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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION OF 'WE WILL CHICAGO' CITYWIDE PLAN

Executive Order ensures the plan's implementation at all levels of government and is guided by the incoming Mayor-elect

CHICAGO—Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot has signed an Executive Order to initiate the implementation of We Will Chicago, a 10-year framework to promote equity and resiliency throughout Chicago. Last February, We Will Chicago became the [first citywide plan](#) in more than 50 years to be unanimously adopted by Chicago Plan Commission.

“We Will Chicago is a roadmap to advance neighborhood growth and vibrancy that will ensure all residents can live in healthy, safe communities and feel a sense of belonging,” Mayor Lightfoot said. “This document will be a critical tool to guide the city’s future annual budgets, capital projects, and policy priorities to ensure public decision-making is focused on the needs of the entire City and all its residents. I am grateful to the thousands of individuals who demonstrated their care and concern for Chicago’s future by contributing their perspectives and insights to shape the We Will plan.”

The Executive Order calls for the establishment of a We Will Chicago Implementation Steering Committee to promote transparency and accountability in the advancement of the plan’s goals and objectives. To consist of City and sister agency staff, residents, community, business, philanthropic, and other stakeholders, the committee will monitor and advise on implementation efforts and identify barriers to progress over time, among other responsibilities.

The Executive Order also directs City staff to create Pillar Action Plans that outline how City departments and sister agencies will advance We Will Chicago goals and objectives over the next five years.



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Implementation will also occur through other related actions. With adoption by the Chicago Plan Commission, future projects considered by the commission will be required to align with the goals and objectives of We Will Chicago. In addition, the City budgeted \$1.5 million to advance We Will implementation in 2023.

“We Will Chicago’s priorities are unique to the city’s needs today,” Department of Planning and Development Commissioner Maurice Cox said. “The same way the ‘1909 Plan of Chicago’ was a reflection of the city’s needs for civic improvements and the ‘1966’ plan identified many capital projects, We Will represents the hopes and dreams of Chicagoans for a more equitable and resilient city.”

Created through three years of intensive neighborhood-based and virtual public engagement, “We Will Chicago” consists of more than 40 goals and 150 objectives to guide the City’s governance across eight “planning pillars” for the next decade. The pillars include Housing & Neighborhoods; Arts & Culture; Environment, Climate & Energy; Lifelong Learning; Public Health & Safety; Transportation & Infrastructure; Civic & Community Engagement; and Economic Development.

“For too long, Chicago has lacked a collective and unifying vision for what we want this city to be, and the values we want to drive public decisions. Shaped with input from more than 13,000 residents, the We Will Chicago citywide plan captures this vision through its guiding principles of equity and resiliency,” said Christina Harris, senior director at the Metropolitan Planning Council. “MPC supports Mayor Lightfoot’s Executive Order to commit the City of Chicago to actions to implement We Will Chicago. We believe that establishing an inclusive Implementation Steering Committee and developing cross-departmental Pillar Action Plans, are essential next steps to advance the plan and put Chicago on a path to achieving its goals and objectives, ultimately increasing opportunities and improving the quality of life for all Chicago residents.”

Pillar goals and objectives were created by research teams that identified Chicago’s most pressing needs since the last citywide plan of 1966, including the challenges of urban renewal, loss of public housing, school closures, vacant lots, and more. Research teams consisted of a diverse group of over 115 resident volunteers, 25 community-based organizations, and 100 city staff selected through a citywide open application process in 2021. Each goal includes multiple objectives to realize progress over time and baseline data on social, health, and economic inequities to monitor throughout implementation. Example goals and objectives include:

- The Civic & Community Engagement goal to “Build more robust and effective civic infrastructure to enable Chicagoans to improve their lives and neighborhoods” is supported by three objectives, including the need to



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- “Create stronger, proactive, long-term partnerships with community organizations, block clubs, and other coalitions to increase engagement.”
- The Economic Development goal to “Support business growth throughout Chicago, especially businesses owned by Black, Latino, and Native American people” is supported by four objectives, including the need to “Prioritize resources and investment in small businesses and entrepreneurship programs.”
 - The Housing & Neighborhoods goal to “Prevent Chicagoans from being involuntarily displaced, especially those that have been historically marginalized” is supported by three objectives, including the need to “Increase community ownership opportunities and options for Black, Latino, Native American, Asian, and immigrant residents to collectively own land and properties.”

The draft plan was reviewed during the public comment period from June through November 2022 by more than 10,000 Chicagoans, 90% of whom agreed with its goals.

In addition to [the framework plan](#) which was formally adopted by the Chicago Plan Commission, the Department of Planning and Development also released two supplemental documents to shape the implementation phase:

- [The Implementation Stater Guide](#) is a collection of more than 600 policy ideas developed through the We Will Chicago engagement process to guide the successful implementation of the plan’s goals and objectives. The guide’s ideas may require further stakeholder engagement, feasibility analyses, and equity analyses, but will help jumpstart implementation and realize the vision of We Will Chicago for a more equitable and resilient city.
- [“We Will in Action”](#) details ways the City and sister agencies have already made significant strides to realize the We Will Chicago vision alongside cross-sector partners throughout the three-year planning process.

For more information on We Will Chicago, visit: wewillchicago.com

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