

# City of Chicago Racial Equity Action Plan

## Business Affairs & Consumer Protection (BACP)

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](http://www.chicago.gov/equity).



## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #1

**The City of Chicago's 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) 



### Citywide Priority Area & Desired Result:

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: All Chicagoans are economically self-sufficient, can build wealth, and thrive.**

### Indicators Examined:

#### *Community Data*

Chicago Demographics, Median Income, Business Ownership, Unemployment Rates

#### *Program/Department Data*

Business Licenses by ward, Chambers in community areas, NBDCs in across community areas

### Community Feedback and Narratives

In partnership with the Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ), BACP's equity cohort team surveyed NDBC's and CBC's who contract with the department to understand barriers and challenges to business ownership and entrepreneurship. The survey showed that businesses in the ten wards with the least business licenses face the following challenges:

- Limited availability of vacant properties that are suitable for business owners without the need to spend significant amounts of money on repairs and renovations.
- High rental costs for business spaces, which many entrepreneurs and business owners cannot afford, leading to a lack of economic resources to start and sustain their businesses.
- Zoning issues that create barriers to starting a business due to the absence of supportive policies and economic resources.
- Lack of resources, knowledge, and financial support for business start-up fees, licensing, legal fees, and architectural assistance.
- Limited knowledge of zoning regulations and how they can impact the success of a business.
- Inadequate access to technology, which is critical to running a successful business in today's digital world.
- Insufficient support and guidance for entrepreneurs and business owners to navigate legal fees, architects, and general business knowledge, leading to a lack of preparation and readiness to start and sustain their businesses.

### Define the Problem

Business ownership is the lowest in communities with people of color. These communities are located on the South/Southeast side of Chicago in areas with the lowest income median and the highest unemployment rates.

### **Identify Root Causes to the Problem**

Our analysis found that ten wards with predominantly African American and Hispanic populations have the lowest number of business licenses. This disparity can be traced back to systematic factors such as redlining, discriminatory lending practices, and policies that have limited access to capital and funding for businesses in these communities. The root cause of these challenges can be attributed to historical inequalities in technology and investment resources over several generations. This lack of resources has perpetuated a cycle of low household income, limited access to viable and affordable spaces, and a lack of business and entrepreneurial role models. Without addressing these root causes, these communities will continue to face significant barriers to economic growth and prosperity.

### **Define Your Department's Opportunity**

The Department of Business Affairs & Consumer Protection has historic funding to help small businesses impacted by the pandemic, ensure the commercial corridors' robust recovery, and provide funding to local community and economic development organizations, including chambers of commerce, community development corporations, and other not-for-profit organizations. These organizations can also work as grantees in the Small Business Storefront Activation Program, collaborating with small business owners, artists, and landlords to provide swift relief by designing and executing activations on commercial corridors' vacant storefronts. BACP has an opportunity to invest ARP and NBDC funds in communities with low business ownership to provide capital, which is often a barrier to entry.

<https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/bacp-recovery-plan/home/small-business-vacant-storefront-activations.html>

## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #1

### Our department will advance the following strategies:

**1. Department Strategy: Strengthen community engagement and training opportunities in areas with the least amount of business ownership (e.g., additional workshops, connecting residents to spaces that will provide the needs to succeed, etc.)**

Measures of Impact: We will look for feedback from our community partners and monitor the attendance to see how many attendees apply for a business license within six months of taking the workshops.

Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
<p>1.1 Engage partners (City departments, chambers of commerce, community organizations, faith-based organizations, etc.) to inform the public on upcoming business webinar workshops and expos held in community colleges all over the city.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify potential partners, including other City Departments, Chambers of commerce, and community organizations that could help spread the word about upcoming online business training events. Such as CPL and COC (Week 1-2)</li> <li>2. Reach out to identified partners and inform them about upcoming business webinars, workshops, and expos. (Week 3-4)</li> <li>3. Provide partners with promotional materials such as flyers, brochures, and social media posts that can be used to advertise the events to their members and followers. ( Week 5-6)</li> <li>4. Collaborate with the partners to spread the word about the events through their respective communication channels, such as email newsletters, social media, and website announcements. (Week 5-6)</li> <li>5. Follow up with the partners to track their efforts and measure the success of the plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership strategy and make necessary adjustments for future events (Week 7-8)</li> </ol>	<p>8 weeks</p>	

