City of Chicago

Strategic Plan for Transportation

YEAR 1 UPDATE

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot
CDOT Commissioner Gia Biagi

December 2022

CDOT

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Access to Opportunity	5
Aligning Our Streets with Our Values	17
Streets Free from Violence	29
A CDOT That Works	37

Cover Photo:
Chris Wolff

INTRODUCTION

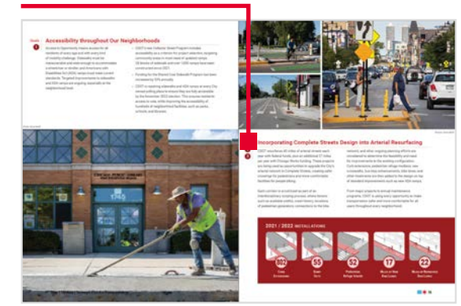
The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) published its Strategic Plan for Transportation in June 2021, prioritizing **transportation equity and mobility justice** as guiding principles of its vision for the future of Chicago. One year into the adoption of the Strategic Plan, CDOT has actively integrated these principles into internal processes and across city-wide initiatives. This one-year plan update highlights those actions and demonstrates CDOT's commitment to equity and mobility justice.

How to Navigate the Year 1 Update

CDOT's Strategic Plan for Transportation is divided into four chapters reflecting core pillars shared by Mayor Lightfoot and Commissioner Biagi to develop a safer, more equitable, and more sustainable transportation system that delivers for Chicago. The chapters – **Access to Opportunity**, **Aligning Our Streets with Our Values**, **Streets Free from Violence**, and **A CDOT That Works** – summarize the transportation goals and strategies to achieve them. This one-year plan update follows that structure. The goals from the original plan are listed in each chapter intro, and each highlight notes which goals are accomplished.

Chapter Goals

Goals Accomplished



MOBEC: CDOT's Equitable Investment Prioritization Tool

Central to CDOT's implementation of the Strategic Plan is the development and implementation of the Mobility and Economic Hardship Index (MOBEC), which analyzes where Chicago residents experience the highest levels of economic and mobility hardship. **MOBEC scoring is now a primary criterion in data-driven decision making at CDOT, guiding where and when infrastructure investments are made throughout the City.** CDOT worked with the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) to create the index in order to identify community areas where these combined economic and mobility hardships are highest.

CNT used the Economic Hardship Index created by the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) in its Healthy Chicago 2.0 plan (2015) as a starting point to create MOBEC. Using data from the American Community Survey (ACS), an ongoing survey conducted by the United States Census Bureau that produces annual demographic data, the economic hardship index includes the following indicators:

- Percent of occupied housing units with more than 1 person per room (a measurement of overcrowding)
- Percent of households living below the federal poverty level
- Percent of persons in the labor force over 16 years old that are unemployed
- Percent of persons over 25 years old without a high school diploma
- Percent of population under 18 or over 64 years old, and
- Per capita income

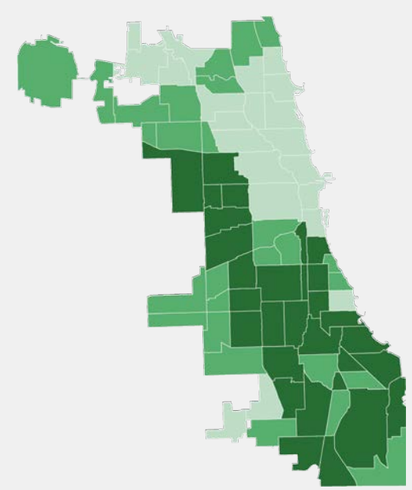
To better focus infrastructure investments in communities with mobility challenges, CNT added indicators that provide a measure of mobility hardship. Using data from the ACS, the Mobility Hardship Index includes the following indicators:

- Commute time
- Percent of population with a disability
- Transportation cost as a percent of income (from CNT's Housing + Transportation Affordability Index)

The result of the combined data is MOBEC, which maps the combined mobility and economic hardship for all 77 of Chicago's community areas. To simplify the data, the community areas are divided into three categories: low, medium, and high.

MOBEC: Mobility and Economic Hardship Index

Low Medium High



Equity Challenge

Starting in 2020, the Transportation Equity Network (TEN), a broad coalition of 30 Chicago-area civic, community, and advocacy organizations, has worked with CDOT to embed mobility justice in its daily work on Chicago's streets—bridging the gap between mobility justice advocacy and city operations. Each chapter in the strategic plan contains specific challenges posed by TEN, in their own words, as they distilled the problems faced in Black and Brown communities across the city and asked how CDOT could address them and deliver more equitable outcomes. Over the past year, CDOT has thoughtfully integrated methods to address these challenges into its daily work and operations. While progress has been made over the past year, embedding mobility justice into all aspects of CDOT is an ongoing effort that will continue to be prioritized. A sampling of the equity challenges are included throughout this document.

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Understanding local community needs is essential to improve access to key destinations, such as jobs, schools, and green and recreational spaces. CDOT is closing gaps in the network to provide safer and equitable access to transit, biking, and key community destinations.

Equitable access is also recognizing that transportation options should be affordable to all Chicagoans and that they should connect people of every age and physical ability. CDOT has integrated equitable access into many processes including planning, design, and construction. For example, we have incorporated Complete Streets design principles into arterial resurfacing projects, expanded ADA sidewalk and ramp repairs, coordinated with CTA to make better streets for buses, and expanded the bicycle, Divvy, and e-scooter programs.

Strategic Plan Goals

1. Make it safer and easier to walk in Chicago
2. Partner with CTA to reduce commute times and improve the transit experience for all Chicagoans
3. Make cycling a safe, affordable transportation option for more Chicagoans
4. Reduce congestion on Chicago's streets
5. Make efficient use of Chicago's curb space

Equity Challenge

"We are advocating for CDOT to establish a comprehensive process and strategy to remove racialized transportation inequities, utilize access to transportation to improve life outcomes in marginalized racial groups, and dismantle structural racism in Chicago's transportation sector. We want a transportation system in Chicago which does not require car ownership."

