

Cincy on Track and the March 2023 Critical Infrastructure Needs

Crosswalk Analysis of the City of Cincinnati's Proposed \$250 Million Infrastructure Spending Plan

Purpose and Method

This analysis compares the March 2023 departmental Critical Infrastructure Needs lists with the projects identified in the City's Cincy on Track proposed spending plan. The March 2023 lists are treated as the baseline. Each listed project is classified as a direct or material carry-forward, an uncertain match, or not identifiable in Cincy on Track. Where Cincy on Track changed a project's scope or amount, that distinction is noted.

The comparison is particularly relevant because Cincy on Track states that its proposed capital spending plan was "largely based on" the March 15, 2023 Top Ten Critical Infrastructure Needs submitted by the departments.

Executive Summary

The March 2023 document identified 57 ranked infrastructure needs with estimated costs totaling approximately \$255.3 million - remarkably close to the \$250 million ultimately proposed for Cincy on Track. Cincy on Track, however, did not simply fund the March lists. It retained many projects while substantially changing departmental allocations, project scopes, and priorities.

Department	March Items	March Estimated Need	Carried Forward	General Result
Enterprise Technology Solutions	7	\$3.800M	0	None
Recreation	10	\$27.675M	10	All 10
Parks	10	\$13.001M	7	7 of 10
Transportation & Engineering	10	\$120.250M	9 + 1 uncertain	Almost all; amounts changed
Public Services	10	\$88.900M	8	8 of 10
Health	10	\$1.655M	5	1 direct + 4 superseded
TOTAL	57	\$255.281M	39 + 1 uncertain	17 not identifiable

Using this conservative classification, 39 of 57 projects (68.4%) were materially carried forward, one project (1.8%) cannot be matched with confidence, and 17 projects (29.8%) have no identifiable inclusion.

1. Enterprise Technology Solutions - 0 of 7

Rank	March 2023 Project	March Cost	Cincy on Track Treatment	Assessment
1	Remediation of antenna structure at ECC	\$100,000	None identified	NO
2	Redundant Prime Site	\$1,500,000	None identified	NO
3	Security Monitoring	\$500,000	None identified	NO
4	Security Staffing	\$400,000	None identified	NO
5	Project Implementation Staff Capacity	\$700,000	None identified	NO
6	Cincinnati Financial System	\$300,000	None identified	NO
7	Cincinnati Human Resources Information System	\$300,000	None identified	NO

ETS is the clearest omission. Cincy on Track contains no ETS spending category and no identifiable equivalent for any of the seven March projects. Some staffing-related items may not qualify as infrastructure expenditures, but that does not by itself explain the omission of physical technology infrastructure such as the ECC antenna or redundant prime site.

2. Recreation - 10 of 10

Rank	March 2023 Project	March Cost	Cincy on Track Treatment	Assessment
1	Dunham Recreation Center Renovation	\$10.000M	Same - \$10.000M	YES
2	Pleasant Ridge Recreation Center Renovation	\$4.820M	Same - \$4.820M	YES
3	Riverside Sports Complex Boat Dock Facilities Renovation	\$0.050M	Same - \$0.050M	YES
4	Playground Equipment and Amenities at Ten Sites	\$1.800M	Same - \$1.800M	YES
5	Millvale Recreation Center Building Code Issue	\$0.100M	Same - \$0.100M	YES
6	Leblond Aquatic Facility Renovation	\$1.650M	Same - \$1.650M	YES
7	Winton Hills Aquatic Facility - new/replacement pool	\$4.350M	Same basic project - \$4.350M	YES
8	Mt. Adams Aquatic Facility Renovation	\$2.490M	Same - \$2.490M	YES
9	Lunken Tennis Courts (8)	\$1.100M	Same - \$1.100M	YES
10	Renovate Athletic Fields (5)	\$1.315M	Same - \$1.315M	YES

Recreation is essentially a complete carry-forward. The March list totaled \$27.675 million and Cincy on Track allocated \$27.6 million to Recreation. This provides a useful comparison: where the administration chose to preserve the March list, it could do so almost exactly.

