Racial Equity Action Plan Methodology

In the fall of 2021, OERJ launched the Equity and Racial Justice Cohorts to develop city departments' capacity to create Racial Equity Action Plans (REAPS). This is a key institutional change strategy to operationalize racial equity into the core business of government.

Participating Departments:

COHORT 1 *Launched in September 2021*	COHORT 2 *Launched in May 2022*	PUBLIC SAFETY COHORT *Launched in December 2022*
*Assets, Information, & Services**	*Chicago Public Library*	*Chicago Fire Department*
Aviation	*Streets and Sanitation*	*Chicago Police Department*
Commission on Human Relations	*Business Affairs and Consumer Protection*	*Civilian Office of Police Accountability*
Transportation	*Family and Support Services*	*Office of Public Safety Administration*
Human Resources	*Administrative Hearings*	
Board of Ethics [Audited]	*Buildings*	
Planning & Development	*Finance*	
Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities	*Law*	
Emergency Management & Communications	*Procurement Services*	
Cultural Affairs & Special Events	*Animal Care and Control*	
Water Management	*Inspector General*	

** In FY24, AIS will be split into two departments, Department of Fleet and Facility Management and Department of Technology and Innovation*

Developing the Capacity to Create REAPs

OERJ led three cohort experiences that supported 26 department teams in developing Racial Equity Action Plans and building the internal capacity to sustain racial equity work. Content and training were funded by the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and designed by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a national organization that provides racial equity training and best practices across the country.

For each team, commissioners selected 4-15 staff who cover the breadth of the department's core functions. Teams attended monthly training sessions. Between sessions, teams organized internal staff to complete assignments and attended technical assistance meetings with OERJ and GARE. Department training covered foundational racial equity concepts around:

- The role of government – building understanding on how government has created racial inequities and the role of government in driving racial equity.
- Leading and communicating about racial equity – providing hands-on exercises to discuss the leadership required to move organizational change within government and tools to communicate about racial equity internally and externally.
- Racial Equity Tools – introducing and applying GARE's Racial Equity Tool to develop Racial Equity Action Plans that identify key areas to advance racial equity and assign resources to drive change in governmental processes and the outcomes we seek.

Departments had the opportunity to showcase their learning and communicate their commitment to racial equity at a culminating symposium. The Mayor, Deputy Mayors, department leadership, and Equity Advisory Council members were in attendance.

Drafting REAPs

The core deliverable of the training was building departmental Racial Equity Action Plans (REAPS). A REAP is a multi-year strategic plan that articulates how departments will work to improve equitable outcomes in their core work (service delivery, policy, programs, finance, HR, etc.). OERJ gave teams the following guidance for developing their department's REAP:

- **A citywide vision statement.** All plans are aiming toward a city where 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. This language comes from CDPH's Healthy Chicago 2025 Plan.
- **13 priority areas with articulated desired results we want to see for all Chicagoans.** These priority areas largely focus on population level outcomes drawn from existing citywide plans to advance racial equity (*e.g., Healthy Chicago 2025, We Will Chicago, the Climate Action Plan, and Our City Our Safety)*. OERJ hoped that this will increase coordination across departments in these key areas. The remaining priority areas focus on key institutional processes needed to drive toward more equitable outcomes.
- **A REAP template to ensure consistency**. All departments were asked to develop REAPs that addressed three different priority areas, including at least one aligned to an outcome and one to a process. This requirement ensured that departments created plans that aligned to the City's definition of equity, which states that *equity is both an outcome and a process.* Department selections are included below.

Departments then had time to finalize their plans post-cohort. Commissioners signed off on final plans before publication. All REAPs were published by Quarter 2, 2023.

	Priority Areas	Desired Results	Department Priorities
Equity in our **OUTCOMES**	Arts & Culture	All Chicagoans celebrate, connect with, and contribute to the City's creative and cultural ecosystem.	DCASE, DOAH
	Economic Development	All Chicagoans are economically self-sufficient, can build wealth, and thrive.	DPD, BACP, DOF, DPS
	Education	All Chicagoans gain meaningful knowledge and skills to thrive.	DHR, CACC, DOL, DPS, DSS, CPL
	Environment, Climate, & Energy	All Chicagoans breathe air free from pollutants and have resilient and sustainable communities.	DAIS*, DOB
	Housing	All Chicagoans have healthy, accessible, and affordable homes.	MOPD, DOB, DOH
	Public Health & Services	All Chicagoans are healthy and benefit from a full range of health and human services.	CCHR, MOPD, DWM, DFSS, CFD, CDPH
	Public Safety	All Chicagoans are safe across the city and have trusting relationships with law enforcement and first responders.	DHR, OEMC, CACC, OIG, CPD
	Transportation & Infrastructure	All Chicagoans have a safe multi-modal transportation system and broadband access.	CDOT, DAIS*
Equity in our **PROCESSES**	Community Engagement	All Chicagoans have a meaningful opportunity to influence City of Chicago programs, policies, and initiatives.	CCHR, CDA, CDOT, DCASE, DPD, OEMC, DOAH, CACC, BACP, DFSS, DOL, DSS, CPD, CDPH, CPL, DOF, DOH
	Contracting	All Chicagoans benefit from and can participate in economic business with the City of Chicago.	DAIS*, CDA, BACP, DFSS, DOF, DPS
	Data	All Chicagoans can obtain, view, or use public-facing data from the City of Chicago.	CCHR, DCASE, DPD, DWM, MOPD, OIG, DSS, CFD, CPL, DOH
	Workforce	The City of Chicago's workforce reflects the demographics of the City, and all employees are connected to training and advancement opportunities.	CDA, CDOT, DHR, DWM, OEMC, DOAH, DOB, OIG, CFD, CPD, CDPH