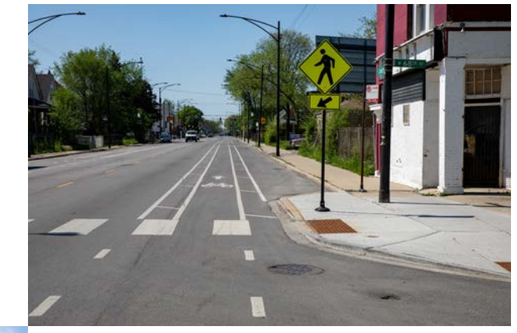
- Transportation Equity Network

Goals 1

Accessibility throughout Our Neighborhoods

Access to Opportunity means access for all residents of every age and with every kind of mobility challenge. Sidewalks must be maneuverable and wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or stroller, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps must meet current standards. Targeted improvements to sidewalks and ADA ramps are ongoing, especially at the neighborhood level.

- CDOT's new Collector Street Program includes accessibility as a criterion for project selection, targeting community areas in most need of updated ramps. 28 blocks of sidewalk and over 1,600 ramps have been constructed since 2021.
- Funding for the Shared Cost Sidewalk Program has been increased by 33% annually.
- CDOT is repairing sidewalks and ADA ramps at every City owned polling place to ensure they are fully accessible by the November 2022 election. This ensures residents' access to vote, while improving the accessibility of hundreds of neighborhood facilities, such as parks, schools, and libraries.



Photos: Chris Wolff

Photo: Chris Wolff

Goals 1 3

Incorporating Complete Streets Design into Arterial Resurfacing

CDOT resurfaces 40 miles of arterial streets each year with federal funds, plus an additional 27 miles per year with Chicago Works funding. These projects are being used as opportunities to upgrade the City's arterial network to Complete Streets, creating safer crossings for pedestrians and more comfortable facilities for people biking.

Each corridor is scrutinized as part of an interdisciplinary scoping process, where factors such as available widths, crash history, locations of pedestrian generators, connections to the bike network, and other ongoing planning efforts are considered to determine the feasibility and need for improvements to the existing configuration. Curb extensions, pedestrian refuge medians, new crosswalks, bus stop enhancements, bike lanes, and other treatments are then added to the design on top of standard improvements such as new ADA ramps.

From major projects to annual maintenance programs, CDOT is using every opportunity to make transportation safer and more comfortable for all users throughout every neighborhood.

2021 / 2022 ARTERIAL RESURFACING PROGRAM INSTALLATIONS

802	55	52	17	22
Curb Extensions	Bump Outs	Pedestrian Refuge Islands	Miles of New Bike Lanes	Miles of Refreshed Bike Lanes

Goals 3

Bike Network Expansion

CDOT is taking a holistic approach to address the barriers to biking and make it a safe, affordable transportation option for more Chicagoans. Committed to a rapid buildout of the bikeway network, CDOT has doubled the rate of bikeways installed per year – with 80 miles of projects implemented in 2021 and 2022. This includes more low-stress bikeways than ever before, and in more neighborhoods than ever before. CDOT's approach to bike planning is guided by transportation equity, and three quarters of the expansion since 2019 has occurred on the south and west sides.

CDOT is working at the neighborhood level, taking a community-based approach to develop connected **Neighborhood Bike Networks**. In 2021 CDOT worked closely with three west side neighborhoods (Austin, Belmont Cragin, and North Lawndale) to plan and build bike networks that connect residents to important local destinations. CDOT is currently working in South Lawndale and will continue expanding the neighborhood bike network program into more south and west side neighborhoods beginning in 2023.

Low-Stress Bikeways provide riders of all ages and abilities with safe and comfortable connections to their destination. These include protected bike lanes, neighborhood greenways, and off-street trails. Since the start of 2020, CDOT has doubled the amount of neighborhood greenways and increased protected bike lanes by nearly 50%. Expansion of the low-stress network will continue to be a priority in the years to come.

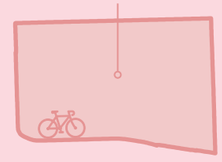
In June 2022, CDOT announced the installation of a new series of concrete curb-protected bike lanes, marking the largest expansion and upgrade of low-stress bike routes ever. CDOT plans to upgrade all existing delineator-protected lanes to concrete by the end of 2023, providing significant safety and comfort improvements for all road users.

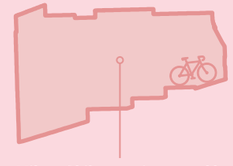
"Barrier-protected lanes are the best way to make biking a safer and more comfortable transportation option for everyone, and we're focused on adding more than ever. Thanks to dedicated funding from Mayor Lightfoot's Chicago Works program, we're making unprecedented safety upgrades to our bikeways network and will continue working with community stakeholders on building neighborhood bike networks to ensure that Chicago is a city where everyone has the option to ride a bike."