3. Parks - 7 of 10

Rank	March 2023 Project	March Cost	Cincy on Track Treatment	Assessment
1	Smale Riverfront River's Edge Stabilization	\$1.070M	Same - \$17.000M	YES - greatly expanded
2	McEvoy Park Renovation	\$1.605M	Same - \$2.500M	YES - increased
3	Fairview Park Overlook Stabilization	\$0.803M	Same - \$1.000M	YES
4	Bellevue Pavilion Stabilization	\$2.408M	Same - \$6.000M	YES - expanded
5	Jackson Hill Park Renovation	\$0.696M	Same - \$0.725M	YES
6	Mt. Echo Park Pavilion Restoration	\$2.140M	Mt. Echo Park Improvements - \$2.150M	YES - modified
7	Mayfield Park Restoration	\$0.375M	None identified	NO
8	Glenway Park Restoration	\$0.321M	None identified	NO
9	Seasongood Square Restoration	\$0.375M	None identified	NO
10	Ault Park Cascade Renovation	\$3.210M	Cascade & Pavilion Renovation; amount inferred about \$5.8M	YES - expanded

Three March Parks projects disappeared even though the category grew from about \$13.0 million of March needs to \$40.7 million in Cincy on Track. Ault Park is expressly listed as a project, but its amount is omitted from the detailed funding table; approximately \$5.8 million is inferred from the difference between the stated Parks total and the other listed Parks amounts.

4. Transportation & Engineering - 9 yes, 1 uncertain

Rank	March 2023 Project	March Cost	Cincy on Track Treatment	Assessment
1	Remove Downtown Lighting Circuits from Duke Manholes	\$20.0M	Same - \$8.5M	YES - reduced
2	CBD Street Lighting Replacement	\$10.0M	Same - \$3.5M	YES - reduced
3	CBD Traffic Signal Booms Replacement	\$30.0M	Same - \$13.25M	YES - reduced
4	Street Rehabilitation	\$18.0M	Same - \$48.25M	YES - greatly increased
5	Columbia Parkway	\$1.5M	Landslide Remediation - \$1.5M	YES
6	Minor Street Traffic Calming / Asphalt Speed Humps	\$4.0M	Same - \$2.5M	YES - reduced
7	CBD Pavers in Crosswalks and Sidewalks	\$10.0M	Same - \$4.0M	YES - reduced
8	Convert Electric Lights to LED	\$15.0M	Same - \$13.5M	YES - reduced
9	Citywide Traffic Signals	\$11.25M	Listed in COT, but no clean funding-table match	CAN'T TELL precisely
10	Mill Creek Road Bridge Rehabilitation	\$0.5M	Same - \$0.5M	YES

Transportation retained almost all of the March project selection, but the distribution of money changed substantially. Street rehabilitation increased from an \$18 million March estimate to \$48.25 million, while several downtown lighting, signal, traffic-calming, and paver priorities were reduced. Citywide traffic signals are expressly listed elsewhere in Cincy on Track, but the detailed funding table does not provide a clean corresponding line item.

5. Public Services - 8 of 10

Rank	March 2023 Project	March Cost	Cincy on Track Treatment	Assessment
1	Cormany Garage Renovation	\$5.0M	Same - \$5.0M	YES
2	Fleet Services Garage Replacement	\$43.2M	None identified	NO
3	College Hill Town Hall Renovation	\$5.0M	Same - \$5.0M	YES
4	Fire Station 8 Replacement	\$7.2M	Same - \$7.2M	YES
5	Fire Station 2 Replacement	\$7.2M	Same - \$7.2M	YES
6	Fire Station 49 Replacement	\$7.2M	Same - \$7.2M	YES
7	Multiple EV Charging Locations for City Fleet	\$3.0M	None identified	NO
8	West Fork Incinerator Demolition/Site Reuse	\$5.0M	Same - \$5.0M	YES
9	City Hall HVAC/Cooling Tower Replacement	\$4.0M	Same - \$4.0M	YES
10	Radcliff Emergency Operations Center HVAC Replacement	\$2.1M	HVAC & Roof Replacement - \$4.0M	YES - expanded

