

June 4, 2022

Mayor Aftab Pureval
Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney
Council Member Jeff Cramerding
Council Member Reggie Harris
Council Member Mark Jeffreys
Council Member Scotty Johnson
Council Member Liz Keating
Council Member Greg Landsman
Council Member Meeka Owens

Via email: clerkofcouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov

RE: Affordable Housing and the City Budget

Dear Mr. Mayor and City Council:

Housing is a social concern priority for MARCC ranked by MARCC member denominations as a top priority for at least half of MARCC's fifty plus years, particularly affordable housing. The question is how do we get it, keep it, and distribute affordability of rental units and single family housing for low and moderate income residents?

The Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati as an interfaith coalition works to improve public policy and, in the process, civic discourse. MARCC has worked and continues to help shape policies that provide dedicated public dollars for affordable housing.

MARCC recommends that the City of Cincinnati budget priorities, policies, and actions include the following to make affordable housing a reality for its residents.

- Dedicate substantial public funding to the already existing city Housing Trust Fund, referred to as Fund 439 established as an ordinance by City Council in 2018.
- Begin substantial financial investment to the Fund by transferring 40 million dollars of 2022-2023 American Rescue Program Funding into Fund 439.
- Commit to an oversight process for the HTF whose focus addresses low and moderate income residents, using an eligibility formula based on the Hamilton County Average Median Income for 60% of the AMI and below, with half used for 30% AMI or below.
- Articulate the purpose of the Housing Trust Fund oversight board to provide gap funding through grants to developers for affordable housing, funding for home repairs, initial mortgage down payments, and rental assistance, establish objectives that decrease the number of individuals and families who experience homelessness, lower racial disparity in home homeownership; and decrease foreclosures and evictions rates.

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- Begin serious discussions of the most responsible way to dedicate a portion of the Earnings Tax, as an annual public funding mechanism to the HTF, a funding mechanism that generates substantial investment in the Housing Trust Fund with an increase in affordable housing units each year.

MARCC has already demonstrated by its words, advocacy, and decisions to work with City Council to make these recommendations a reality. City Council will have many community partners in this effort.

Sincerely,



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Executive Director
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