— CDOT COMMISSIONER
GIA BIAGI

Belmont Cragin

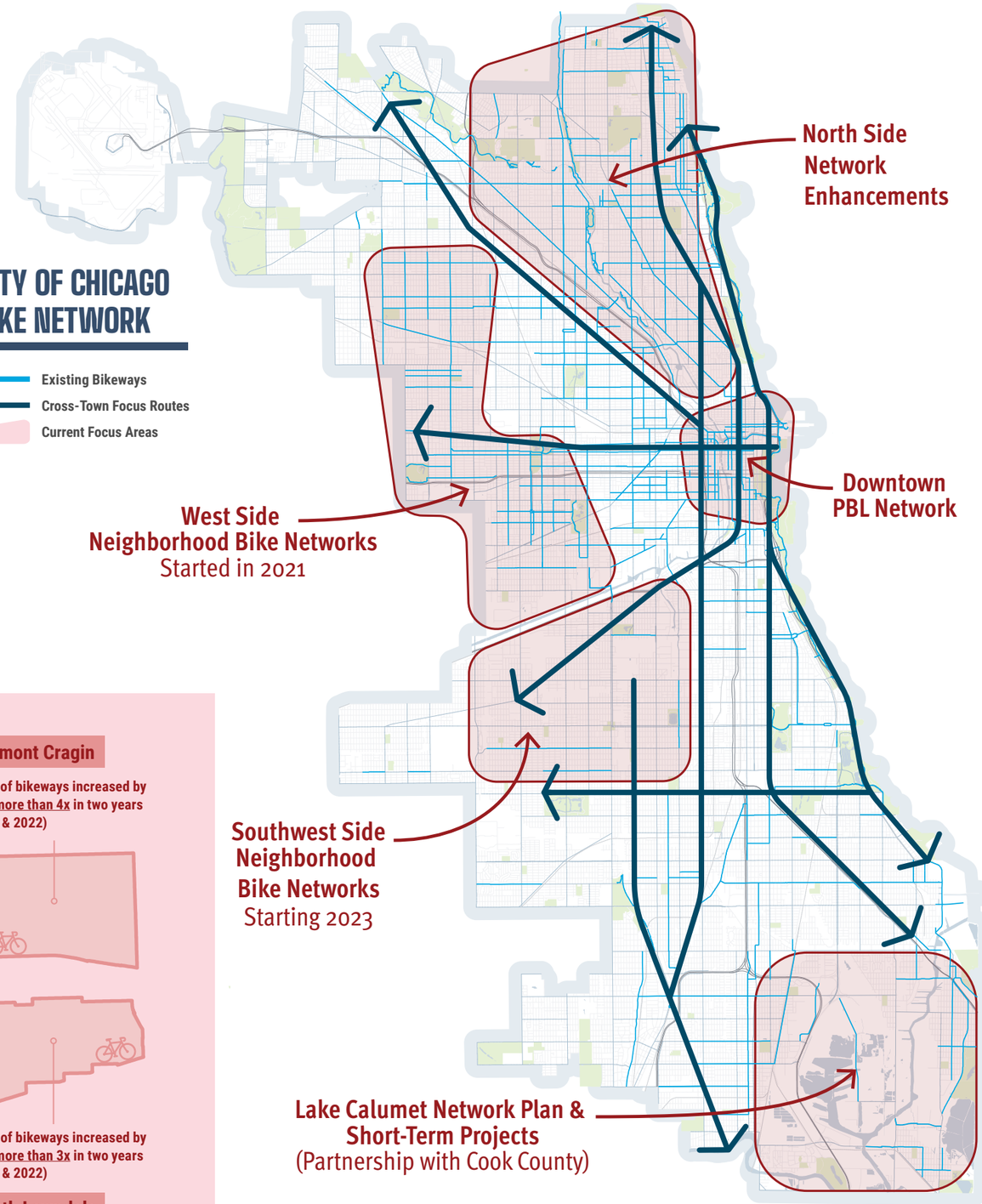
Miles of bikeways increased by than more than 4x in two years (2021 & 2022)





Miles of bikeways increased by than more than 3x in two years (2021 & 2022)

North Lawndale

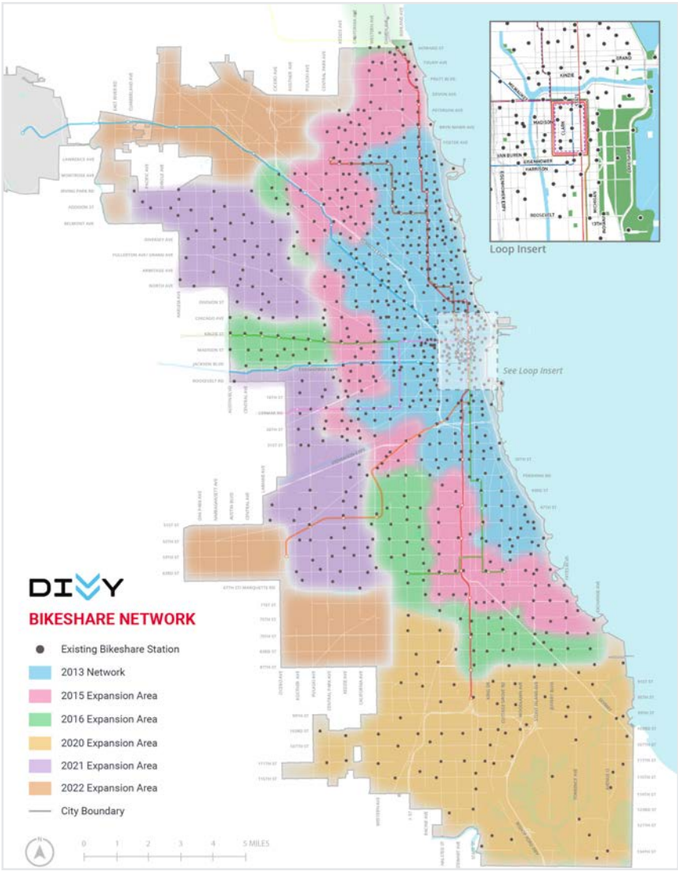


Goals 3

Divvy Expansion

Since July 2021, over 38 square miles have been added to the Divvy system providing a safe and affordable transportation option for more Chicagoans. Citywide Divvy expansion will be achieved by the end of 2022.

Recently, the City and Divvy announced a partnership with City Colleges — covering the cost of an annual Divvy membership for all students. To celebrate the partnership, a new station was installed at Olive-Harvey College. Providing Divvy service to Olive-Harvey College will connect students, faculty, and staff to transit and give them an opportunity to try out almost 30 miles of new bikeways installed in the Far South Side in 2020 and 2021.



Since July 1, 2021, 155 new stations have been added to the bikeshare system:

106 New Divvy stations installed in expansion areas

49 New Divvy stations installed in existing service areas to increase access and add additional parking in high-demand areas

5 Electrified stations with 105 more to come

"We are thrilled that CDOT has chosen Olive-Harvey to be a Divvy recipient and a Divvy destination. This new station will connect our students and community to the entire bike network. This also gives our students more transportation options, connects them to transit more easily, and is part of healthy life style."