<p>1.2 Training partners on department processes</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct an assessment of our business partners to identify areas of improvement in regard to our process. (Q1 2024)</li> <li>2. Develop training programs that cover best business practices and strategies for increasing business success and encourage people to apply for a business license. (Q1 2024)</li> <li>3. Invite our business partners to attend the training program and provide them with the necessary materials, such as handouts, presentations, and previous youtube video recordings. (Q2 2024)</li> <li>4. Deliver the training program virtually or in person using interactive and engaging methods to maximize learning and retention. (Q2 2024)</li> <li>5. Follow up with business partners to answer any questions as needed.</li> <li>6. Monitor the effectiveness of the training program by tracking the number of new business license applications and conducting surveys to assess the satisfaction and confidence of our partners. (Q3 2024)</li> <li>7. Evaluate the training program and make necessary adjustments for future training sessions to ensure continuous improvement (Q4 2024)</li> </ol>	<p>2024</p>	
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<p>1.3 Creating additional workshops in Zoning in these areas so entrepreneurs can better understand our zoning guidelines and what to look out for</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a needs assessment among our business partners to identify knowledge gaps and areas of difficulty in understanding our licensing guidelines, including City zoning requirements. (Q1 2024)</li> <li>2. Analyze the results of the needs assessment to determine which areas require additional training and design or redesign workshops to meet those needs. (Q1 2024)</li> <li>3. Develop workshop materials that cover the relevant guidelines, regulations, and City zoning requirements, with a focus on providing practical examples to enhance understanding. (Q2 2024)</li> <li>4. Schedule and publicize the workshops through various channels, such as Social Media, email, and community events, to ensure broad participation. (Q3 2024)</li> <li>5. Deliver workshops in a manner that is interactive and engaging, using a variety of instructional methods, including real business-type examples and group discussions.</li> <li>6. Collect feedback from attendees and make necessary adjustments to the workshops to ensure that they remain relevant and effective. (Q4 2024)</li> </ol>	<p>2024</p>	
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## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #1

### Our department will advance the following strategies:

**2. Department Strategy: Empower start-ups and facilitate the growth of existing small businesses by providing them with the necessary capital to improve their operations and expand their reach.**

Measures of Impact: The success rate of the businesses that receive funding, measured by factors such as revenue growth, job creation, and sustainability as small businesses are often key drivers of economic growth and job creation.

Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
<p>2.1 Leverage the data uncovered to maximize the impact of Historical Funding Programs and ensure that businesses that have been most impacted receive the support they need to recover. To achieve this, we will provide our ARP team with the relevant data and collaborate with them to develop a targeted outreach plan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the wards that have been most impacted by the current economic situation using the data we uncovered. (Week 1-2)</li> <li>2. Develop a clear and concise message that effectively communicates the availability of Historical Funding Programs and how businesses can apply for them. (Week 3-4 )</li> <li>3. Utilize a variety of communication channels, such as email, social media, and direct mail, to reach businesses in the targeted areas and inform them of the funding opportunities. (Week 5-6)</li> <li>4. Provide guidance and support to businesses throughout the application process to increase their chances of success. (Week 7-8)</li> <li>5. Collaborate with community organizations, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders to ensure the outreach efforts are comprehensive and effective. (Week 9-10 )</li> <li>6. Monitor the success of the outreach plan and make adjustments as necessary to ensure the targeted businesses are receiving the support they need. (Week 11-12)</li> </ol>	<p>12 Weeks</p>	

