



**Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting**  
 Held December 1, 2025  
 7:00 PM.

A regular meeting of the Oberlin City Council was held on December 1, 2025, in the Council Chambers of the Oberlin City Hall, located at 85 S. Main Street, Oberlin, Ohio. President of Council Eboni Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. Roll Call was taken as follows:

**1. COUNCIL BUSINESS**

- (a) Call Regular City Council Meeting to Order and Roll Call – 7:00 PM.

<b>Council Members:</b>	Present	Absent
Joseph Waltzer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jessa D. New	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michael McFarlin, Vice President	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ray English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Libni Lopez	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kristin Peterson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eboni A. Johnson, President	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Appointees:**

- Greg Holcomb, City Manager
- Jon Clark, Law Director
- Marin Fowler, Finance Director
- Belinda Anderson, Clerk of Council

- (b) Approval of Minutes –Special City Council Meeting – November 10, 2025; Regular City Council Meeting – November 17, 2025; Budget Work Sessions – November 25, 2025, and November 26, 2025

The minutes were approved as submitted.

- (c) Consider a Motion not to Object to an Application for the Transfer of a D-5 Liquor Permit from Thi Ni Thai Inc.

Due to Waltzer, New, and Peterson needing to recuse themselves and having only three members present, this item was postponed until the next Council meeting.

- (d) Consider a motion not to object to an Application for a New C-1 and C-2 Liquor Permit from Bailey's Farm Market.

Due to Waltzer, New, and Peterson needing to recuse themselves and having only three members present, no action was taken on this item. The clerk will indicate that there is no objection.

- (e) Appointments to Boards and Commissions

New stated that the nominating committee and the Clerk were able to fill all the appointments for boards and commissions. Belinda Anderson, Clerk of Council, noted that the seats that needed to be filled have been, but the only seats that have not been filled are those that belong to City Council members, which would be Oberlin Community Improvement Corporation (OCIC) and the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee.

English, seconded by Lopez, moved to approve the slate of nominees for boards and commissions as presented.

**Roll Call:**                      6 Ayes                                      0 Nays                                      Motion Carried

**2. ANY CONCERNS NOT ON THE AGENDA MAY BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL AT THIS TIME**

N/A

**3. OPPORTUNITY FOR A REPORT FROM A CITY BOARD OR COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE**

N/A

**4. OPPORTUNITY FOR A REPORT FROM AN ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE**

N/A

**5. OLD BUSINESS:**

A. ORDINANCE No. 25-56 AC CMS: An Ordinance Declaring 8.6994 Acres of Real Property Located on U.S. Route 20 to be Surplus and Authorizing the City Manager to Sell Said Property to GPH Holdings, LLC to Go into Immediate Effect.

The Clerk read the Ordinance by number and title only.

Peterson, seconded by English, moved for passage on the third reading of the Ordinance.

Members of Council heard from Jon Clark, Law Director, as he asked Council to postpone this ordinance again until the next meeting. There are still a few things to work out before there is a final agreement.



pass-through for us. In that process, we apply our rate to that, so there are fees and taxes that are collected from that.

New, seconded by Peterson, moved to waive the rule requiring three readings on Ordinance 25-58 AC CMS.

**Roll Call:**                    6 Ayes                    0 Nays                    Motion Carried  
(Suspension of Rules)

New, seconded by Lopez, moved to that Ordinance 25-58 AC CMS goes into immediate effect to assure that the electric capacity and energy requirements of the City of Oberlin’s electric utility system are satisfied.

**Roll Call:**                    6 Ayes                    0 Nays                    Motion Carried  
(Effective Immediately)

- B. ORDINANCE No. 25-59 AC CMS: An Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into an Agreement with Providing Oberlin with Efficiency Responsibly, Inc. and Authorizing the Expenditure of Funds from the Sustainable Reserve Fund to Go into Immediate Effect.

The Clerk read the ordinance by number, title, and substantive portions only.

Lopez, seconded by English, moved for passage on the first reading of the Ordinance.

Members of Council heard from Linda Arbogast, Sustainability Coordinator, as she introduced Cindy Frantz, POWER member, who gave a presentation about Providing Oberlin with Efficiency Responsibly, Inc. (POWER) and their plans for the next five years.

*A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.*

Following the presentation, Lopez asked does the energy audit also includes renters. Frantz responded in the affirmative. He then asked if customers could get another audit done since it’s been a few years. Frantz responded yes, and they should. Insulation settles, and it stops being airtight, so it is best to get another audit done.