— KIMBERLY HOLLINGSWORTH, PRESIDENT OF OLIVE-HARVEY COLLEGE

Goals 3

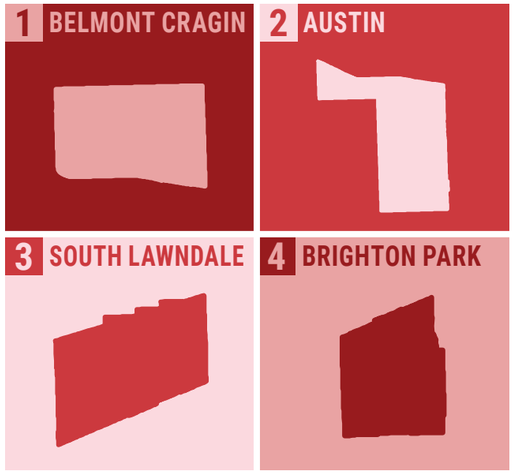
Bike Chicago

In July 2022 CDOT launched Bike Chicago, a new program that will provide 5,000 free bikes, as well as maintenance and safety equipment, to Chicagoans by 2026. By the end of 2022, CDOT will have distributed 500 free bicycles, helmets, locks, lights, bells, multi-tools, and chain lubricant to age and income-eligible residents. Over the next four years, CDOT will gradually increase distribution until 5,000 free bikes have been provided, as part of Chicago's goal to increase affordable and climate friendly mobility options.

The City of Chicago's commitment to advancing Bike Chicago is tied to the recent release of the 2022 Climate Action Plan that outlines strategies and actions to prioritize low-carbon mobility options like walking, biking, and transit use to reduce emissions. On road transportation is the City's second-largest source of emissions and a major contributor to climate change.

When picking up their bike, recipients are given information and resources they need to confidently travel the City's bikeways network and keep their bike working for years to come.

Neighborhoods with the most applications for the Bike Chicago program:



"Riding a bike is an affordable, sustainable, and healthy way to travel that reduces car congestion and improves quality of life. Along with improving and expanding the City's network of bike lanes and trails, CDOT is committed to making biking a more popular and practical option for all residents – and Bike Chicago will do just that. We're excited to launch this program and start distributing bikes and safety gear this summer and throughout the next several years."

—CDOT COMMISSIONER GIA BIAGI

Photo: Chris Wolff

Goals 2

Better Streets for Buses

CDOT and the Chicago Transit Authority are collaborating to develop a comprehensive framework plan to improve street infrastructure for public bus service: the Better Streets for Buses Plan. Public transit, and bus service in particular because of its broader geographic coverage, is a critical transportation option for many of Chicago's historically marginalized communities. The plan will establish a network of priority corridors and a toolbox of street treatments to improve bus service for these neighborhoods and their residents. After a series of public meetings, a draft version of the plan was released in Spring 2022 for public comment.

Current bus priority improvement projects that will be installed in 2022 include bus stop and safety improvements along the Vision Zero High Crash Corridor of 87th Street from Damen to Halsted, new permanent Bus Priority Zone projects with red bus-only lanes on 79th Street and Chicago Avenue, and bus boarding islands along Belmont Avenue that benefit both bus riders and cyclists by separating bus and bike traffic at bus stops.

Goals 4

Traffic Signal Modernization Program

CDOT's Traffic Signal Modernization (TSM) program reconstructs signalized intersections from the ground up using state-of-the-art equipment and practices. TSM improvements include LED signal heads that are larger, brighter, more efficient, and optimally placed for visibility; pedestrian countdown signals that show people walking how much time they have left to cross a street; Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) that provide audible and vibro-tactile WALK indications for pedestrians with vision impairments; and communication and data-collection equipment to monitor traffic flow and synchronize timing along congested corridors.

The TSM program offers increased safety and efficiency for all users at signalized intersections. This includes opportunities to improve multi-modal accommodation by providing bike signals, bus queue-jump signals and transit signal priority to maximize bus flow, accessible curb ramps, curb extensions, and other improvements.

Modernized equipment also increases system reliability and reduces crew time and resources needed for maintenance and repairs. TSMs are currently in design or construction at over 80 intersections with 10-15 more anticipated per year.

Photo: Chris Wolff

Goals 3

E-Scooters and E-Bikes

Chicago's e-scooter program offers an easy way for residents and visitors to choose active transportation to get around Chicago. As transportation costs rise, micromobility solutions like shared bikes and e-scooters provide affordable ways to travel in Chicago without needing a car.

In 2019 and 2020, CDOT and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection conducted a pair of four-month scooter sharing pilots to evaluate the viability of scooter sharing in Chicago. Following program evaluations, refinements, and an application process, the City awarded licenses to three scooter-sharing companies in April 2022. To prioritize mobility equity, 50% of e-scooters are required to be located in Equity Priority Areas covering many south and west side neighborhoods.

In May 2022, Divvy became the first bikeshare system in the United States to offer on-street charging of its e-bikes. As part of this initiative, CDOT and Divvy released integrated shared micromobility with docked scooters and bikes. Docked scooters at Divvy stations offer a convenient, predictable experience for riders, and a clutter-free sidewalk for pedestrians.

The integrated Divvy scooter and bike-share system is one of the largest shared micromobility programs in the country, and Divvy for Everyone is the largest equity membership program.

E-Scooter Program

Chicagoans took over 230,000 total scooter trips in July 2022, averaging over 7,650 trips per day

Average trip distance is 1.39 miles at a duration of 18 minutes and 30 secs

Equity Priority Areas had over 65,000 trips (nearly 24% of all trips)

"As Chairman of the Transportation Committee, I am excited to continue to bring new forms of transportation for Chicagoans and visitors. I am honored to join CDOT and Divvy as we continue to expand mobility and access to transportation citywide."

— ALDERMAN HOWARD BROOKINS, 21ST WARD

Photo: Chris Wolff

ALIGNING OUR STREETS WITH OUR VALUES

By integrating transportation equity and mobility justice into CDOT's internal processes and program prioritization, the City is investing not only in infrastructure but in our communities. CDOT is committed to improving safety and access to opportunity for every Chicagoan and has aligned investments toward equitable outcomes.