<p>2.2 Outline steps to enhance the promotion and continuous dissemination of information to the public regarding the availability of funding</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the historical grant and funding programs that will be used to provide access to capital for small businesses. (Week 1-2)</li> <li>2. Develop a comprehensive outreach plan to ensure that small business owners are aware of these programs and understand the application process. (Week 3-4)</li> <li>3. Create a streamlined application process that is easy to navigate and minimizes administrative burdens for applicants. (Week 5- 6)</li> <li>4. Assemble a team of reviewers who can efficiently evaluate applications and determine which businesses are best suited for funding. (Week 7-8)</li> <li>5. Establish a system for monitoring and evaluating the success of the businesses that receive funding, using metrics such as revenue growth, job creation, and sustainability. (Week 9-10 )</li> <li>6. Provide ongoing support and resources to the businesses that receive funding, such as mentorship, training, and networking opportunities. (Week 11-12)</li> <li>7. Continuously assess the effectiveness of the program and make adjustments as necessary to ensure that it is meeting the needs of small businesses and driving economic growth. (Week 13-14 )</li> <li>8. Communicate the impact of the program to stakeholders, including small business owners, elected officials, and the public, to build support and ensure it continued (Week -15-16)</li> </ol>	<p>16 weeks</p>	
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<p>2.3 Collaborate with various departments within the city by forming partnerships to achieve common goals.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify potential departments within the city that share common goals and objectives.(Week1- 2)</li> <li>2. Conduct research and gather information on the department's current initiatives, resources, and priorities. (Week 3-4)</li> <li>3. Develop a proposal outlining the benefits and objectives of partnering with each department, including potential collaborative projects and areas of mutual interest. (Week 5-6)</li> <li>4. Schedule meetings with representatives from the identified departments to discuss the proposal and explore partnership opportunities. (Week 7-8 )</li> <li>5. Determine the best ways to allocate resources and responsibilities among the collaborating departments. (Week 9-10 )</li> <li>6. Establish clear communication channels and protocols to ensure effective coordination and collaboration. (Week 11 )</li> <li>7. Monitor the progress of collaborative projects, track outcomes, and evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership. (Week 12)</li> <li>8. Review and adjust the partnership strategy and implementation plan as necessary. ( Ongoing )</li> </ol>	<p>12 Weeks</p>	
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## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #1

### Our department will advance the following strategies:

**3. Department Strategy: Forge partnerships with programs that have access to spaces that are suitable for business owners to open businesses without the need to spend significant amounts of money on locations, repairs, renovations, etc.**

Measures of Impact: number of new businesses that open in previously inaccessible locations, the increase in the local economy's vibrancy, the reduction in the costs associated with starting a business, which can encourage more entrepreneurs to take the leap and start their own ventures

Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
<p>3.1 Vacant lot program- Identify vacant lots in low-license count wards and recommend potential business uses for these lots</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a comprehensive survey of all wards to identify vacant lots.</li> <li>2. Analyze license data to determine wards with low license counts.</li> <li>3. Cross-reference the results of the survey and license data analysis to identify vacant lots in low-license count wards.</li> <li>4. Research potential business uses for each vacant lot, taking into account factors such as zoning regulations, local market demand, and community needs.</li> <li>5. Create a database or map of the identified vacant lots and potential business uses.</li> <li>6. Share the database or map with relevant stakeholders, including city officials, community organizations, and potential business owners.</li> <li>7. Provide guidance and resources to help interested parties turn vacant lots into viable business locations, including information on financing options, zoning regulations, and community engagement.</li> <li>8. Monitor and evaluate the success of the program, including the number of new businesses established and the increase in license counts.</li> </ol>	<p>One full year</p>	

<p>3.2 Storefront activation-Revitalize vacant commercial and mixed-use buildings in neighborhood corridors to increase business opportunities in areas with low business licensing rates</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify key neighborhood corridors with high vacancy rates and low business licensing rates.</li> <li>2. Conduct a needs assessment to determine the specific needs and preferences of local business owners.</li> <li>3. Develop a plan to repurpose vacant buildings into suitable spaces for business owners.</li> <li>4. Provide funding and resources for building rehabilitation and repurposing, including grants and low-interest loans.</li> <li>5. Work with local business associations and community organizations to promote available spaces to potential business owners.</li> <li>6. Establish partnerships with local financial institutions to provide additional support to business owners.</li> <li>7. Monitor and evaluate the program's success, including the number of new businesses established and the increase in business licensing rates.</li> </ol>	<p>one full year</p>	
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<p>3.3 Co-Ops</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct research: Conduct research to identify shared-equity models that have been successful in similar communities and determine the most suitable model(s) for the targeted community.</li> <li>2. Develop the program: Develop the economic development program, outlining the goals, objectives, and expected outcomes. Ensure that the program includes clear and measurable metrics to track progress.</li> <li>3. Pilot the program: Pilot the program by investing in shared-equity models, such as worker cooperatives, housing cooperatives, and community land trusts. Ensure that the pilot is implemented in historically disinvested communities.</li> <li>4. Measure and evaluate: Measure the impact of the pilot by tracking the number of new shared-equity models established, the amount of wealth generated within historically disinvested communities, and the level of community engagement. Evaluate the success of the pilot and make any necessary adjustments to the program.</li> <li>5. Expand the program: Based on the success of the pilot, expand the economic development program to additional communities. Ensure that the program is scalable and sustainable.</li> <li>6. Communicate and promote: Communicate the successes of the program and promote it to other stakeholders, including community members, businesses, and policymakers.</li> <li>7. Continuous improvement: Continuously monitor and evaluate the program to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. Make any necessary adjustments to ensure that the program continues to meet the needs of the community.</li> </ol>	<p>20 weeks</p>	
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## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #2

