

City of Chicago RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN

Under the City of Chicago's Municipal Code (Ch. 2-4-100), all City of Chicago departments must create and maintain Racial Equity Action Plans (REAPs) "to articulate and guide strategy aimed at advancing equity and making it a permanent pillar in all departmental workstreams." Progress on all REAPs are accounted for annually as a part of the City of Chicago's budget process. This document outlines the components of the REAP and ensures that all strategies are aligned to Chicago's citywide vision: ***All people and all communities have power, are free from oppression, and are strengthened by equitable access to resources, environments, and opportunities that promote optimal health and well-being. (HC2025)***

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THE CITY OF CHICAGO'S DEFINITION OF EQUITY

Equity is both an outcome and a process:

As an **outcome** equity results in fair and just access to opportunity and resources that provide everyone the ability to thrive. Acknowledging the present and historical inequality that persist in our society, equity is a future state we strive to create where identity and social status no longer predestine life outcomes.

As a **process**, equity requires a new way of doing business: one that

- (1) Prioritizes access and opportunities for groups who have the greatest need.
- (2) Methodically evaluates benefits and burdens produced by seemingly neutral systems and practices.
- (3) Engages those most impacted by the problems we seek to address as experts in their own experiences, strategists in co-creating solutions, and evaluators of success.

Further, our focus is on evaluating our own strategies, interventions and resources in a way that prioritizes those who are most negatively impacted by current policies, procedures & practices.

Racial equity focuses on the social construction of race and how it has been used (historically and presently) to unjustly distribute opportunity and resources based on a person's skin color, heritage, ethnicity, and/or national origin. Advancing racial equity requires an analysis of systemic racism inclusive of the ways harm is created at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels. It also requires a commitment to dismantling systems that perpetuate racialized outcomes and rebuild systems that produce systemic inclusion.

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The coordination of the development and implementation of City of Chicago REAPs is led by the Office of Equity and Racial Justice. For more information about REAPs and/or the work of the office visit www.chicago.gov/equity.

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1. Economic Development

Citywide Desired Result:

All Chicagoans are economically self-sufficient, can build wealth, and thrive.

Community indicators:

What data can you examine to understand the status of the citywide desired result?-Walkability

Walkability

- *Distance (0.25-.5 miles) to local amenities
- *Car crashes (most dangerous intersections)
- *Sidewalk Café permits

Amenities

- *Grocery Stores, Parks, Libraries, Transit, Schools, etc.)
- *Citywide Grants Accessibility, including but not limited to DPD-administered grants like NOF, CDG, TIFF, SBIF, etc.)

Safety

- *Building vacancy
- *City-owned land
- *Properties in 2022 Scavenger Sale

Define the Problem

Identify the problem creating barriers to advancing the citywide goal.

Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on. Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue.

Long-term disinvestment of communities, lack of planning, lack of government intervention and resources, and lack of engagement in black and brown communities has resulted in disproportionate economic, health, and social inequities for communities of most need. Historical practices, such as redlining, along with inequitable access to financing, have created a cycle of poverty in many South and West side communities.

Identify Root Cause(s)

What is contributing to the problem?

How has systemic and structural racism shaped historical and current events related to the problem?

Redlining and block-busting, along with the widespread closure of industrial and manufacturing businesses, created concentrated poverty and disinvestment in the South and West communities (which local government has continued to enable) and has caused areas like Roseland to be left without sufficient resources and to not be able to participate in community building grants. Grants being offered come with strict application guidelines that create a barrier of entry for potential applicants, such as not understanding how to fill out an application completely and, oftentimes, not being able to get past the Scofflaw checks due to outstanding city debts.

Define the Opportunity

Identify opportunities for your department to advance the citywide goal.