Strategic Plan Goals

1. Adopt decision-making frameworks that prioritize equitable outcomes
2. Use CDOT infrastructure to improve the quality of Chicago's air and water
3. Bring CDOT's infrastructure into a state of good repair
4. Mitigate community impacts of movement of freight through Chicago by improving safety and efficiency
5. Improve the efficiency of and modernize local street funding
6. Increase CDOT's flexibility in spending transportation funds

This has been demonstrated through adopting and implementing the Chicago Works program and MOBEC Index (see page 4), addressing and mitigating the impacts of climate change through innovative materials and electric vehicle readiness, incorporating neighborhood mobility projects into larger infrastructure programs, and exploring new funding sources. These initiatives align with Strategic Plan Goals and highlight only a small portion of the work being done to reflect the values of Chicago through infrastructure investments.

Equity Challenge

"Industry and freight movement have an enormous impact on our communities. In neighborhoods like Little Village, air quality is poor, large trucks drive fast down all of our streets. We need CDOT to start to prioritize the health of our residents over the infrastructure for regional transportation."

- Transportation Equity Network

Chicago Works

Investing in Communities through Infrastructure

Goals

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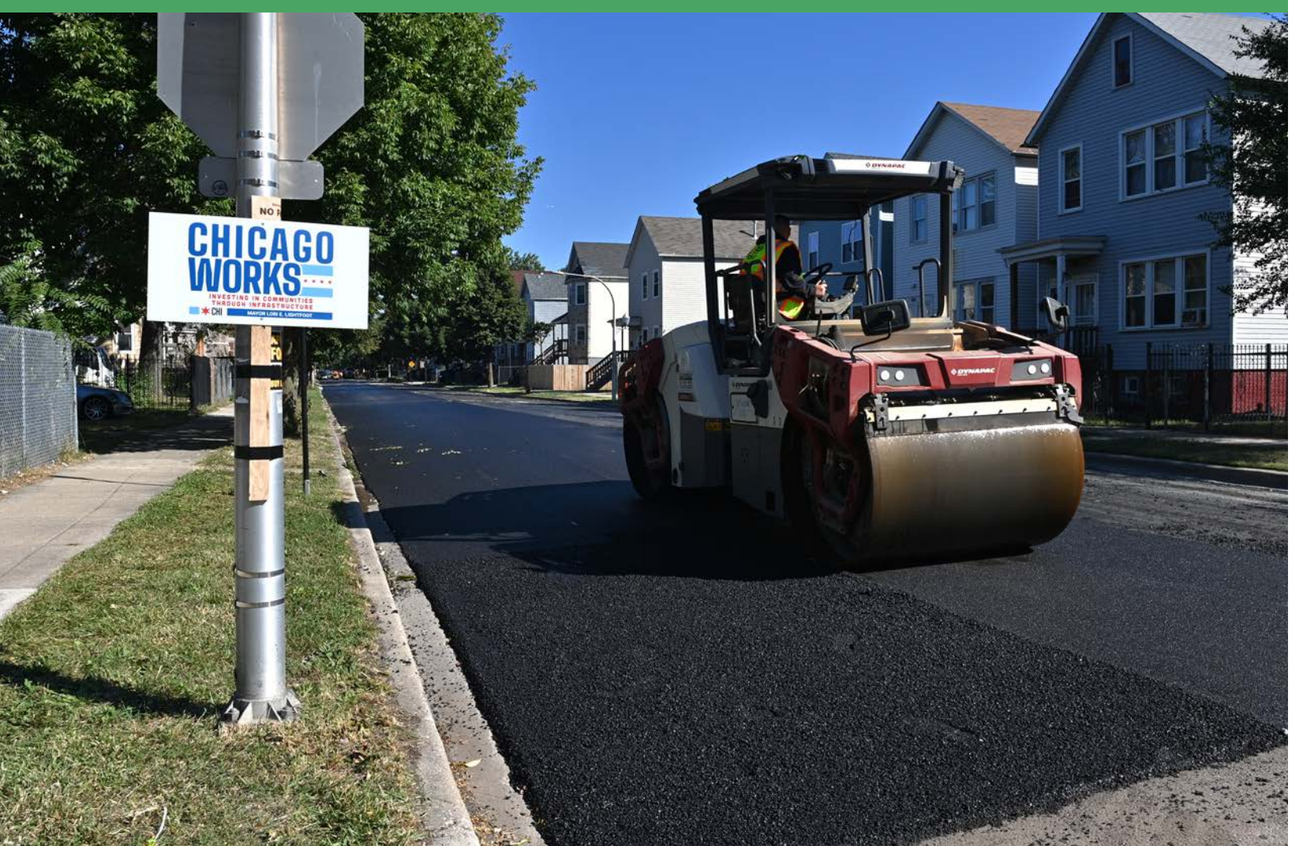
6

Chicago Works is Mayor Lightfoot's historic $3.7 billion, five-year infrastructure plan for Chicago that provides the funding and framework for a legacy investment in our critical transportation infrastructure in neighborhoods across the City, especially in communities challenged by mobility and economic hardships. Chicago Works includes funding for streetscapes, lighting, bikeways, bridges, sidewalks, traffic safety, public art, and more. These improvements prioritize making it easy to safely move around the city in sustainable ways like walking, biking, and taking public transit while making our streets and our public way vibrant, safe, and inviting places.



Chicago Works provides significant and immediate investment in Chicago's infrastructure without waiting for passage of a federal bill. Federal funding is more difficult to manage and is often provided through competitive grant programs making it a less reliable and more rigid source of funding than local funds. Federal funds are an important piece of the infrastructure funding puzzle and Chicago will continue to pursue it as it becomes available; however, local funds are more appropriate for smaller projects that are also urgent. Since the approval of Chicago Works by City Council in December 2020, Chicago has seen real infrastructure investment throughout the City.

Photo: Chris Wolff

MOBEC

CDOT's approach to implementing Chicago Works puts an emphasis on equity, safety, and mobility, while lowering the economic and environmental burden of transportation for all of our residents. Infrastructure investment decisions are made using multiple factors that balance asset condition with equitable distribution addressing long underserved communities, populations, and users. The Mobility and Economic Hardship Index (MOBEC, see page 3) is a key criterion in project selection.