Lopez, seconded by Peterson, moved to waive the rule requiring three readings for Ordinance 25-59 AC CMS.

**Roll Call:**                    6 Ayes                    0 Nays                    Motion Carried  
(Suspension of Rules)

Lopez, seconded by New, moved that Ordinance 25-59 AC CMS goes into immediate effect to provide funding for the implementation of the strategies set forth in the City of Oberlin City Action Plan.

**Roll Call:**                    6 Ayes                    0 Nays                    Motion Carried  
(Effective Immediately)

- C. ORDINANCE No. 25-60 AC CMS: An Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lorain County Board of Commissioners (D.B.A. Lorain County Transit) to Provide for Transit-Related Services to Go into Immediate Effect.

The Clerk read the ordinance by number, title, and substantive portions only.

New, seconded by Peterson, moved for passage on the first reading of the Ordinance.

Members of Council heard from Carrie Porter, Planning & Development Director, as she discussed the ordinance. The ordinance is to approve an agreement with the county to continue providing the Oberlin Connector Service within the City. It also allows residents to go outside the City within Lorain County. The City has been doing this with the county since 2010, when Lorain County Transit's regular routes were eliminated. This agreement would be just for 2026 since the county hasn't set the holidays yet for 2027, and so they didn't want to do the agreement without having the holidays set. We're proposing to fund the operating costs for 2026 with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds as well as city general revenue funds. There is \$71,200 in ARPA funds, as well as \$61,000 from the general revenue fund budgeted for 2026, with the total cost around \$132,000 for the year. The county does pay half of the cost of this service.

English sought clarification on the ARPA funds and that they need to be expended by the end of 2026, and they will all be gone. Porter responded in the affirmative. Continuing after 2026 will require some other source of funding to keep the program going.

Lopez asked about the low-income fare cards and how one would go about getting one. Porter responded that there was something put into place before she started working with the City through the Lorain Metro Housing Authority (LMHA). If someone is an LMHA client, they can request a card through LMHA.

Johnson asked if there is a way for someone who is low-income, but not an LMHA resident, to get a low-income fare card. Porter responded that the City hasn't been doing that, and she hasn't heard of any requests for that. Most individuals fall within the half-fare category, but we could look into that. There would have to be parameters for people to qualify because LCT would be the ones to screen people for that, but it is possible.

English, seconded by New, moved to waive the rule requiring three readings for Ordinance 25-60 AC CMS.

**Roll Call:**                      6 Ayes                      0 Nays                      Motion Carried  
(Suspension of Rules)

English, seconded by Peterson, moved to that Ordinance 25-60 AC CMS goes into immediate effect to authorize an agreement to continue local public transit demand response service, without interruption, in 2026.

**Roll Call:**                      6 Ayes                      0 Nays                      Motion Carried  
(Effective Immediately)

- D. ORDINANCE No. 25-61 AC CMS: An Ordinance Implementing 3735.65 through 3735.70 of the Ohio Revised Code, Establishing and Describing the Boundaries of a Community Reinvestment Area in the City of Oberlin, Designating a Housing Officer to Administer the Program, and Creating a Community Reinvestment Housing Council and a Tax Incentive Review Council.

The Clerk read the ordinance by number, title, and substantive portions only.

English, seconded by Lopez, moved for passage on the first reading of the Ordinance.

Porter stated this ordinance is a follow-up from a presentation that she and the economic development consultants from Environmental Design Group (EDG) did a couple of months ago about community reinvestment areas and tax incentive financing districts. We're starting the creation of this community reinvestment area for the Oberlin Place Senior Affordable Housing project. This ordinance would create the boundaries for that, as we would be negotiating an agreement that we would bring back to Council for the actual abatement terms, as far as percentage and number of years. We were asked by the developer of the Oberlin Senior Housing Place project for this type of assistance to help with the financing of the project and to make it more affordable. We have to designate a housing officer, a housing council, as well as a tax incentive review council. The tax incentive review council already exists since the county reviews all tax abatements every year in March. The housing officer and the housing council are charged with reviewing every agreement with the community reinvestment area (CRA), which in this case would only be one. This would be to make sure that the entity receiving the abatement keeps the property maintained and makes sure the entity is going to do what they said they would do per the agreement. The tax incentive review council makes a recommendation to this Council on whether to maintain that abatement every year. The tax incentive review council will decide if the is compliance or not according to the agreement. Jennifer Syx from EDG is here to answer any questions as well.