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) is the central planning agency for the City of Chicago, and has the ability to influence development to best support and provide public benefit for local neighborhoods. DPD regulates large planned developments, provides city financial assistance, sale of land, and planning for neighborhoods. The most impacted communities (based on data including but not limited to low/moderate income, lack of public transit, life expectancy, vacancy, ect.) are the communities that are most in need of planning and resources, and are the communities that have benefited the least from DPD planning. Disinvestment in communities is also a central tenant of the We Will Chicago Plan to address historic reckoning and trust building, systemic inequities, accountability, and providing meaningful engagement. These efforts function as a lens for DPD to assess and reflect on its own programs and policies, whether those practices may directly or indirectly institutionalize systemic racial inequity.

Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on. Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue.

Data shows that Roseland is one of the most negatively impacted communities throughout the City of Chicago. There has been no business investment, particularly along Michigan Avenue, which is Roseland's main commercial street. Vacant storefronts are common sight, discouraging existing businesses and new businesses to locate in the area. Lack of DPD resources and intervention to provide tools to local businesses or recruit new businesses into the neighborhood has perpetuated this disparity. Opportunities to utilize Department funds are not realized nor intentionally directed to this neighborhood of most need.

<p>Department Strategy <i>What are the department's overarching strategies to advance equity for this priority area?</i></p> <p>Actions <i>What action will the department take to enact each strategy?</i></p>	<p>Timeline <i>By when will the department achieve this?</i></p>	<p>Performance Measures <i>How will the department know if it achieved its goal? Identify metrics that will indicate success. (e.g., staff composition and # of organizations served)</i></p>	<p>Implementation Plan <i>What specific steps will the department take to carry out each action? Identify necessary stakeholders to advance this action, e.g., internal department divisions/bureaus, other government departments/agencies, community organizations, etc.</i></p>	<p>Status <i>Departments will report the status of each action annually at budget time.</i></p>
<p>A. Department Strategy:</p>				
<p>Action #1: Improve the relationship between the Dept Planning and community organizations / businesses in the Roseland area to allow for opportunity to co-design and build programs and RFP's.</p>	<p>1 - 5 Years</p>	<p>Participation in number community events. Number of leadership roles for community</p>	<p>A department-wide effort with everyone that interacts with the Roseland community to identify opportunities for co-design.</p>	

<p>Action #2 Policy Change to DPD programs to remove requirement for scofflaw and revenue checks.</p>	<p>4th Quarter 2022</p>	<p>Number of program applicants able to proceed w/o revenue checks</p>	<p>(1) Identify municipal code provisions where revenue checks are required. (2) Review DOH ordinance to waive city debt on vacant and abandoned properties to support community revitalization projects, to assess potential application to DPD programs (3) Data shows racial disparities in city debt where predominant black and latinx communities are most like to have city debt, (4) Coordination with Dept Finance and Law to refine scofflaw policy for communities in most need (5) Be aware of potential "unintended consequences" that could arise and how to address them (i.e. removing scofflaw opens the doors for people with current tax/city dept to apply for grants to improve their business, post improvement the property tax can improve and with the same financial situation as prior to the grant, the business owner will be unable to keep up with taxes, a tax freeze would help in this instance.)</p>	
<p>Action #3 Predevelopment process: provide architects, general contractors, and other support for drafting a full application</p>	<p>1-2 years</p>	<p>Number of applicants able to utilize support materials to improve applications for City financial assistance</p>	<p>DPD is securing licenses to utilize Submittable software applications, which will allow for the ability to assess and track applications, real-time collaboration to refine applications, and provide support to applicants.</p> <p>DPD will engage with pro-bono and work to secure funding for groups to assist/provide feedback to applicants for more competitive outcomes.</p>	

