Structure of City Planning: Cincinnati, Ohio

Course: Regional Planning 652 – Tools & Techniques
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
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Figure 1: City Hall – Google Images

Background

Figure 2: Cincinnati – Google Images

- Settled in 1788
- Population: 296,943 (2010 census)
  - 64th largest in the U.S.

Government Overview

Mayor: Mark Mallory
- Nine members elected at-large + city manager
- 21 various departments, offices, and agencies
- 11 boards and commissions

Mission

Cincinnati's City Council is to provide, in a democratic and transparent manner, efficient and effective services which will make Cincinnati a better place in which to live, work and play

Departments & Locations

City Planning & Buildings – guides land use, zoning and preservation of historic structures, facilitates building permitting and construction inspection
- 75 staff members
- Centennial Plaza Two, 805 Central Ave, Seventh Floor

Community Development – provides and leverages funding and other resources that support quality housing, neighborhood revitalization and human services
- 805 Central Ave., Suite 700

Economic Development – Facilitate the creation and retention of jobs and new investment within the City in order to expand the City's tax base
- 15 staff members
- Centennial Plaza Two, 805 Central Ave., Suite 710

Planning Commission – 7 commission members

Zoning Board of Appeals – 4 members whose duties are to hear all appeals arising out of the Cincinnati Zoning Code