The City of Chicago's 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)



### Citywide Priority Area & Desired Result:

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

### Indicators Examined:

#### *Community Data*

Business ownership, common languages spoken

#### *Program/Department Data*

Vendor participation in BACP's community events, outreach to the community, 311 complaints

### Community Feedback and Narratives

Building on our partnership with the Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ), BACP surveyed NDBCs and CBCs contracting with the department to understand barriers and challenges to business ownership and entrepreneurship. They all discussed the need to have department information readily available and accessible in multiple languages to ensure that they are better servicing the communities they are in.

### Define the Problem

Communication is critical. We see a barrier in forming partnerships with minority businesses due to a lack of appropriate feedback from the business community. This has resulted in the information provided by the department not being presented in a language accessible to business owners, particularly minorities, which hinders their ability to comprehend guidelines and regulations thoroughly.

### Identify Root Causes to the Problem

A root cause issue we have identified is not receiving the appropriate feedback from our minority business community to be better able to form partnerships in these communities and provide our depts information in a language-accessible way to ensure that as business owners, they are aware of all of the guidelines they are to follow.

### Define Your Department's Opportunity

BACP has an opportunity to enhance its services by ensuring that all FAQ sheets and website information is accessible to the general public, regardless of their language or background. This presents an ideal opportunity to thoroughly review the current FAQ sheets and identify areas for improvement to make information more easily accessible to all. By doing so, the department can better serve the community and improve its overall accessibility and inclusivity.

## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #2

### Our department will advance the following strategies:

#### 1. Department Strategy: Enhance the effectiveness of community engagement by refining guiding questions and conversation prompts.

Measures of Impact: Increase the level of engagement and participation from the community as well as the quality of insights and feedback obtained from them. This improvement would ultimately result in better-informed decision-making and policies that align with the community's needs and preferences.

Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
<p>1.1 Develop guiding questions/ conversation prompts for community engagement.</p>	<p><b>Weeks 1-2:</b> Identify the key objectives and goals of the community engagement initiative through a needs assessment and analysis of the community.</p> <p><b>Weeks 3-4:</b> Research and analyze the community's needs, preferences, and concerns to ensure the guiding questions and conversation prompts are relevant and impactful.</p> <p><b>Weeks 5-6:</b> Collaborate with stakeholders and subject matter experts to develop comprehensive guiding questions and conversation prompts that cover all relevant topics.</p> <p><b>Weeks 7-8:</b> Test the questions and prompts with a sample of the target audience to ensure they are clear, concise, and understandable.</p> <p><b>Weeks 9-10:</b> Refine and iterate on the questions and prompts based on feedback from the testing phase.</p> <p><b>Weeks 11-12:</b> Create a final set of guiding questions and conversation prompts, a user guide, and training materials for staff to use in community engagement activities.</p> <p><b>Weeks 13-14:</b> Train staff on the new guiding questions and conversation prompts.</p> <p><b>Week 15 onwards:</b> Implement the new guiding questions and conversation prompts in community engagement initiatives and regularly evaluate their effectiveness to ensure continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Q1 of 2024</p>	