Peterson asked about section 7 of the ordinance on the community reinvestment area housing council and how two additional members shall be residents within the area. She wanted to know if that meant contiguous to the boundaries of the project or anyone from the city. Porter said she believed it's within the area, so they would more than likely have to be residents of the housing project.

English asked if there had been any discussions with the schools about this. Porter responded in the affirmative. We've already met with the schools to let them know that we're planning on doing this. English asked what the response was from the school. Porter said for this development, there weren't a lot of concerns because it's not going to put kids in the schools. It will be more of a concern with the tax increment financing (TIF) districts that we are looking at creating, because those will be developments where families will more than likely locate and have children in schools. We have done this in the past with the TIF district, and that was done for the East College Street project, and the schools wanted 50% of what they normally would get as a part of that agreement to let that go forward. Jennier Syx with EDG noted that during their conversations with the school superintendent, he expressed support for this because they know that they want children in the school district. What we would be proposing to the school district is that they would be waiving their right to the fourteen-day and the forty-five-day notification period. What it means from a development standpoint is that we're going to be more proactive and productive when we get a development in, because if the Ohio Revised Code allows us to go up to 75% for ten years without school boards' approval, and only a fourteen-day notification period. If we exceed that threshold, it requires a forty-five-day notification period, and that takes a long time to get through the school board, and she has seen TIFs and CRAs fail at the board of education level.

English asked a follow-up question about do we have an idea of what the developer is interested in, in terms of percentage and number of years to make it affordable. Porter responded in the discussions with the developer. At first, it was 100% in fifteen years, but we came back with 75%

in ten years without the school board's approval. The developer would like to see 75% in fifteen years. We will aim for that and see what we can negotiate with the schools as well.

**Roll Call:**                      6 Ayes                      0 Nays                      Motion Carried  
(First Reading)

- E. ORDINANCE No. 25-62 AC CMS: An Ordinance Amending the Civil Service Rules for the City of Oberlin to Go into Immediate Effect.

The Clerk read the ordinance by number, title, and substantive portions only.

English, seconded by Lopez, moved for passage on the first reading of the Ordinance.

Clark stated that back in 2023, the Council authorized changes to the civil service rules that would help our police department and authorize lateral transfers and reclassification of part-time officers to full-time. What this amendment does is that it makes the same procedure applicable to firefighters. The fire department applicants within the fire department for lateral transfer, will have to have a paramedic certification and a firefighter level two to the state of Ohio and have completed probation and have worked within the past 12 months as a firefighter paramedic. Those are the qualifications that are specific to firefighters who would be coming in as a lateral transfer. The other option is that current part-time firefighters could be moved to full-time positions.

English noted that the Civil Service Commission discussed this at the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, and it passed unanimously.

New, seconded by Peterson, moved to waive the rule requiring three readings for Ordinance 25-62 AC CMS.

**Roll Call:**                      6 Ayes                      0 Nays                      Motion Carried  
(Suspension of Rules)

New, seconded by English, moved to that Ordinance 25-62 AC CMS goes into immediate effect to provide for the efficient operation of the Oberlin Fire Department.

**Roll Call:**                      6 Ayes                      0 Nays                      Motion Carried  
(Effective Immediately)

- F. ORDINANCE No. 25-64 AC CMS: An Ordinance to Appropriate Monies for Municipal Purposes for the Fiscal Year 2026 to Go into Immediate Effect.

The Clerk read the ordinance by number, title, and substantive portions only.

English, seconded by Peterson, moved for passage on the first reading of the Ordinance.

Members of Council heard from Marin Fowler, Finance Director, as she went over the appropriation ordinance. Two edits needed to be made, where one was \$100,000 in the kilowatt tax revenue, and the second one was \$400,000, which was a duplicate entry in the finance office for the computer expense line that was already accounted for under general plant. She will need to make an amendment to it so that \$84,000 will be for the police vehicle, and that will fall under the general fund. That will increase the capital by \$84,000 and then in the sustainable reserve fund. The capital will be reduced by \$84,000, and that will not change the total expense.

Clark sought clarification on whether Fowler was asking for an amendment. Fowler responded yes but was unsure what the best way to handle it. New noted that during the budget session, the Council wanted to hold off on immediate effect and pass the ordinance on first reading and then come back for a second reading once the changes have been made.

