



# **A Job Creation Agenda for the City of Cincinnati**

by Councilman Charlie Winburn  
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**A Job Creation Agenda  
for the City of Cincinnati**

***Let's start an  
Entrepreneurial  
Revolution!***

# **A Job Creation Agenda for the City of Cincinnati**

In December 2009, the Mayor appointed me Chair of the Job Creation Committee. I took that responsibility very seriously because JOBS are the single most important issue for our community and our nation.

Leadership is about having a Vision, and so I went to work to develop a Declared Vision for the City of Cincinnati.

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I also went back to school to learn how I can better serve the citizens of Cincinnati. That's why I spent \$15,000 of my own money to go to Harvard Business School in their Authentic Leadership Development Program. I believe I'm now better prepared with the leadership skills needed to take on today's challenges in public service.

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At the outset, the Mayor challenged me to change the negative perception of the City's Small Business Enterprise Program. For some time now, the numbers have not changed significantly regarding city contracts for construction, professional services and supplies for minority and women owned businesses.

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Let me be very clear about this issue: the City of Cincinnati has failed in this area of growing small businesses and promoting equal opportunity particularly for MBEs and WBEs.

**However, BEGINNING today, we're going to CHANGE THAT!**

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As a result of the Mayor's assignment, we didn't just look at the SBE Compliance Program. We looked beyond it to put Cincinnati to work and back to work, to grow businesses and to create an aggressive small business development program.

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They say that imitation is the best form of flattery. And the truth is, we're not the first major metropolitan area to be undertaking an aggressive small business development program. We found that the City of Los Angeles this year enacted sweeping changes similar to what we are presenting today.



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L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's Executive Directive on January 12, 2011 stated, *“Many economists agree that more jobs are created by small businesses than large ones. The City can and should help small businesses by leveraging its procurement authority.”*

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Additionally, last week I went to Detroit, Michigan at my own expense to meet with Dan Gilbert's, CEO of Rock Gaming, Leadership Team, to learn more about his **Bizdom University** and to try to convince him to bring this dynamic program to Cincinnati.

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With two programs already underway in Detroit and Cleveland, I am convinced that our local economy would see unprecedented growth from small businesses with a ***Bizdom University*** in Cincinnati.

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***Bizdom University*** is a nonprofit entrepreneurship accelerator that provides training, mentorship and seed funding to assist aspiring and first time entrepreneurs to launch innovative, growth-oriented startup businesses.

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***Bizdom's*** four month program provides entrepreneurs an environment where they can develop and launch their business with the training, mentorship and support from a full time team, prominent entrepreneurs, and experts in technology, sales, marketing and more...all provided at no cost to the entrepreneur.

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**We are fortunate to have some of Dan Gilbert's  
colleagues from Rock here today.**

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So, that's where we are right now!

My Declared Vision brought me to the formation of five economic roundtables representing over 150 volunteers and 18 months of study and planning. I think we pulled together some of the best minds in our community to put this together.

These roundtables included:

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## **I. Business Recruitment & Retention –**

We want to create a favorable economic climate to retain current businesses and recruit new ones to the City of Cincinnati.



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**2. Small Business Development** – We're trying to streamline residential and commercial development in order to make it easier for small businesses to do work in the City.

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**3. Workforce Development** – We are identifying and evaluating the effectiveness of the workforce development and job training programs for adults and youth, and looking for opportunities that City Council can make them more effective and efficient.

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## **4. Cincinnati Dream Neighborhoods –**

This is a broad based neighborhood development initiative that I've created to turn around and strengthen the local economy in each of Cincinnati's 52 neighborhoods.

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## **5. Small Business Enterprise**

**Compliance** – We want to find and implement best practices and models in urban cities to encourage growth and participation of small, women, and minority owned business on city projects.

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The results of our Roundtables thus far include:

- I. In the area of Workforce Development, we made changes to the City's hiring practices and policies that apply to Ex-Offenders to assist them and their families to re-enter the job market and become a productive member of society.

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- 2. We have the Economic and Community Development Departments and those who have received certain city contracts regularly appearing before the Job Creation Committee to demonstrate accountability and tracking of job creation and job retention in the City.**

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- 3. I have personally worked with neighborhood community councils and developers to move projects forward. These efforts are impacting Cincinnati's employment numbers.**

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4. And finally, the development of the Job Creation Agenda we are presenting today will compliment all of these initiatives, and in particular radically change the City of Cincinnati's SBE Compliance Program.



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This plan we are laying out today – The **Cincinnati Competitive Edge-Initiative**, what I'll be referring to as CCE-I – is patterned after the best practices we've examined and the experts we've consulted.

To be honest with you, **if this plan is not supported today, I don't see another option.**

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As I stated earlier leadership is about Vision. The City of Cincinnati, like many other municipalities, is experiencing the need to recapture population loss, much of it due to lack of jobs.

The ultimate goal of CCE-I is to promote job growth specifically for the City of Cincinnati.

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This model encourages business growth, equal opportunity, and equity for small businesses. In turn, this model will create jobs for the citizens of the City.

CCE-I will provide one stop shopping for SBE utilization, thereby assisting the city in achieving an SBE goal of 30% participation in all city departments.

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## **CCE-I will have the following major goals:**

1. Create Jobs for the City of Cincinnati
2. Complete the remaining items recommended by the *Open Cincinnati Task Force*
3. Grow & build small business by providing one stop-shopping for SBE service & support
4. Increase SBE utilization in all city departments & divisions

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## **CCE-I will have the following major goals:**

5. Establish and oversee the *Open Cincinnati USA Business Development Center*
6. Review and accept qualified small businesses to participate in CCE-I
7. Connect all small business development service providers receiving city financial support

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## **CCE-I will have the following major goals:**

8. Reverse any negative perception of the city's current SBE program by creating an equal opportunity business development center for everyone
9. Create a collaborative environment where the business community can network

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**CCE-I will have the following major goals:**

10. Attract new businesses and showcase the City of Cincinnati as a place that is conducive to business growth and development

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## **The CCE-I benefits to the city include:**

- 1. Achieve 200 net new jobs through targeted business development efforts**
- 2. Increase individual annual earnings income tax and corporate income tax revenue**



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## **The CCE-I benefits to the city include:**

- 3. Promote new business sales revenue**
- 4. Financial savings and efficient customer service for the City of Cincinnati, providing for a more effective and economical government**

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Let me make one other point very clear: CCE-I is not intended to duplicate the work of other organizations in our region who are serving the needs of small businesses in very unique ways.

We are all about collaboration and partnership with each and every one of them.

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CCE-I is designed to include all segments of the region's business community by increasing the competitiveness and profitability of all small businesses.

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**This is where the future of small business,  
economic development, and job creation in the  
City of Cincinnati begins today!**