The largest March Public Services priority - \$43.2 million for Fleet Services Garage Replacement - was omitted. That single decision explains much of the reduction from \$88.9 million in March needs to \$49.6 million in Cincy on Track. Cincy on Track also added \$5 million for 801 Linn Street Renovation (Police), which was not among the March Public Services Top 10.

6. Health - major shift in strategy

Rank	March 2023 Project	March Cost	Cincy on Track Treatment	Assessment
1	Price Hill Health Center Air Handler	\$120K	Same - \$120K	YES - direct
2	Bobbie Sterne Structural Support	\$30K	Full Bobbie Sterne replacement - \$10M	YES - superseded
3	Bobbie Sterne HVAC Units	\$300K	Full replacement	YES - superseded
4	Burnet & King Roof	\$60K	None identified	NO
5	Burnet & King Structural Repairs	\$150K	None identified	NO
6	Burnet & King Exterior Painting	\$155K	None identified	NO
7	Bobbie Sterne Interior Painting	\$120K	Full replacement	YES - superseded
8	Burnet & King Elevators	\$250K	None identified	NO
9	Bobbie Sterne Cooling Tower	\$120K	Full replacement	YES - superseded
10	Burnet & King Asbestos Remediation	\$350K	None identified	NO

Health represents a change in strategy rather than a straightforward carry-forward. The March list emphasized relatively small repairs, while Cincy on Track proposed \$10 million to replace the Bobbie Sterne Health Center, \$7.5 million to replace the CHD Administration Building, and \$5 million to replace the Northside Health Center. The Bobbie Sterne repair items are therefore classified as superseded rather than omitted.

Key Findings

- The March lists and Cincy on Track were nearly identical in aggregate size: approximately \$255.3 million versus \$250 million.
- That numerical similarity did not translate into a simple funding of the departmental priority lists. The administration substantially reprioritized projects and departments.
- Recreation was preserved almost exactly, while ETS disappeared entirely.
- Parks increased from about \$13.0 million of March identified needs to \$40.7 million in Cincy on Track.
- Health increased from about \$1.7 million of March identified needs to \$31.1 million, largely through a shift from repairs to facility replacement.
- Public Services declined from \$88.9 million in March identified needs to \$49.6 million, with the \$43.2 million Fleet Services Garage Replacement omitted.
- Transportation retained almost all projects, but funding was redistributed substantially among them.

Conclusion

Cincy on Track was derived from the March 2023 departmental critical-needs lists, but it was not a funding plan for those lists. The administration substantially reprioritized them.

That distinction matters because the March lists totaled almost exactly the amount later proposed for Cincy on Track. The record therefore supports a more precise description of the plan: the March departmental lists supplied a substantial project base, but the administration made significant subsequent choices about which needs to retain, omit, expand, reduce, or replace with different projects.

Cincy on Track also states that project selection balanced infrastructure condition, equity, cost effectiveness, and project readiness, and that prioritization would include equity analysis directed toward projects benefiting historically underserved minority and low-income communities. Those stated criteria provide a potential framework for further examination of why the March priorities were changed.

Source Documents

1. City of Cincinnati, Cincy on Track Proposed Spending Plan.
2. City of Cincinnati, Critical Infrastructure Needs / Deferred Maintenance List, March 2023.

Note: This report is a crosswalk of the two source documents. 'Inferred,' 'superseded,' and 'can't tell' classifications are analytical judgments identified as such and should not be read as statements made by the City.



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