**Roll Call:**                      6 Ayes                      0 Nays                      Motion Carried  
(First Reading)

## 5. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS:

### (A). Referrals

### (B). Advocacy

### (C). Correspondence

### (D). Reports

Council members provided updates on board and commission meetings, initiatives, community events, and announced upcoming meeting dates.

## 6. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

City Manager Greg Holcomb reported on the following:

- Noted he needs to update Council on his monthly report, but he is still waiting for a few responses, so it should go out soon.
- Noted that he wanted to discuss with staff and appointees on creating a year-long legislative calendar to keep track of some of the items that are due.

## 7. OPPORTUNITY FOR OTHER APPOINTEES TO REPORT:

N/A

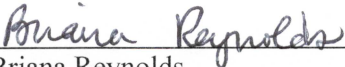
## 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

N/A

## 9. ADJOURNMENT:

Being that there was no additional business before Council, the regular meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.

### Prepared by:




Briana Reynolds  
Clerk of Council's Assistant

### Attest:



BELINDA B. ANDERSON, MMC  
CLERK OF COUNCIL



EBONI A. JOHNSON  
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

APPROVED: 12/15/2025

POSTED: 12/16/2025



# Report to Oberlin City Council

December 1, 2025

Presented by Cindy Frantz,  
Board Vice Chair

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## Mission

To increase the energy efficiency of homes, small businesses, non-profit organizations, and churches in Oberlin, Ohio and the surrounding area.

## Vision

Creating a community of comfortable, affordable, and healthy homes.

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# History

- Founded in 2008 with goal of addressing both energy poverty and climate change with a win-win solution
- Adopted Energy Advocate model (and Greg Jones!) in 2013

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# Our Model

- Provide 1-stop shopping for energy efficiency
- Meet people where they are, provide the assistance they need

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# Our Model

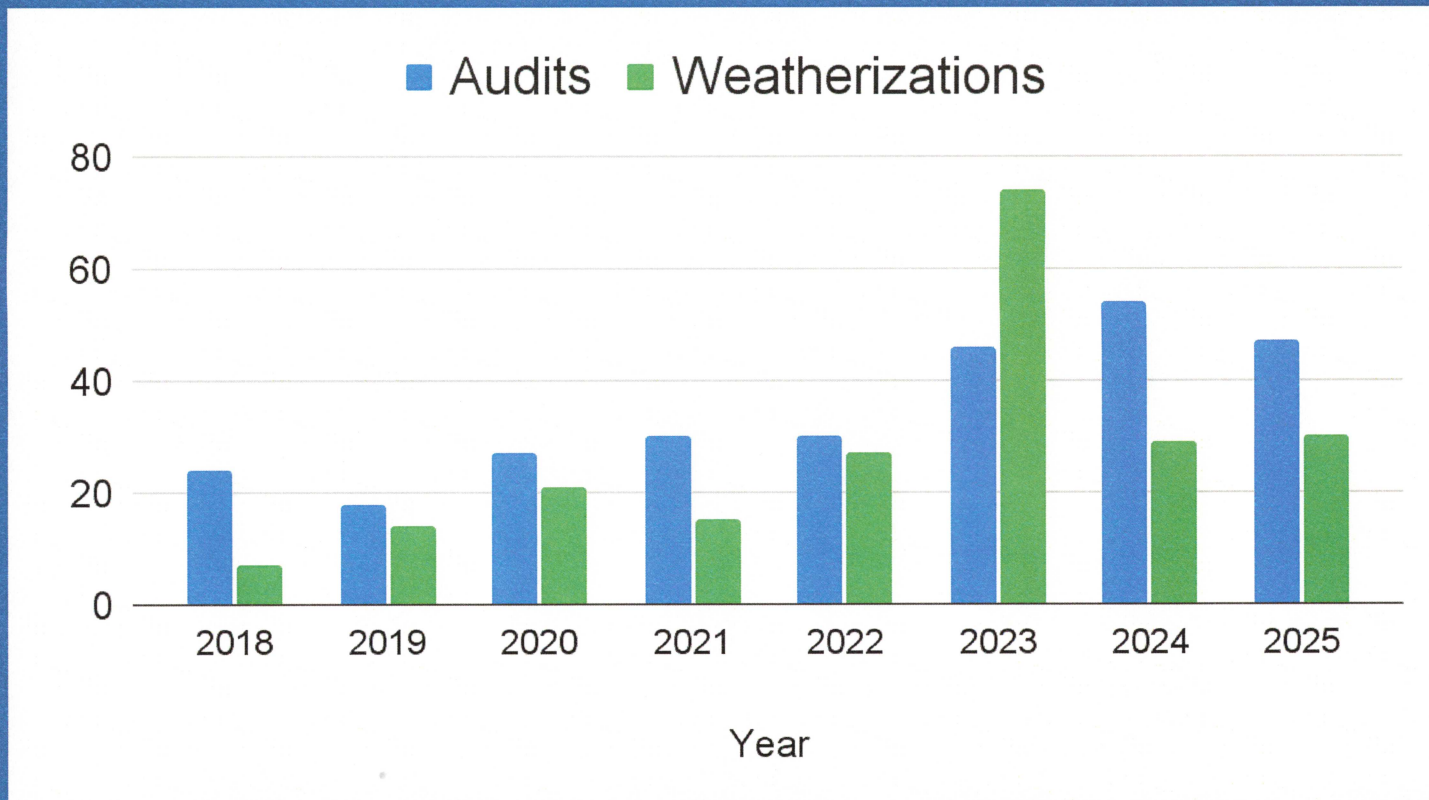
- Sliding scale financial assistance – something for every income bracket
- Address barriers to completing efficiency work
  - Leaky roofs
  - Inadequate ventilation, mold
  - Other structural issues