<p>1.2 Quarterly NBDC meetings to gather feedback using newly built-out resources.</p>	<p><b>Month 1:</b> Establishing the goals for each quarter's assembly, disentangling which parties are pertinent to consider, and deciding on an optimal calendar of meeting dates and timings must all be accomplished.</p> <p><b>Month 2:</b> Formulating a detailed schedule for the upcoming meetings is imperative, as enlisting all pertinent subjects must be deliberated upon and deciding on precise feedback that needs gathering. Variance in sentence structures demands diverse syntax patterns with emphasis placed on exploratory communication strategies, further complicating our language repertoire through extensive use of multi-syllable adjectives paired alongside complex adjective adverbs.</p> <p><b>Month 3:</b> Oversee the gatherings, guaranteeing that every invested party can furnish input and that all items on the schedule are addressed comprehensively.</p> <p><b>Month 4:</b> Procure and compile input concerning the assemblies, encompassing proposals, apprehensions, and avenues for enhancement. Shuffle these notions into a cohesive collection of data.</p> <p><b>Month 5:</b> Upon conducting an in-depth analysis of the feedback obtained, it is imperative to discern and recognize recurring patterns or overarching motifs.</p> <p><b>Month 6:</b> Following the received feedback, create a well-constructed strategy and delegate ownership of each action item to the appropriate personnel on board.</p> <p><b>Months 7-9:</b> Execute the strategic plan and frequently assess advancement in attaining goals of the quarterly gatherings. Varyingly examine how successful initiatives have been implemented to accomplish objectives during these meetings.</p>	<p>Begin to draft plan in Q4 on 2023 to introduce in Q1 of 2024</p>	
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<p>1.3 Bi-annually community meetings with dept management Deputies, Asst Commissioner's and alderpeople to gather feedback.</p>	<p><b>Phase 1: Planning and Preparation (1-2 months).</b> Determine the goals and objectives of the community meetings Identify the key stakeholders and determine their expectations Choose a suitable venue for the meetings Establish a communication plan for announcing the meetings to the community. Develop a feedback mechanism to record and review all feedback.</p> <p><b>Phase 2: Implementation (3-6 months).</b> Schedule the community meetings and ensure adequate notice is provided to all stakeholders. Conduct the discussions following the structured approach for open dialogue. Record and review all feedback, and identify action items. Circulate the summary reports to all stakeholders. Assign action items to relevant personnel, with progress reports given at subsequent meetings.</p> <p><b>Phase 3: Evaluation and Continuous Improvement (Ongoing).</b> Monitor the progress of the action items and make necessary adjustments Evaluate the effectiveness of the community meetings and make improvements for future meetings. Continuously engage with the stakeholders to ensure their needs and expectations are being met.</p>	<p>Q2 of 2024</p>	
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## **RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #2**

### **Our department will advance the following strategies:**

**2. Department Strategy: Enhance and expand the scope of our community engagement efforts internally and externally to create a more significant and widespread impact.**

Measures of Impact: Increased frequency and quality of interactions with community members; the level of satisfaction and trust demonstrated by the community towards our department; the effectiveness of our engagement by tracking the number and diversity of community members reached; positive changes and outcomes resulting from our community engagement initiatives.

Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
<p>2.1 Analyze 311 data for most common complaints</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through implementing relevant statistical approaches, discover the most frequent grievances lodged in 311.</li> <li>2. Classifying the grievances based on their frequency and gravity is essential while recognizing any patterns or trends in the information presented.</li> <li>3. Assemble a comprehensive report that encapsulates the discoveries made and articulates prevalent grievances.</li> <li>4. Employ various illustrative tools such as diagrams, figures, and visual aids to facilitate comprehension of said information.</li> <li>5. With an in-depth breakdown and thorough examination of the findings, provide suggestions on alleviating the prevalent issues often brought up as complaints.</li> <li>6. Continuous Monitoring of the results to ensure that they are effective.</li> <li>7. On an ongoing basis, assess and scrutinize the 311 figures to identify novel patterns or trends. Once detected, make necessary adjustments to the plan.</li> <li>8. Share the analysis and implementation plan results with relevant stakeholders and seek their feedback to improve the process.</li> <li>9. Evaluate the success of the implementation plan and make any necessary adjustments to improve the process for future analyses.</li> </ol>	<p>Begin in Q4 in 2023 to introduce in Q1 of 2024</p>	

