not added to the denominator.

TOTAL _____ out of _____ points

POSSIBLE SCORES AND PERCENTAGES

Because not all Rubric categories apply to every project, here's a table of possible scores and their corresponding percentages, for your reference.

 = ELIGIBLE FOR EXTRA CREDIT POINTS

Out of 8 points (2 categories)	
1/8	12.5%
2/8	25%
3/8	37.5%
4/8	50%
5/8	62.5%
6/8	75%
7/8	87.5%
8/8	100%

Out of 12 points (3 categories)	
1/12	8.3%
2/12	16.6%
3/12	25%
4/12	33.3%
5/12	41.6%
6/12	50%
7/12	58.3%
8/12	66.6%
9/12	75%
10/12	83.3%
11/12	91.6%
12/12	100%

Out of 16 points (4 categories)	
1/16	6.2%
2/16	12.5%
3/16	18.7%
4/16	25%
5/16	31.2%
6/16	37.5%
7/16	43.7%
8/16	50%
9/16	56.2%
10/16	62.5%
11/16	68.7%
12/16	75%
13/16	81.2%
14/16	87.5%
15/16	93.7%
16/16	100%