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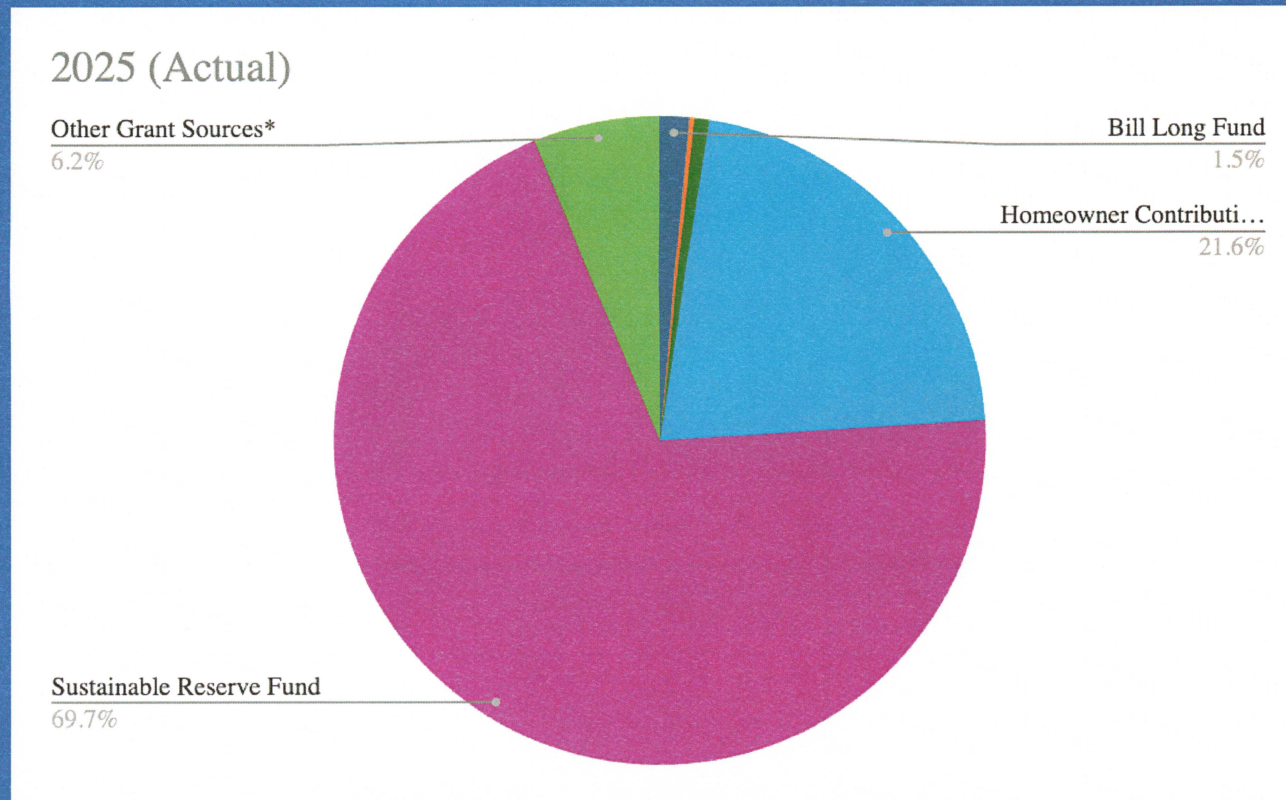
# Our Model