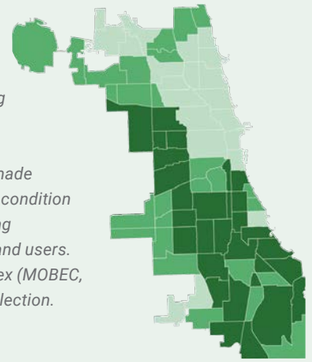


Photo: Chris Wolff

CDOT's **Arterial Resurfacing** program is primarily funded by federal and state dollars and typically resurfaces roughly 40 miles of arterial streets per year. An additional 27 miles of paving is required annually to keep the City's arterial network in a state of good repair. Chicago Works is providing the supplemental funding to pave these additional 27 miles as well as provide pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic safety improvements.

Green Alleys improve drainage and conserve energy by using permeable pavements (asphalt, concrete, or pavers) to drain stormwater into the ground, diverting it from our overloaded sewer system and water treatment facilities. Alleys with underlying soils unsuitable for permeable pavement are designed with high albedo concrete to reduce the urban heat island effect and with oversized stormwater retention, reducing the likelihood of basement flooding during intense rain events. Chicago Works provides funding to increase the number of Green Alleys from 8 to 50 annually.

CDOT's new **Collector Street Program** supplements the Aldermanic Menu Program, which had been the primary source of funding for the maintenance of residential streets. CDOT strategically leverages and expands on Menu project selections, factoring in pavement condition, ADA accessibility, and MOBEC to target streets in areas of the City that have typically lacked sufficient funding to keep up with infrastructure needs. The program is providing an additional 60 miles of resurfacing each year, often coupled with curb and gutter, alley apron, and curb ramp upgrades for maximum efficiency and impact.

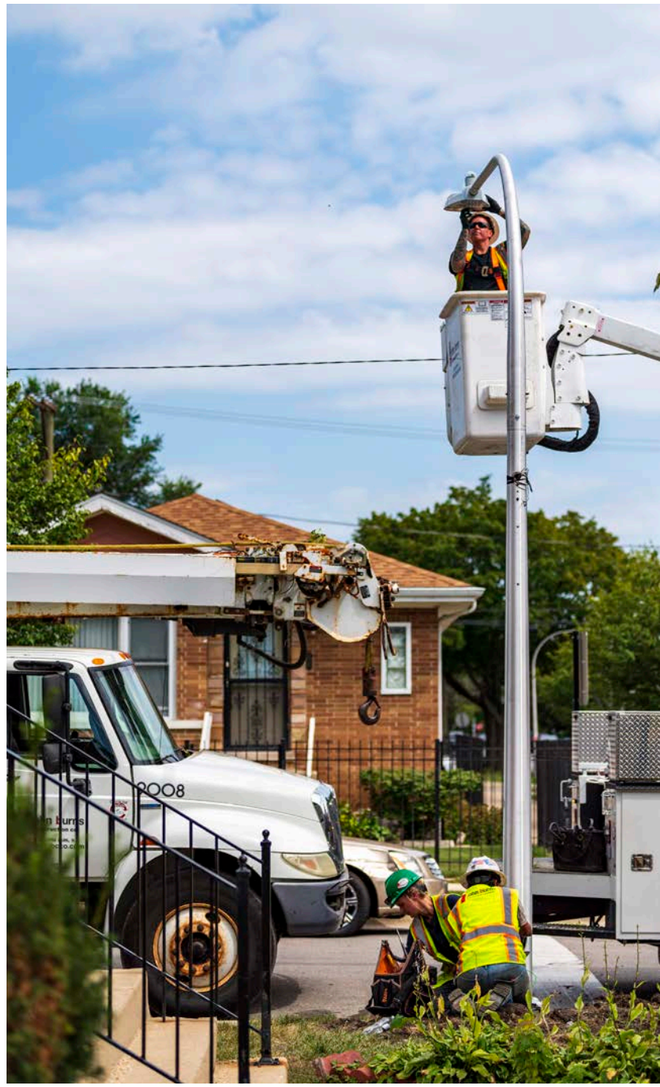
Streetscape projects create flourishing public places while improving the functionality of infrastructure to support dense urban living, striving to rehabilitate Chicago's neighborhood commercial areas into active, attractive places for Chicagoans to live, work, and play. Chicago Works supports nine major streetscape projects along INVEST South/West corridors that will improve walkability, connectivity, access to transit, aesthetics, and pedestrian safety in those neighborhoods.

CDOT completed the **Chicago Smart Lighting Program** in 2022, creating the largest lighting management system in the nation. The program converted over 280,000 outdated high-pressure sodium streetlights to high-efficiency LED, which use half the energy and last twice as long. The carbon reduction impact of this project is significant and estimated to offset more than 134,600 metric tons of carbon dioxide, while saving taxpayers $100 million in electricity costs over the next ten years. The program has made Chicago a greener city and is providing clearer, more reliable nighttime lighting in every neighborhood. And the smart lighting management system is making our operations more efficient, enabling our workforce to respond to outages more quickly and efficiently when they occur.

A key vendor for the Chicago Smart Lighting Program was Lyons View Manufacturing, a certified Minority Business Enterprise based on the West Side that is dedicated to creating job opportunities for residents with barriers to employment. The company features non-discriminatory hiring practices that allow a second chance opportunity to job applicants. Lyons View assembled more than half the LED fixtures used in the program.

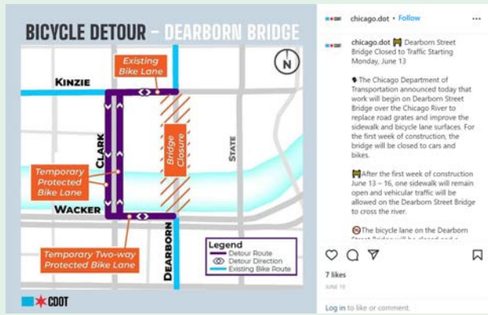
"The Chicago Smart Lighting Program has been a springboard for our company," said Josh Davis, CEO of Lyons View. "We have garnered support and investment from world-class organizations and grown into a 60,000 square foot facility in Chicago's K-Town Business Centre. We look forward to continuing to grow our business on the West Side and taking advantage of the growing opportunities in the energy efficiency sector of the economy."

