City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street, Suite 346A
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Phone: (513) 352-3464
Email: mark.jeffreys@cincinnati-oh.gov
Web: www.cincinnati-oh.gov

Mark Jeffreys
Councilmember

Motion: Cincinnati Connects Neighborhoods Fund

WE MOVE that the Administration creates an annual Cincinnati Connects Neighborhoods Fund for neighborhood-led events that bring Cincinnati residents together. By supporting free and accessible community gatherings, the fund would help build stronger relationships, celebrate neighborhood traditions, and foster a greater sense of community.

WE MOVE that the Administration subsequently allocate $115K from the Special Events Fund to support upcoming neighborhood events in partnership with Invest in Neighborhoods.

Statement

The Administration previously considered the issue of special event fees[1] and recommended that fees associated with special event permits remain nonexempt[2]. That recommendation appropriately recognized that special events create real costs for the city, including staff time, materials, and services necessary for city departments to maintain their standard operations. Additionally, neighborhoods are faced with increased costs such as insurance related to hosting events that can make these events cost prohibitive. This proposal will ensure that these events are still possible.

The proposed program would provide $100,000 annually for event awards, with an additional $15,000 for Invest in Neighborhoods to administer the program, for a total annual budget of $115,000. Invest in Neighborhoods will issue a report on events funded, neighborhoods reached, attendance, first-time applicants, distribution across LIFT neighborhoods, and resident feedback on connection and belonging.

Under the proposed updates, awards would be approved before an event and generally paid through reimbursement following submission of receipts and a brief event report. LIFT neighborhoods could be eligible for an advance of up to 50%, subject to City financial controls. At least 30% of available event funding would initially be reserved for new or first-time-funded events, with uncommitted funds available for reallocation later in the year.

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[1] Motion 201800068
[2] Report 201800068

Event Grants

Category	Maximum per Award	Annual Pool
Neighborhood Gatherings	$1,500	$45,000
Community Festivals & Events	$3,000	$30,000
Flagship Neighborhood Events	$5,000	$25,000
Total Event Funding		**$100,000**