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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT UNVEILS COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLAN FOR CITYWIDE
EQUITY, RESILIENCY**

*Draft 'We Will' framework would be Chicago's first citywide plan in more than
50 years*

CHICAGO — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced Chicago's [first-ever citywide plan](#), drafted by neighborhood residents and community leaders, which is now available for public comment and discussion through the fall.

As a 10-year framework to enhance citywide equity and resiliency, the draft "We Will Chicago" plan includes approximately 40 goals and 150 objectives to improve Chicagoans' lives, especially individuals impacted by inequities in health, economic stability, neighborhood livability, and other systemic issues.

"'We Will' is a people-centered, data-driven plan that empowers our residents to reflect on our shared past and reimagine our city's future," said Mayor Lightfoot. "I am proud that this plan is the first of its kind in both our city and across the country. With residents' input that we will gather in the months to come, this plan will be a roadmap for a City where all people, businesses, and communities can thrive."

Publication of the 146-page draft simultaneously caps two years of research and meetings with over 115 resident volunteers, 25 community-based organizations, and 103 city staff. Today, the City starts a four-month public engagement period through Nov. 1 that will enable Chicagoans in every neighborhood to respond to this vision for a more equitable and resilient city.

Anticipated to be finalized in early 2023, the framework is part of Chicago's first formal citywide planning process since the mid-1960s. The framework is Chicago's:



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- First plan to acknowledge the impact of racist, discriminatory, and predatory policies of previous plans, policies, and private-sector practices that continue to exacerbate racial and social inequality today.
- First plan to be created with volunteers and community leaders, working side-by-side with city staff, who were selected through a citywide application process open to all residents.
- First plan to provide financial stipends to community organizations to compensate their constituents' participation in research team meetings.
- First planning process that incorporated a third-party civic organization to document all research team meetings and events for public transparency.
- First plan to enable stakeholders to host their own community discussions on the plan and provide feedback through a "Meeting-in-a-Box" model. More than 65 resident meetings were hosted through this format in 2021.
- First plan to inspire and coordinate public input through artist-led engagement activities in local neighborhoods. One-thousand-four-hundred residents were reached through 80 virtual and in-person events in 2021.

Under the direction of Mayor Lightfoot, the approximately \$4 million "We Will" planning process was initiated by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and the Metropolitan Planning Council in August 2020 with a series of stakeholder workshops and pre-planning sessions. Participants emphasized Chicago's need for a citywide plan led by residents that were excluded or harmed from previous planning efforts and outcomes.

Subsequent public engagement efforts included a virtual kick-off meeting attended by 800 people and the creation of seven research teams through a citywide open application process with 110 people and 25 organizations. The research teams and Advisory Group convened for more than 100 meetings combined to produce "We Will" draft goals, objectives, and a list of 600+ policy ideas to guide the City's implementation of the plan in 2023 and beyond.

"The draft framework directly speaks to our times and the opportunities and challenges we collectively face as a city of neighborhoods," DPD Commissioner Maurice Cox said. "It provides a foundation for long-lasting improvements that can be implemented by government, corporations, philanthropies, individuals, and other community stakeholders to make Chicago a more equitable and resilient city for all."

"We Will" contents are arranged around eight pillars:

- **Arts & Culture**, which presents strategies to support equitable access and participation in the arts throughout Chicago's 77 communities.



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- **Civic & Community Engagement**, which addresses opportunities for more robust and effective civic participation, trust-building, and improved service delivery for residents.
- **Economic Development**, which seeks to foster sustainable generational wealth for Black, Latino, and other households harmed by systemic inequities.
- **Environment, Climate & Energy**, which advances the city’s climate resiliency efforts and prioritizes strategies for Chicago’s most vulnerable residents.
- **Housing & Neighborhoods**, which aims to ensure that every Chicago neighborhood is safe, inclusive, and vibrant with access to healthy, affordable, and accessible housing and amenities
- **Lifelong Learning**, which seeks to facilitate Chicagoans’ access to learning opportunities regardless of age, race, citizenship, and language proficiencies.
- **Public Health & Safety**, which aims to prioritize public health and wellness for all residents and improve trauma-informed responses to inequities in health and safety.
- **Transportation & Infrastructure**, which sets goals to create access and connections through safe and reliable physical infrastructure and transportation networks

This summer’s public outreach to solicit feedback on the draft framework includes over 150 “We Will” engagement activities at city festivals and other locations where participants can provide in-person comments, take surveys, and submit ideas. Chicagoans can review the event calendar, download a copy of the plan, utilize the Meeting-in-a-Box toolkit to host your own conversations, and provide feedback at [WeWillChicago.com](https://www.wewillchicago.com).

Public feedback to the draft framework will be incorporated by planning staff in late 2022, and an updated “We Will” document will be presented to the Chicago Plan Commission in early 2023. The adoption of “We Will” by Plan Commission would lead to multiple implementation measures by the City that include new legislation, policies, executive orders, and other action items.

If adopted, the City would establish an administrative structure to facilitate accountability and transparency between departments and sister agencies to the public, and the budgets and scopes of existing City programs would undergo equity analyses for their alignment with the framework’s goals and objectives. The Plan Commission’s formal review and approval of large construction projects would also



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consider the projects' potential to advance the framework's equity and resiliency goals.

To view the citywide plan and contribute your voice, visit [WeWillChicago.com](https://www.wewillchicago.com).

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