B. Department Strategy:				
Action #1: Create a Large Lots program for commercial properties. Provide resources to those that buy lots.	Implement in 2023	The number of businesses and jobs supported with city vacant land. Measurable increase in property value. Value of proposed improvements.	Determine eligibility requirements for businesses to take advantage of re-purposing vacant city commercial lots to support existing businesses. Program ordinance required to improvement this new land sale program	
Action #2: Designate and fund a receiver for abandoned commercial properties in the court system.	Ordinance approved by Council in 1st Quarter 2024	Reduce the number of vacant abandoned commercial buildings that would otherwise be demolished	Coordinate with Dept Housing to develop a receivership property management program based on DOH Troubled Building Program.	
C. Department Strategy				
Action #1: Scale-up the Forty Acres Fresh Market idea in other neighborhoods, like Roseland.	1 to 2 years	The number of new food markets.	Assess the Forty Acre model for potential replicability. Work with programs like ETOD and the Food Equity Council.	
Action #2: Partner with ride-sharing apps to provide low-cost rides and/or delivery to unserved areas.	1 year	The number of people served by low-cost ride-sharing options.	Restart conversations with Lyft to start LyftUp Grocery Access Program in Chicago.	

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2. DATA

Citywide Desired Result:

All Chicagoans can obtain, view, or use public-facing data from the City of Chicago.

Community indicators:

What data can you examine to understand the status of the citywide desired result?

Website Analytics to understand who is accessing information and who is not (Traffic/FOIA Request Reduction/Helpfulness of Data)

Inventory of Data Sets to understand what's missing and how to get those missing assets

Analyze how we present the data and findings through user surveys

Define the Problem

Identify the problem creating barriers to advancing the citywide goal.

Be explicit about which populations or communities you need to focus on. Consider who is most negatively impacted and most marginalized on the issue.

No centralized data collection or standards and guidance; Lack of personnel that specializes in data management ; Lack of hardware and software and funding problems; Shared access to city data across departments and programs is unavailable

Identify Root Cause(s)

What is contributing to the problem?

How has systemic and structural racism shaped historical and current events related to the problem?

Inequity in digital resources and lack of will for transparency from government in order to enable the disenfranchisement of marginalized groups. This lack of resources have led to long-term disinvestment of communities, lack of planning, lack of government intervention and resources, and lack of engagement in black and brown communities which has resulted in disproportionate economic and social inequities.

Define the Opportunity

Identify opportunities for your department to advance the citywide goal.

The department can create and pilot standards for data collection, visulization, and anylization for better policy creation and transpacity with the public. This will lead to better policy outcomes and accountability to follow through on stated values, specifically for low income communities.

Department Strategy	Timeline	Performance Measures	Implementation Plan	Status
<p><i>What are the department's overarching strategies to advance equity for this focus area?</i></p>	<p><i>By when will the department achieve this?</i></p>	<p><i>How will the department know if it achieved its goal?</i></p>	<p><i>What specific steps will the department take to carry out each action?</i></p>	<p><i>Departments will report the status of each action annually at budget time.</i></p>
<p>Actions</p> <p><i>What action will the department take to enact each strategy?</i></p>		<p><i>Identify metrics that will indicate success. (e.g., staff composition and # of organizations served)</i></p>	<p><i>Identify necessary stakeholders to advance this action, e.g., internal department divisions/bureaus, other government departments/agencies, community organizations, etc.</i></p>	

A. Department Strategy: Establish common standard data and metrics for all programs within DPD

Action #1: Identify desired outcomes for data collection for CRP programs and others as desired	End of Q4 2022	Each active initiative will have identified Key Performance indicators.	Each CRP program, and others as desired, will have Program Manuals that outline processes, procedures, and KPIs	
Action #2: Memorialize standards	End of Q1 2023	DPD will have a data standards policy.	The CRP team in coordination with Bureaus will write and adopt a policy that is endorsed by the Commissioner	
Action #3: Educate the department on the new data management approach.	End of Q1 2023	Hold quarterly training with the goal of 80% attendance	Create slides and training to be given and recorded on quarterly basis.	
Action #3: <i>Enforce data management standards and spot check for accuracy on a monthly basis and update progress.</i>	Q1 2023	Data collection is uniform regardless of program. We are able to compare data month to month on an "apples to apples" basis.	Set monthly reporting outputs and ask managers to verify accuracy	