— JOSH DAVIS, CEO OF
LYONS VIEW MANUFACTURING



Chicago Works addresses the chronic underfunding of **Bridge and Viaduct Infrastructure,** a critical part of the City's transportation network. Over the next five years, CDOT's goal is to replace or fully rehab 43 bridges that are beyond their useful life. This massive undertaking will utilize multiple funding sources, and Chicago Works will close the funding gap for 27 bridges. Over the next three years, CDOT plans to address 46 identified critical bridge repairs, with more to follow. Finally, Chicago Works is funding underpass rehabilitations and vertical clearance improvement projects throughout the City.

One current example is the Dearborn Street Bridge over the Chicago River, a historic bascule bridge constructed in 1963. Dearborn Street is a key corridor in the bike network, providing a protected two-way cycle track through the Loop and over this bridge into the River North neighborhood. The bridge is undergoing rehabilitation, causing temporary closure of the bike lanes. Prior to construction, CDOT identified and communicated a detour route for cyclists that included a temporary two-way protected cycle track on Wacker Drive.



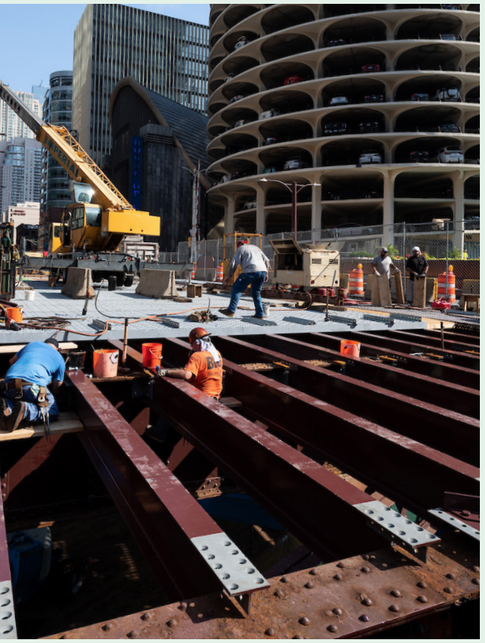


Photo: Chris Wolff

Chicago Works is delivering over:

300 Miles of roadway resurfacing	**60** Green alleys	**500** Blocks of curb and gutter	**13,000** ADA ramps
35 Miles of alley resurfacing	**100** Miles of bikeways	**500** Blocks of sidewalk	

Chicago Works is a comprehensive plan to improve the City's transportation infrastructure, and the projects highlighted on these pages and throughout this document only scratch the surface of its reach. We are currently in year two of the program, and every neighborhood in the City is seeing an unprecedented level of construction activity. We are truly taking advantage of the historic opportunity that Chicago Works is providing to fund projects across the spectrum of transportation assets. We are catching up on years of underfunded maintenance needs, increasing mobility, and stimulating economic development. Our goal is to achieve a direct positive impact on the quality of life and livability of all Chicago communities.

"With an emphasis on equity, the Chicago Works infrastructure plan will allow us to invest in the lives of residents in need and bring our entire city closer together by literally building bridges between our communities. This effort will allow us to unlock our city's full potential, give our residents the resources they need to succeed right in their own neighborhoods and ensure that our City retains its reputation as a world-class destination filled with state-of-the-art infrastructure."

— MAYOR LORI LIGHTFOOT

Goals 2

Innovative Materials to Combat Climate Change

CDOT is committed to improving the quality of Chicago's air and water and doing its part to combat climate change. We are continually evaluating and implementing new and innovative materials for use in public way infrastructure that lower our carbon footprint, alleviate flooding, and reduce the urban heat island effect. These include concrete mixes that permanently sequester carbon, asphalt mixes that use bio-oil, high recycled content mixes, permeable surfaces, reflective materials, and more.

CDOT has produced a policy memo which outlines the process for the submittal, review, and approval of new, innovative, sustainable, or specialized materials for construction in the public way. The process will evaluate the operational needs of the department, material characteristics and performance, cost compared to standard material, and sustainability. This ensures that innovative materials are consistently considered, and there is a streamlined process in place for their evaluation and determination of most appropriate use. Chicago leads by example in prioritizing efforts to reduce and mitigate climate change impacts.

Goals 1 2 4

Electric Vehicle Readiness

Electric Vehicles (EVs) are one of many sustainable mobility options that help us meet our city-wide goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve the health for our residents. CDOT is playing a role in helping transition Chicago residents, as well as its own fleet, to EVs. 50 light-duty fleet vehicles have been identified as candidates for electric replacements. The 2022 Chicago Climate Action Plan recently announced the City's strategy to electrify 100% of the City's fleet by 2035, prioritizing the installation of chargers and EV replacements in pollution-burdened neighborhoods.

Equitable distribution of EV charging stations is needed for more Chicagoans to have an opportunity to utilize EVs. As the EV sector is rapidly evolving and expanding, CDOT is developing an Electric Vehicle and Infrastructure Framework that will address sustainable EV infrastructure planning, prioritize equity, and guide CDOT's role and investments moving forward. The framework will support CDOT's pursuit of funding opportunities resulting from the passage of the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill and the Inflation Reduction Act in addition to Illinois' Climate and Equitable Jobs Act.

Goals 1 2 3 4 6

CREATE-ing Opportunity for Neighborhood Mobility Benefits

The Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program is a public-private partnership that oversees 70 projects focused on the safety and efficiency of Chicago's rail network.