<p>2.2 Engage business owners and complainants to understand what is contributing to high influx of complaints</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze previous customer complaints to identify the most frequent complaints (1-2 weeks).</li> <li>2. Contact the business owners whose companies are frequently complained about and schedule a meeting or a phone call to discuss the issues (1-2 weeks).</li> <li>3. Follow up with the individuals who filed complaints and ask for feedback on what they experienced during this process. Use the feedback to understand the root cause of the problem (2-4 weeks).</li> <li>4. Analyze the information collected from business owners and complainants to identify commonalities or patterns (1-2 weeks).</li> <li>5. Based on the analysis, develop a plan of action to address the root causes of the complaints. This may involve changes to policies, procedures, or training for staff members (2-4 weeks).</li> <li>6. Communicate the plan to the business owners and implement the necessary changes (4-8 weeks).</li> <li>7. Monitor the situation after implementing the plan to ensure the number of complaints decreases over time. If necessary, adjust the plan to continue improving the customer experience (ongoing).</li> <li>8. Finally, communicate the plan results to all stakeholders involved, including the business owners and complainants, to demonstrate progress and improvements (ongoing).</li> </ol>	<p>Q2 of 2024</p>	
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<p>2.3 Collaboratively examine the feedback provided by the community and work together to devise effective solutions aimed at decreasing the number of complaints.</p>	<p><b>Month 1:</b> Collect customer data and feedback through surveys, feedback forms, social media channels, and other relevant platforms to identify the most common complaints and areas that require improvement. Form a team consisting of representatives from different departments to develop solutions collaboratively. Prioritize the issues based on their severity, impact, and frequency.</p> <p><b>Month 2:</b> Brainstorm and develop practical, cost-effective, and feasible solutions to address the identified issues. Implement the keys on a small scale to test their effectiveness and identify potential problems.</p> <p><b>Month 3:</b> Refine the solutions based on the test results and implement them on a larger scale. Provide training to employees and communicate the changes to customers.</p> <p><b>Month 4:</b> Continuously monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented solutions. Identify any potential issues and make necessary adjustments to ensure their effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Month 5 and Ongoing:</b> Continuously gather feedback from customers and employees to make necessary improvements to ensure that the solutions remain effective over time.</p>	<p>Q3 2024</p>	
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## **RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #2**

### **Our department will advance the following strategies:**

**3. Department Strategy: Improve the linguistic inclusivity of all information disseminated both internally and externally by ensuring information intended for public consumption is accessible to all, regardless of their language or background.**

Measures of Impact: The number of website visitors who use translation tools; the number of individuals who access the department's information in alternative formats such as Braille or audio; and the number of individuals who access the department's social media channels in a language other than English


Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
<p>3.1 Ensure all departmental information is linguistically inclusive and disseminated within the department, emphasizing information intended for public view.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. During the initial 2-4 weeks, perform a comprehensive assessment of all pertinent departmental details to unearth potential linguistic obstacles and opportunities for enhancement.</li> <li>2. Throughout the initial phase spanning 2-4 weeks, it is crucial that precise regulations and benchmarks are put in place for the convenience of language comprehension. These protocols should be derived from suggestions offered by departmental personnel and outside linguistic specialists if necessary.</li> <li>3. It is critical that programs are formulated and executed to train departmental personnel to be equipped with the essential capabilities required for producing accessible data.</li> <li>4. To maintain language accessibility, a system for consistent scrutiny and assessment of departmental information must be executed within 28-42 days.</li> <li>5. During a two-to-three-month period, give precedence to modifying openly available data like website particulars and online public notices to make them easily understandable for every public member.</li> <li>6. Consider the integration of multi-lingual proficiencies into your department's communication channels within a period spanning between 8 and 12 weeks from now. This future incorporation would augment language accessibility levels across diverse demographics.</li> <li>7. Sustain communication and interaction with community-based establishments and individuals knowledgeable in linguistics to acquire feedback and understanding of methods of enhancing language accessibility implemented within the department</li> </ol>	<p>Beginning of Q1 of 2024</p>	