B. Department Strategy: Create/Establish ongoing professional development related to data collection, visualization, and analysis				
Action #1 - <i>Create basic trainings regarding the importance of data "story telling" to empower employees to better understand the importance fo data collection</i>	Q2 2023	At least two opportunity for training with the goal of 80% participation	Identify training that all employees can take and allocate resouces for that training	
Action #2 <i>Create a hiring plan for staffing</i>	Q2 2023	Create hiring ask for 2024 budget to include new data related positions	Work with operations to create resouce plan for data positions.	
Action #3 <i>Create a resouce plan for staffing</i>	Q2 2023	Create budget line item(s) for 2024 Budget to include new data programs	Work with operations to conduct an audit and resouce recommendations	
C. Department Strategy: Create a centralized dashboard for DPD data sets and visualization				
Action #1 Allocate in-house staff and resources.	Q1 2024	Having the hiring plan approved and executed	Work with OBM to get positions approved	
Action #2 Create a shared vision of the intention behind the dashboard.	Q1 2023	Finalized list of needs and timeline for launch	CRP staff conducts surveys with various DPD stakeholders to create list of needs and timeline	
Action #3 Create a pilot dashboard that addresses that vision.	Q3 2024	Working functional dashboard(s)	Completes actions 1&2	

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3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Citywide Desired Result:

All Chicagoans have a meaningful opportunity to influence City of Chicago programs, policies, and initiatives.

Community indicators:

What data can you examine to understand the status of the citywide desired result?

Roundtable schedules
Number of public meetings per year
We Will surveys
Spectrum of engagement

Define the Problem

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Lack of accessible information (print and electronic)
Lack of language access or accommodations for those with special needs
Timing of public input (when meetings are held, comment periods, etc.)
Disenfranchisement from resources due to lack of power, privilege, and/or connections to city hall

Identify Root Cause(s)

What is contributing to the problem?

How has systemic and structural racism shaped historical and current events related to the problem?

Many constituents have been left out of the public participation process. This has been a way to limit the amount of people-centered power in government. Racism and prejudice have reinforced an inequitable balance of power and influence.

Define the Opportunity

Identify opportunities for your department to advance the citywide goal.

Provide more options for people to engage in person and online
Community evaluators on RFP Evaluation Committees
Proactive education (i.e., Zoning 101)
Meet people where they are - go to a pre-scheduled meeting/event
Coordinating agency/department meetings so we don't have lots of meetings in one neighborhood
Create a more transparent public process that must respond to the community's listed concerns, even if it contradicts them (i.e., NIMBYs and affordable housing).

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A. Department Strategy: Create opportunities for the community to provide feedback to better understand their wants and needs.				
Action #1 - Work with the regional planners to be more proactive in the communities and provide more opportunities for community members to provide feedback on proposed community projects while also tracking how community feedback is or is not used in final plans with an analysis of why.	Q4- 2023	# of Staff Trained	Continue to train planners on how to improve their outreach and engagement skills	
Action #2 - Participate in community events and fairs to relay information on DPD programs as well as collect feedback from attendees on how we can improve our communication with the public.	Q4- 2023	# of Events Attended and # of survey responses	Use centralized event calender and create general feedback survey	
Action #3 Connect the We Will Chicago civic and community engagement priorities to all DPD led projects	Q4- 2023	a perminate written policy created by DPD that outlines engagement expectations	Commissioner's Office needs to secure the resources to get a written policy in place	
B. Department Strategy: Continue to improve DPD grants programs, to the extent possible, with community feedback in mind.				
Action #1 - Hold focus groups with past grant recipients and applicants to understand opportunities for improvement when it comes to DPD grants.	Q4- 2023	# of focus groups and changes to policy based on feedback	Hold focus groups to understand strengths and challenges of each program then incorporate those changes into the framework	
Action #2 - Ensure grant applications for DPD grants are easily accessible for everyone.	Q1- 2023	# of quality applications submitted	Continue to improve and consolidate online applications so that grant applications are more accessible.	