- Partner closely with Oberlin Community Services and Office of Sustainability
- Full participation in community events
  - LED bulb giveaways, public presentations

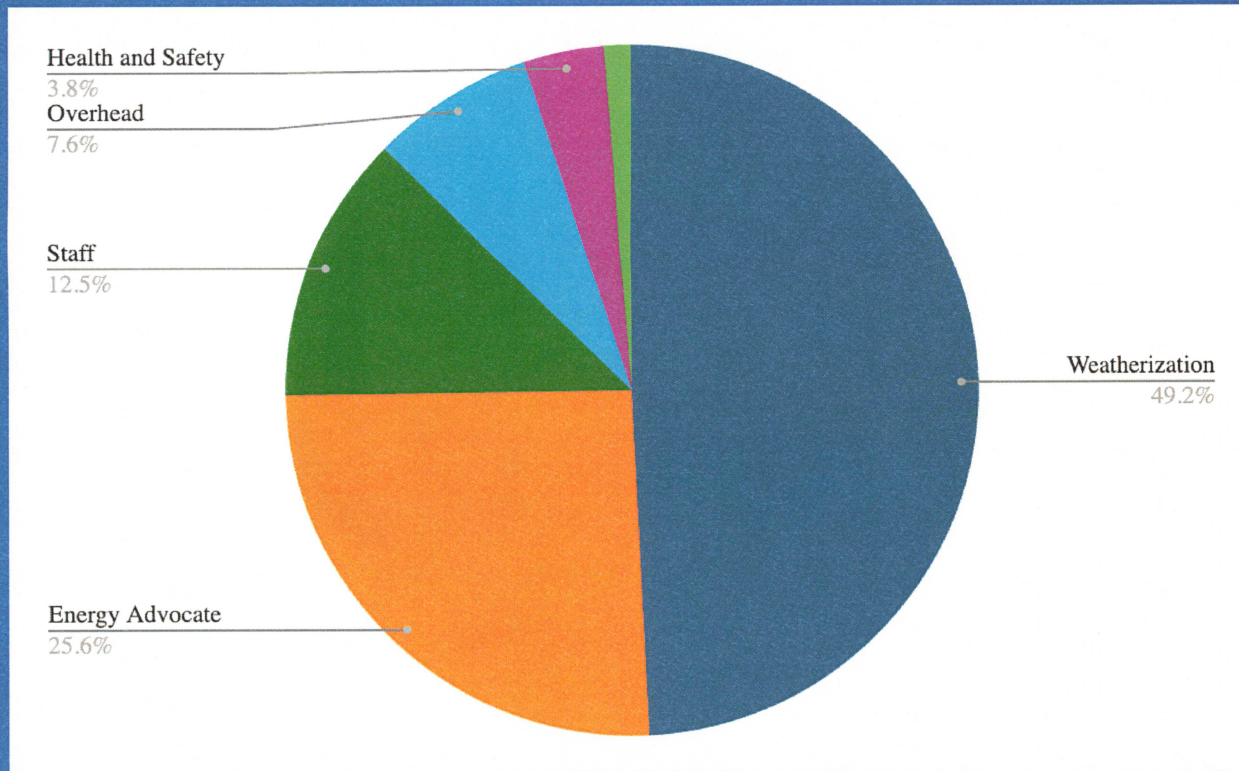
# Our Track Record



# Sources of Funding in 2025



# Expenses



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# Recent Challenges

- Elimination of Columbia Gas rebates
- HWAP program more difficult to access
- Increased cost of energy audits (x3), materials and labor
- Decreased SRF support

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# Rising to the Challenge

- Adjusted sliding scale for financial assistance:

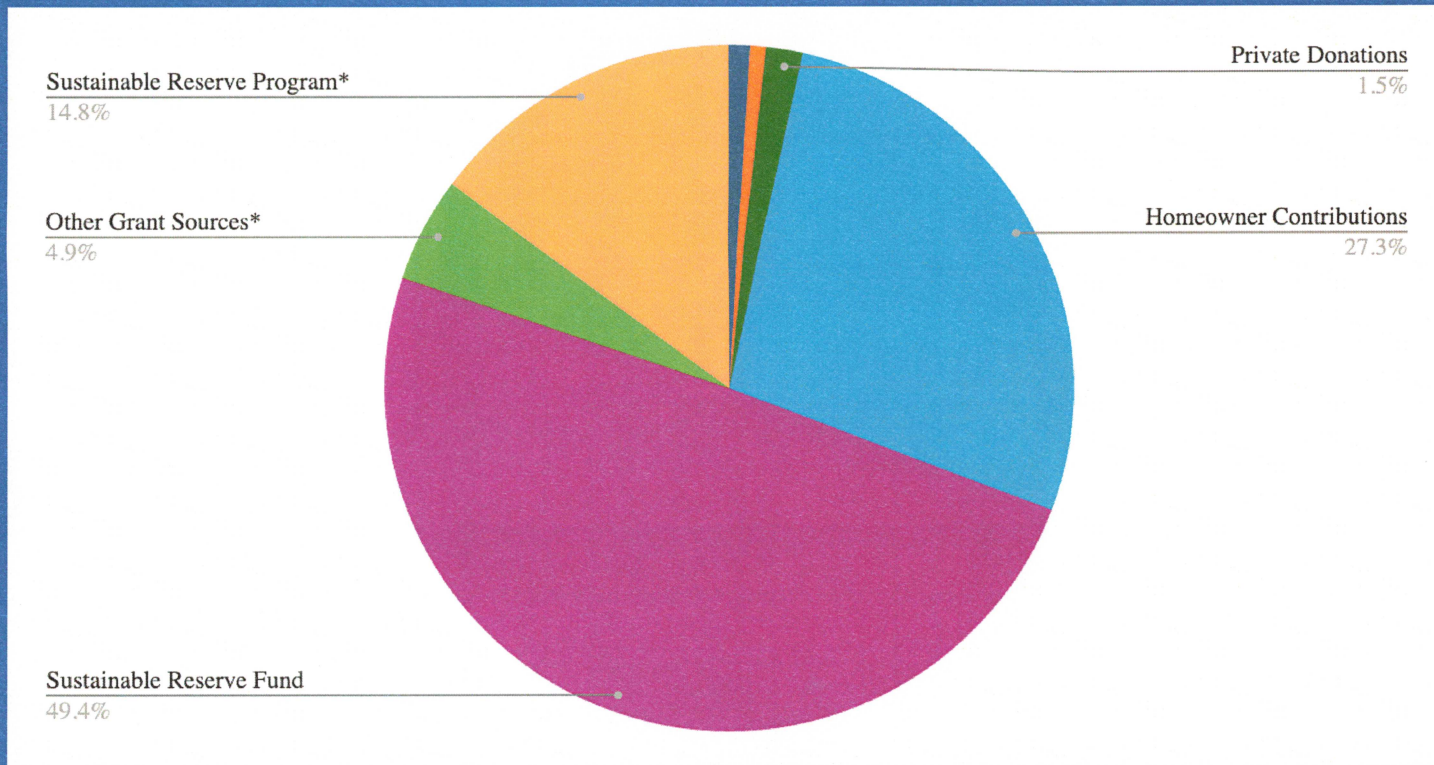
Income Bracket	Previous Sliding Scale	Proposed Sliding Scale
FPL x 200%	100% covered	100% covered
FPL x 300%	75% covered	50% covered
FPL x 400%	50% covered	25% covered
FPL x 500%	25% covered	10% covered

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# Rising to the Challenge

- Aggressively pursue HWAP funding
- Seek funding from Sustainable Reserve Program
  - Appropriate for all-electric homes or homes that are fuel switching

# Proposed budget 2026



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# Work to Complete

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Number of homes	33	33	33	33	33
HWAP Goal (no additional cost)	2	2	2	2	2
ASPIRATIONAL Number of homes	36	36	36	36	36

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# Additional Goals

- Actively promote heat pumps
  - *Pump It Up* Happy Hour at Haven
  - More events to come!

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# Additional Goals

- Explore other ways to support the City's Climate Action Plan
  - Encouraging tree planting
  - Developing local carbon offset market



**Thank You!**

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