<p>3.2 Enhance the accessibility of information disseminated within our department.</p>	<p><b>Month 1-2:</b> Conduct a needs assessment: Before implementing any changes, it is essential to understand the current state of information accessibility in the department. Conducting a needs assessment will help identify areas where improvements are needed and inform the design of appropriate interventions.</p> <p><b>Month 3-4:</b> Develop an information management system: Establish a plan to manage information within the department. This system should be designed to ensure that information is easily accessible, organized, and up-to-date. Consider using digital tools and technologies to facilitate efficient information sharing and management.</p> <p><b>Month 5-6:</b> Establish communication protocols: Clearly define communication protocols for sharing information within the department. These protocols should outline the procedures for communicating, receiving, and responding to reports and the expected response times.</p> <p><b>Month 7-8:</b> Provide training and support: Provide staff with training on effectively managing and sharing information within the department. Consider offering ongoing support to ensure staff has the resources to use the new information management system and communication protocols.</p> <p><b>Month 9-10:</b> Launch new system protocols for the entire department and provide ongoing support.</p> <p><b>Month 11-12:</b> Monitor and evaluate: Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the new information management system and communication protocols. Use feedback from staff and other stakeholders to make any necessary adjustments and ensure that the system meets the department's needs.</p>	<p>Q2 of 2024</p>	
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<p>3.3 To make our department's communication more accessible for individuals with disabilities such as visually impaired</p>	<p><b>Month 1-2.</b> Identify areas for improvement: Conduct a needs assessment to identify areas where accessibility improvements are needed. Involves BACP reviewing existing materials and soliciting feedback from individuals with disabilities.</p> <p><b>Month 3-4.</b> Develop a plan for implementing changes: Develop a plan that includes identifying the materials that need to be updated and the alternative formats.</p> <p><b>Month 5-6.</b> Update materials: Begin updating materials to make them accessible. Redesigning materials to include alternative formats such as large print, Braille, audio, or electronic text and incorporating plain language into our department's materials</p> <p><b>Month 7-8.</b> Provide training to staff on how to create accessible materials and use assistive technology.</p> <p><b>Month 9-10.</b> Pilot test new materials and formats: Pilot tests the latest materials and designs with a small group of participants to identify any issues and make necessary adjustments.</p> <p><b>Month 11-12.</b> Launch accessible materials: Launch the new accessible materials and formats to the public and provide ongoing support.</p> <p>By incorporating these strategies, you can ensure that your department's communication is more accessible to individuals with disabilities, leading to greater inclusivity and equity for all members of the community.</p>	<p>Q4 of 2024</p>	
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## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #3

**The City of Chicago's 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) 



### Citywide Priority Area & Desired Result:

**CONTRACTING: All Chicagoans benefit from and can participate in economic business with the City of Chicago.**

### Indicators Examined:

#### *Community Data*

Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBE) Certified businesses, business ownership

#### *Program/Department Data*

Type of businesses that receive contracts from BACP

### Community Feedback and Narratives

See We Will Chicago plan

### Define the Problem

Based on research, contract and procurement spending during the years 2015 through 2019, totaling approximately \$1.55B was awarded to prime contractors. Businesses considered M/WBE and “socially disadvantaged” under the City’s ordinance, prime contractors’ utilization of subcontractors was 54.2 percent. Out of that percentage, 7.7 percent were Black-owned, 17.1 percent Hispanic-owned, 16.4 percent Asian-owned, 0.0 percent Native American-owned, and 13.0 percent White woman-owned. The other 45.9 percent were non-M/WBE-owned businesses. The study found that M/WBEs are much more reliant on subcontracts compared to non-M/WBEs. For Black, Hispanic, and White woman-owned firms, over 90 percent of their work is as subcontractors. In contrast, for non-M/WBE-owned firms, just under 73 percent of their work is as subcontractors.

### Identify Root Causes to the Problem

Small business owners and entrepreneurs aren't aware of the City's procurement processes or resources available.

### Define Your Department's Opportunity

Through our Department's new EDGE program, BACP will offer workshops, training, internships, mentoring and coaching, matchmaking, and cohort

programming designed to assist existing and start-up minority, certified and non-certified minority, and women-owned enterprises (MBE/WBE).

## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #3

**Our department will advance the following strategies:**

**1. Department Strategy: Increase training for small MBE/WBE to assist them in getting more city contracts.**

Measures of Impact: Number of participants that successfully register as a MBE/WBE contractors/suppliers and those that are awarded city contracts.

Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
<p>1.1 Develop a training program to assist MBE/WBE businesses get certified and registered to sell to/contract with the city.</p>	<p>1. Initial meeting to introduce Small Business Advocacy team (SBA) to DPS and share data from 10 wards with the fewest business licenses. 2. Discuss how DPS currently solicits and encourages bids from MBE/WBE businesses and how SBA &amp; NBDCs can assist. 3. Discuss/strategize how SBC can best help DPS get more MBE/WBE businesses successfully registered with DPS. 4. DPS trains SBA and NBDCs on how to complete MBE/WBE certification applications so they can recruit and assist businesses in completing the process.</p>	<p>3rd Quarter 2023</p>	
<p>1.2 Quarterly meetings with SBA &amp; DPS to track and discuss progress.</p>	<p>1. Monthly meetings/check-ins with NBDCs to discuss progress in identifying and assisting MBE/WBE businesses registering with the city. 2. Analyze information from NBDCs to determine the most successful approaches. 3. Outreach team to conduct bi-annual training webinars to help MBE/WBE businesses get certified and registered with DPS to contract goods and services with the city.</p>	<p>3rd Quarter 2023</p>	
<p>1.3 Annual review/progress report.</p>	<p>1. Review and analyze success in increasing MBE/WBE certifications, the number of applications received, and the number successfully completed/certified. 2. Review and discuss the number of MBE/WBE contracts awarded in the previous year compared to prior years. 3. Implement an action plan to improve or expand the existing program to other wards.</p>	<p>3rd Quarter 2024</p>	

## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #3

### Our department will advance the following strategies:

#### 2. Department Strategy: Increase the number of minority businesses that successfully contract with the department

Measures of Impact: Locations and number of MBE/WBE businesses where dollars are spent in procurement department.

Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
<p>2.1 We will create a tailored outreach plan (REAP Priority 1) to reach small business owners who could possibly benefit from applying to be an MBE/WBE throughout the south and west sides.</p>	<p>Through partnerships with our local chambers of commerce, non-for-profit community, neighborhood business development service centers, and business services organizations, our education and outreach and Small Business Advocacy teams will provide training, workshops, counseling, and mentorship resources to assist entrepreneurs, small business owners, and professional service firms prepare for the successful participation in public and private contracting.</p>	<p>Q3/4 2023</p>	
<p>2.2 Provide training, workshops, counseling, and mentorship resources to assist entrepreneurs, small business owners, and professional service firms prepare for the successful participation in public and private contracting.</p>	<p>Working internally with our Small Business Advocacy and Outreach and Education teams, we will create webinars and in-person summits to teach the following classes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government Contracting Fundamentals</li> <li>Peer, Mentoring, and Coaching Programming</li> <li>Sales Pitch Development</li> <li>Bonding and Bidding</li> <li>Financing to Scale Business Operations</li> <li>Training covering RFP best practices and common mistakes.</li> <li>Subcontracting to Prime Contracting Training, Workshops, and Internships</li> <li>Certification Application Assistance</li> </ul>	<p>Q3/4 2023</p>	

<p>2.3 To create fair, equal, and equitable access to public and private contracts in Chicago.</p>	<p>Following the above plans, we will launch our EDGE Initiative. The Encouraging Diversity, Growth, and Equity (EDGE) Initiative serves as an essential component to develop, strengthen, and advocate for Chicago's minority and women-owned business enterprises (M/WBEs) supplier community. The EDGE Team is committed to the Racial Equity Plan, cultivating a competitive and diverse economic environment that drives equitable access to contracts and supports growth for success.</p>	<p>Q3/4 2023</p>	
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## RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN: Priority #3

**Our department will advance the following strategies:**

**3. Department Strategy: Increasing MBE/WBE contractors providing services for BACP and other City departments.**

Measures of Impact: Number of contracts awarded to MBE/WBEs and number of dollars spent.

Actions	Implementation Plan	Timeline	Status
3.1 Review internal BACP supply contracts.	Review all current BACP vendor contracts, which include reviewing terms, timelines, etc., then assess whether we've been satisfied with the services provided thus far.	Q2 2024	
3.2 Look for opportunities to procure new vendors from previously identified disadvantaged areas (see priority #1.)	Collaborate with Procurement Department. And take advantage of our network of affiliates	Q2 2024	
3.3 Through our Small Business Center consultants, educate entrepreneurs and small business owners who come into the center about vendor opportunities.	Add procurement flyers to "Chicago Business Toolkit," which is a packet given to all new licensees.	Q2 2024	