City Council – responsible for enacting ordinances, imposing taxes, making appropriations, establishing policy, and hiring some city officials
- adopts the local general plan, zoning, and subdivision ordinance
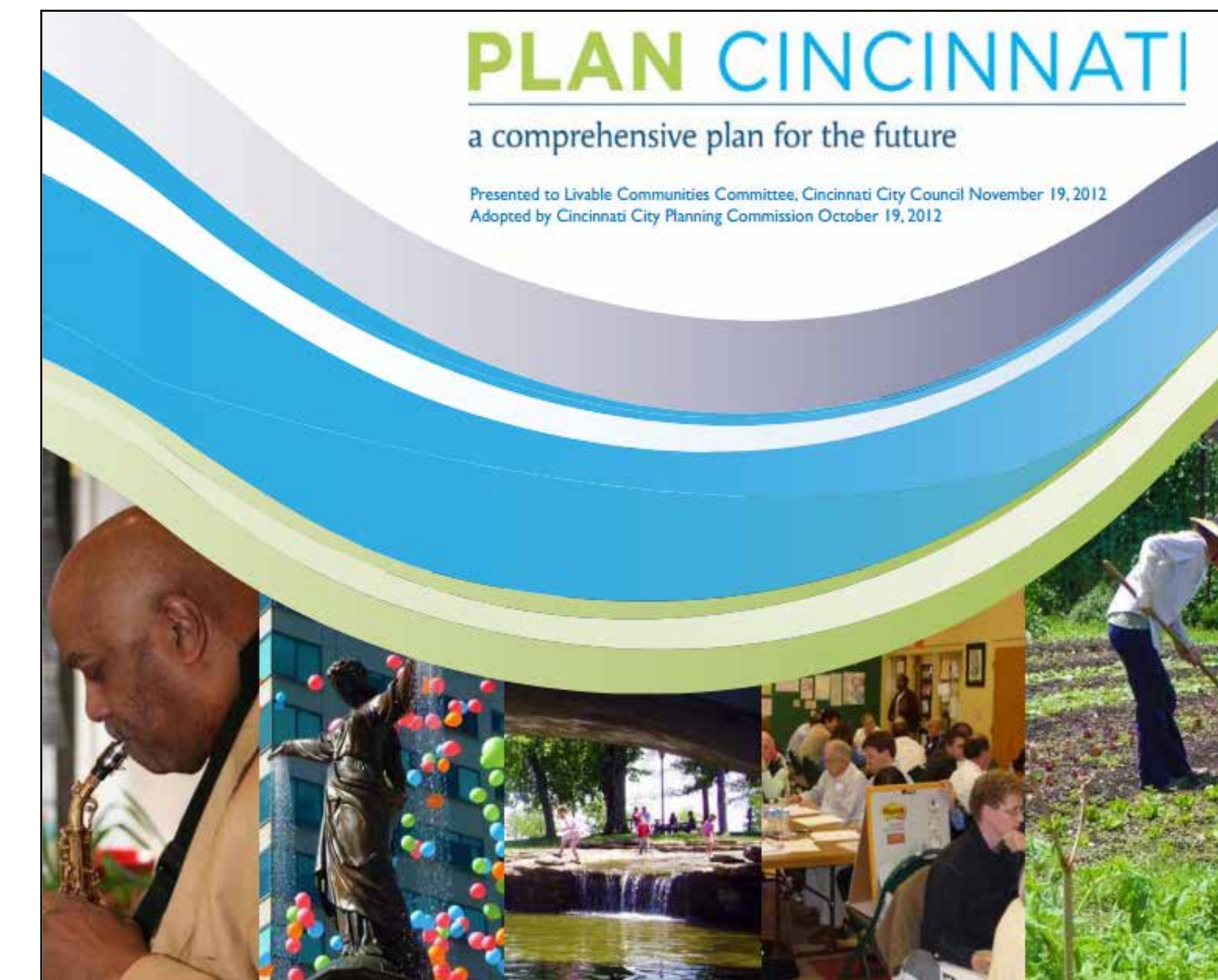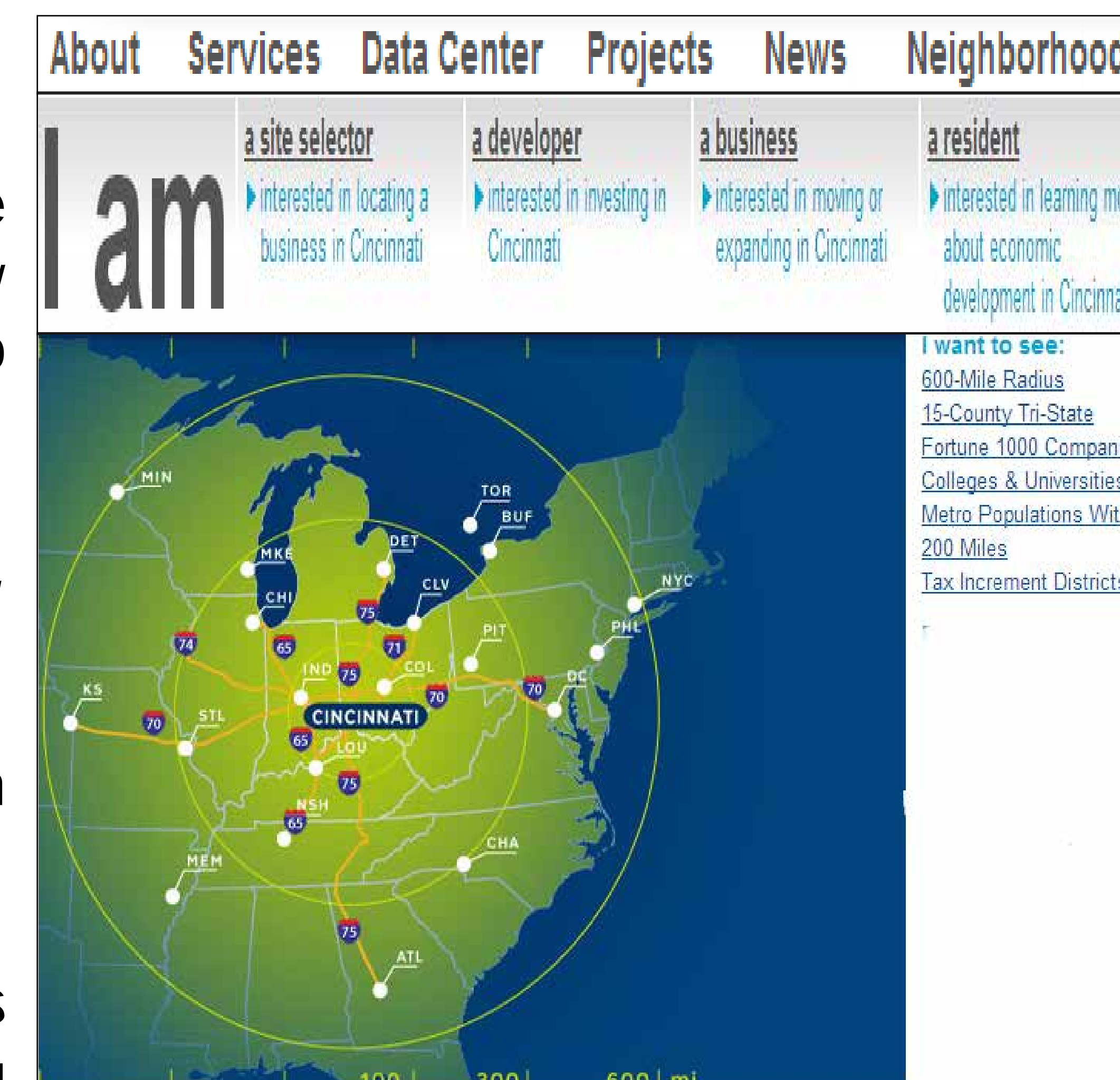- 801 Plum St., Cincinnati, OH 45202

Figure 3: Plan Cincinnati – http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cityofcincinnati/

