



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 11, 2012

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL LAUNCHES \$20 MILLION  
INNOVATION LOAN FUND**

*City Departments Must Propose Projects that Show Improvements in Service Delivery, Revenue Gains  
or Increased Efficiencies;*

*Funds Will Go Toward Projects Dedicated to Reducing Time People Wait for City Services – Helping  
Small Businesses and Home Owners*

Continuing with the implementation of the 2012 budget, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today that applications for the new \$20 million Innovation Loan Fund (ILF) are now available to all City Departments. The Chicago Innovation Loan Fund will make loans to City departments for projects that cannot be otherwise funded from their existing budgets and only those that achieve cost savings or revenue gains, and service improvements. The fund will especially target projects that reduce the time people wait for City services, such as cutting the time Chicagoans wait to start a new business, expand their home, or get a permit for a neighborhood block party.

“As a City we must constantly push the envelope, and strive for more innovative solutions, so we can deliver the highest quality service with the lowest cost to taxpayers. The Innovation Loan Fund will encourage Department employees at every level to submit their ideas on how we can run this City more efficiently and cost effectively,” said Mayor Emanuel. “It’s imperative we find ways to reduce the time people spend in line to get City services. This will help our small businesses and our home owners while saving taxpayer dollars through increased efficiency. I look forward to hearing about projects submitted by Departments that help achieve this goal.”

The Innovation Loan Fund will be managed by the Office of Budget and Management (OBM). The savings and revenues achieved through selected projects will be used to repay the loan capital, and savings above the loan amount will be reallocated to the Department to invest in further innovation. Funds will be awarded to applications that demonstrate innovation, accountability, or entrepreneurship.



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

After each application is reviewed by OBM to ensure it meets all of the requirements, they must be voted on by an Oversight Committee. In addition to voting on loan requests, the Oversight Committee will review progress reports provided by OBM. The deadline for applications to be submitted is February 15, 2012. After an initial review period, OBM will post complete and qualified loan proposals online at [www.chicagobudget.org](http://www.chicagobudget.org).

“This fund will help keep Chicago ahead of the curve,” said Budget Director Alex Holt. “It will allow us to invest in projects that otherwise we wouldn’t be able to fund during these difficult times.”

Additional examples of innovative projects that could be funded include retrofitting streetlights to cut electricity bills or streamlining the inspections system to cut administrative costs while reducing burdens on Chicago’s businesses. In addition, OBM will encourage City departments to work together and collaborate on their projects to achieve even more significant savings.

# # #