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Student Reading 3.2: Cincinnati's City Services

Every city provides important services to its residents. The size of the city, the amount of taxes collected, and what the people want and need help to determine the services that a community provides. In Cincinnati, there are many services that the city, or municipal government oversees. Street maintenance, snow removal, waste collection, emergency services (police and fire), parks and recreation, and water works are just some of these services.

Traffic and Road Operations

It is important to be able to travel in, around, and through the community. The Traffic and Road Operations Division has the job of keeping the streets safe and clean. All throughout the year, workers pave streets and fill pot holes. They repair the curbs, make sure streets are well-lit, take care of painting the lines on streets, and keep bridges repaired. They are also responsible for removing snow, preparing streets for snowy or icy weather, and repairing traffic lights.



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Waste Collection

Another important service that is provided to the residents of Cincinnati is garbage collection. Garbage is collected every week. Yard waste like leaves, cut grass and weeds, and trimmings from trees and bushes are collected during the growing season. Recycling services are also available.

Emergency Services

Cincinnati's fire department began in 1853. It is the oldest fire department in the United States that has had firemen who are paid and professionally trained as firefighters. The members of the fire department do more than put fires out. They are also trained to give emergency medical services. They also inspect buildings to make sure they are safe, and give permits for fires at events. There are 26 fire stations in the city of Cincinnati.

The police department has the job of keeping the community safe. Officers patrol communities to stop crime and help enforce laws by walking, riding bikes, riding horses, and driving cars throughout the community. Officers also



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investigate crimes that happen, looking for the person responsible. Police also help traffic to run smoothly, especially when there are big events. There are about one thousand police officers in the Cincinnati Police Department.

Parks and Recreation

Cincinnati has many parks and green spaces. The land for the very first park, Piatt Park, was given to the city in 1817. City leaders have made creating and keeping natural areas an important part of our community. In 1859, Eden Park was set aside. This beautiful area is where we find the Art Museum, the Art Academy, Playhouse in the Park, and Krohn Conservatory. Many other areas in the city have been bought by the city since then, including the Theodore M. Berry International Friendship Park (2003), the Cincinnati Riverfront Park (2008), Bicentennial Commons, and the Serpentine Wall. There are over 5,000 acres of parkland in Cincinnati.

In addition to the many parks and the activities provided there, Cincinnati has recreation centers. These centers are part of the Recreation Commission. Each center offers activities for all age groups. There are pools, gyms, weight rooms, tracks, tennis courts, and other spaces for physical activities and for



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groups to meet for different activities. The commission provides after-school programs, camps, and summer lunch programs for children.

Water Works

Cincinnati has its own water works. It has been owned and run by the city since 1839. Water works is the term used for all the pipes, collection areas, and storage areas used to collect, clean, store, and provide clean, safe water to people. This includes the sewer system, which takes waste water and rain water away from homes and public buildings. The Greater Cincinnati Water Works provides clean water to the city of Cincinnati and to most of the rest of Hamilton County, some of nearby Butler and Warren Counties, and even to Boone County in Kentucky. Over one hundred million gallons of water are used daily by the residents of the Greater Cincinnati area.

Our City Services

The taxes collected from the residents of Cincinnati help provide all these, and many other services. For example, elevators in public buildings are inspected regularly to make sure they are safe. Restaurants are inspected to make sure



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they are clean and safe. Many of the things that we do or count on each day are part of the services the city provides.