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Reviewing/Evaluating REAPs

The Equity Advisory Council recommended setting up a process to evaluate department REAPs so the public could better understand the quality and potential impact of the REAPs. The goal of these evaluations was to acknowledge transformative work included within these plans and provide constructive ways to strengthen plans that are more transactional. For this reason, plans were evaluated on a scale of transactional to transformative.

Transactional approaches are issue-based; they focus on short-term gains for communities most impacted but leave the existing structure in place. Transformational approaches cut across multiple institutions, focus on policy and organizational culture, and alter the ways institutions operate.

OERJ, members of the Equity Advisory Council, and close community partners assessed plans based on the rubric below.

To be clear, moving toward transformation takes time. Every step, whether transactional or transformative, counts toward our greater goal of driving racial equity.

REAP Evaluation Rubric

	Transactional	Emergent	Transformative
NORMALIZES RACIAL EQUITY	**Focus on <u>equality</u>** *(Other acceptable phrases: ensuring everyone is getting the same opportunity)*	**Focus on <u>equity</u>** *(Other acceptable phrases: ensuring fair and just opportunity to resources and services; prioritizing access and opportunities for groups who have the greatest need)*	**Focus on racial <u>equity</u>** *(Other acceptable phrases: addressing racialized outcomes or systemic racism or driving systemic inclusion)*
FOCUSES ON SYSTEMS CHANGE	**Uses racial equity tools to create the plan but only applies one or fewer of the following components:**	**Uses racial equity tools to create the plan, but only applies two out of three components:**	**Uses racial equity tools and applies three of the following components in the plan:**
	• Clearly identifies the most negatively impacted. • Acknowledges systemic racism's role in creating racial inequities present today. • Prioritizes and creates a systems-change approach for those most negatively impacted.		
BUILDS INTERNAL CAPACITY & ORGANIZES RESOURCES	**Builds an infrastructure to advance racial equity, but only incorporates one or fewer of the following components:**	**Builds an infrastructure to advance racial equity, but only incorporates two out of three components:**	**Builds an infrastructure to advance racial equity by incorporating three of the following components:**
	• Identifies team(s)/staff to execute the plan and to track progress. • Develops a clear structure to engage all staff around the agency's racial equity commitments. • Strengthens staff's ability to advance racial equity in their work.		

INCORPO-RATES DATA *(NUMBERS AND NARRATIVES)*	**Uses data but only includes one or fewer of the following components:**	**Uses data but only incudes two out of three components:**	**Uses data by including three of the following components:**
	• Articulates data examined, both numbers and community narratives. • Narrative sections of the REAP (e.g., problem statement, root cause analysis, opportunity statement) are informed by available data. • Department strategies are derived from available data.		
INTEGRATES CITY PLANS AND STRUCTURES	**The plan does not cut across multiple institutions and sectors to drive racial equity. It includes none of the points listed below.**	**The plan attempts to cut across multiple institutions and sectors to create racial equity. It includes one item listed below.**	**The plan cuts across multiple institutions and sectors to create racial equity. It includes both items listed below.**
	• Identifying connections to relevant initiatives. This can be community, local, state, and/or federal plans. • Articulating cross-agency and or cross-sector approaches to addressing inequities.		
ESTABLISHES A STRONG EVALUATION SYSTEM	**Includes a plan to evaluate progress and address racial disparities. Further, it includes one or fewer of the following:**	**Includes a clear plan to evaluate progress and address racial disparities. Further, it includes two of the following:**	**Includes a strong plan to evaluate progress and address racial disparities. Further, it includes all of the following components:**
	• Quantifiable measures of how well an action is working and if anyone is better off. • Measures of impact disaggregated by race and/or geographic location, allowing for progress tracking of groups most negatively affected. • Measures of impact that are aligned/connect to the problem stated and underlying drivers to the problem - root causes.		