

One-Stop Fast Track Residential and Commercial Model for the Greater Cincinnati Area

Charles Winburn, M.Ed.

Winburn for City Council, Robert Hall, Sr., Treasurer
7811 Hamilton Ave. Cincinnati, Ohio 45231

Winburn's One-Stop Fast Track Development

Introduction

Developers have found Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati's process of development a bureaucratic nightmare that is cumbersome at best. Charlie Winburn will implement innovation and change for the development of Cincinnati.

Mr. Winburn has proposed a one-stop fast track development process that is efficient, effective and user-friendly for all residential and commercial developers.

I. Goals for the One-Stop Fast Track Development Model

- a. To make it easier for developers to build in Cincinnati.
- b. To attract new developers to Cincinnati.
- c. To eliminate unnecessary regulation, red tape and development slowdowns.
- d. To attract new businesses, improve tax base and expand job opportunities.
- e. To increase new home ownership.
- f. To improve new housing stock.
- g. To ensure that Cincinnati is a safe place to live and work so we can attract new developers and new homeowners.
- h. To become a national model for effective development regarding residential and commercial development.
- i. To help identify lots capable of development in targeted city neighborhoods. These lots will be used for new residential communities through a citywide comprehensive master plan. This plan would be in contrast to the city's current piecemeal approach to development.

II. Concern of Developers

Several developers choose not to pursue development opportunities in Cincinnati for numerous reasons. Also, developers in Cincinnati are fed up with the barriers to development. Many of them are considering stopping development altogether.

Winburn's proposed One-Stop Fast Track Development Model calls for retaining current developers and attracting new developers to Cincinnati. The model addresses many concerns that are listed below:

- a. The long drawn out permit process.
- b. Putting development plans on hold for no apparent reason by city employees.
- c. City employees change the rules and the development plans in mid-stream of the development process.
- d. Excessive water tap fees which increase construction costs.
- e. MSD permit delays which drive up construction cost.

Winburn's One-Stop Fast Track Development

- f. Waterworks permit delays which slow down the construction process.
- g. Long drawn out city subsidizing decisions, such as tax abatement and gap funding which hinders development.
- h. Poor coordination of development between the city and the county.
- i. The inability of the city to obtain buildings or lots for future development by the private sector.

The 16-Point One-Stop Fast Track Development Process

1. Streamline the development process by reducing approval time by 50%.
2. Redesign and reprioritize the entire building permit process to make it easy for the builder, developer and city staff. Reassign the permit process approval to the private sector, using designated architects who will be required to be bonded. (If a person does not have an architect, they can use the city's architect regarding the approval of plans and granting permits.)
3. Hold the waterworks department accountable for tracking and expediting the approval of water services.
4. Hold the MSD department accountable for tracking and expediting the sewer approval for submitted development plans.
5. Work collaboratively with City Council to reduce excessive water tap fees by 50-75%.
6. Create a clearly defined effective gap funding process that is not encumbered.
7. Work to reduce excessive development fees placed on developers.
8. Hire a development ombudsman who will assist developers to break through all barriers that prevent timely processes.
9. Create a one-stop shop uniform processing and clearing house.
10. Create a Mayor's Roundtable comprised of real estate agents, developers, contractors, architects, surveyors and engineers to help frame a new development agenda for Cincinnati.

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11. Develop and implement a unified development process.
12. Develop a set of standard operating procedures that are understandable and user friendly.
13. Recruit a qualified development staff from the private sector who understand that time is money.
14. Revamp the economic development department to include innovative technology. (Hire an innovative technology expert.)
15. Design and implement a comprehensive development agreement between the city and the county regarding residential and commercial development in the City of Cincinnati.
16. Develop a one-stop city-wide comprehensive development master plan that would include each city neighborhood for new targeted residential communities to be sponsored by the city and home builders. The plan should address the following:
 - a. Identify certain city properties or lots for new residential development, e.g. Over-the-Rhine, as a first new residential community.
 - b. Invest in identified blighted properties targeted for new residential development through receivership or purchases by the city.
 - c. Use these new residential communities as a city-wide model for all Cincinnati/Hamilton County neighborhoods.
 - d. Implement a lottery system to target specific neighborhoods for new residential communities.
 - e. Seek to obtain *Citirama* status for new residential communities.
 - f. Establish residential community development goals for each neighborhood. For example, a minimum of 7-10 homes in identified, targeted neighborhoods.