Figure 4: Econ. Dev. Website – http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cityofcincinnati/
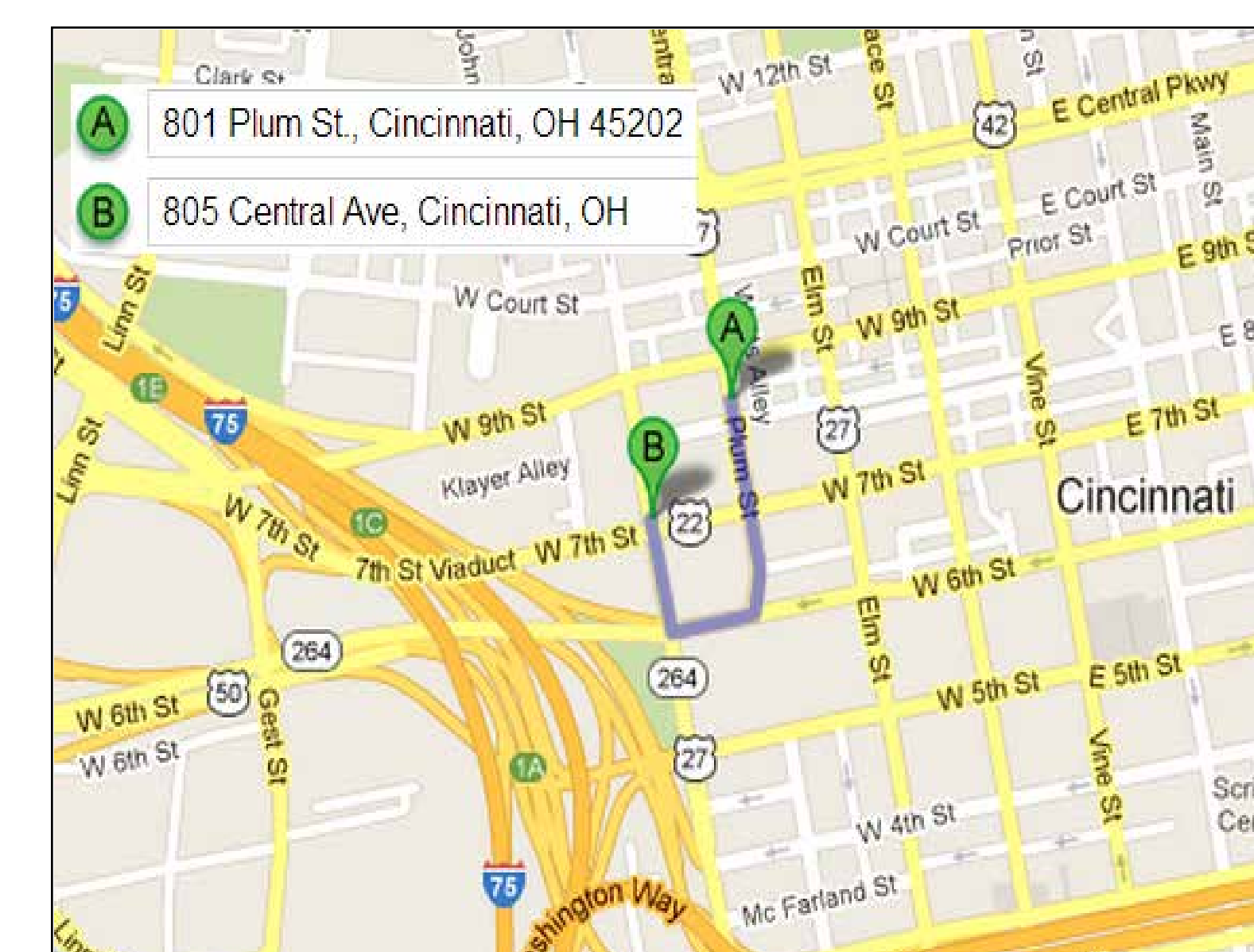

Figure 5: City Council vs. Depart. Locations – Google Maps

Strengths

All of the departments, offices, and programs are located in the Centennial II building. This allows for good communication, easy public access and interaction, and efficient development and relations between individual departments.
- City website: well laid out, interesting, inspirational in a way
- Staff members: friendly, helpful
- City Hall persona: dark and quiet yet strong sense of empowerment

Weaknesses

The governing body is located a block away in the City Hall building which can lead to issues between policy and planning as stated in Zucker P. (2007). "Politics."
- City Hall's public persona: un-marked, daunting to pass through giant doors
- Public Parking: inaccessible at times, expensive
- Very limited sources available on the Centennial II building: U-shape, 5-12 stories

Workability

All of the elected and appointed city officials seem to work closely with the public to ensure Cincinnati is one of the best places to live. This unity leads me to believe that the office atmosphere and attitude is the same between each and every staff member.