In October 2022, CDOT and CREATE partners broke ground on two grade separation projects at the Forest Hill Flyover and 71st Street. These projects comprise the first half of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (75th St. CIP), the most complex piece within the overall CREATE Program, located on the south side of Chicago in the neighborhoods of Ashburn, Auburn Gresham, Englewood, and West Chatham. CDOT partnered with CREATE and worked with elected officials, community advisory groups, and the public to identify and prioritize Community Mobility Benefit projects throughout the corridor. These projects, led by CDOT, add key neighborhood infrastructure improvements that go above and beyond what is required for the rail projects. There are 155 Community Mobility Benefit projects underway within the communities near the 75th Street CIP!

Since 2021, 155 Community Mobility Benefit projects are complete or set to be complete by the end of 2022:

- **71** Parkway Tree Plantings Projects
- **57** ADA, Sidewalks, Curb & Gutter, Bus Stop Improvement Projects
- **27** Resurfacing - Residential Street Repaving Projects

2021 → 2022

54 projects were completed in 2021

101 projects to be completed in 2022

Goals
5
6

New Funding Opportunities

Through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), $1.2 trillion of federal funding is available for a variety of infrastructure improvements, including transportation, energy, water, and broadband systems. This is a combination of new funding programs and increased funding amounts for reauthorized programs. One primary component of these funding opportunities is equity, which aligns with CDOT's focus on transportation equity and will bring investments to historically disinvested communities. In collaboration with regional partners, CDOT is well positioned to take advantage of these monumental funding opportunities over the next five years. CDOT is actively monitoring and applying for IIJA funds, such as the Bridge Investment Program and Safe Streets and Roads for All, as well as funding opportunities provided by other sources.

As part of IIJA, the City was awarded $20 million for the Englewood Nature Trail through USDOT RAISE grant funding in August 2022. The Englewood Nature Trail will convert a 1.75-mile abandoned elevated railway corridor into an elevated multiuse path for walking and biking in Englewood. The trail will not only revitalize a railway corridor that has been unused since the 1960s, but also serve as the spine of an urban agriculture district that occupies adjacent land, along with other productive uses. The long-term goals for the trail include connecting the surrounding area with safe and inviting park space and creating economic opportunity for the surrounding community.

" Englewood and West Englewood need bold catalytic development. As the network of community stakeholders and residents, we've been working to ensure that Englewood's culture and identity are baked into this project and that it is a source of pride for the community. We're grateful for this federal investment and look forward to building a space where neighbors can find economic opportunities, safe and environmentally sustainable places, and access to more healthy foods."

— ANTON SEALS JR., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GROW GREATER ENGLEWOOD

STREETS FREE FROM VIOLENCE

CDOT is committed to protecting the safety of all Chicagoans on our streets. The Transportation Equity Network challenged CDOT to reduce violence on our streets, recognizing that strategies should be implemented that not only address vehicular violence but structural and interpersonal violence.

Strategic Plan Goals

1. Reduce dangerous driving on Chicago's streets
2. Elevate Vision Zero in Chicago
3. Expand CDOT's role in making Chicago's streets safer and more vibrant
4. Make Chicago's streets more responsive to community needs

This means prioritizing and implementing strategies to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways, ensuring that pedestrians, bicyclists, and all modes of transportation are protected throughout the City, and providing more opportunities for communities to build on their unique character through streetscapes, shared streets, and outdoor dining programs. This in turn brings people out to the street which enhances neighborhood connectivity and "eyes on the street".

CDOT is also using an equity lens to ensure that our most vulnerable populations are comfortable, safe, and protected on any street in Chicago. This past year, CDOT has made strides to reduce violence through expanding Vision Zero, establishing the Chicago Mobility Collaborative, activating downtown streets, developing Chicago Alfresco, and investing further in the Greencorps Chicago Youth Program.

Equity Challenge

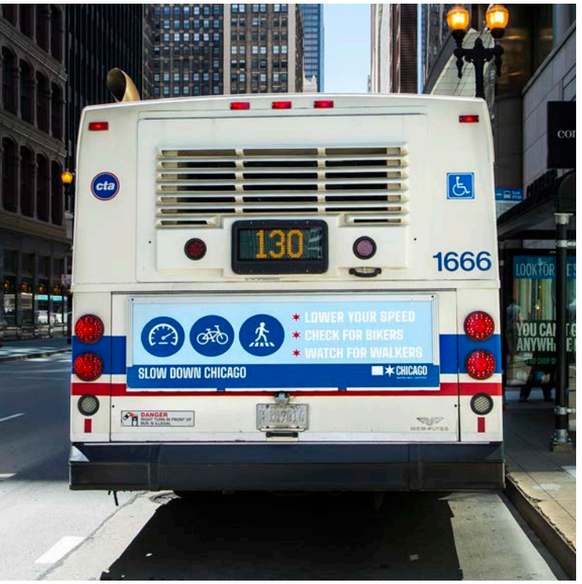
"Our communities are deeply concerned primarily about three types of violence: interpersonal/gun violence, police/structural violence, and vehicular violence. With significant levels of violence deeply and adversely impacting our streets, we are advocating for CDOT to invest in strategies, programs, and infrastructure to reduce all forms of violence in our communities while recognizing the need to address trauma from past violence on our streets. This comprehensive approach, and incorporation of violence reduction strategies into planning, will help increase walking and cycling in predominantly Black and Brown communities."

- Transportation Equity Network

Goals
1
2

Vision Zero

Established in 2017, Vision Zero Chicago is the commitment and approach to eliminating fatalities and serious injuries from traffic crashes. We all have the right to walk, bike, take public transit, and drive on streets that are safe for everyone, regardless of who we are or where we live. Over the last year, CDOT has elevated Vision Zero – building it into the agency's central mission. Implementing the Slow Down Chicago program, increasing Vision Zero planning projects, incorporating Vision Zero principles into all CDOT projects, and hiring a Vision Zero manager demonstrates a prioritization throughout CDOT.



Slow Down Chicago Program The City of Chicago recently rolled out an awareness campaign encouraging drivers to slow down. The campaign includes digital billboards, environmental advertisements, and social media messaging — highlighting the importance of coming together to protect our neighbors and reminding drivers to "Slow Down Chicago."

Coexisting with Cyclists CDOT has taken additional steps to build awareness of cyclists using the roadway. In July 2022, CDOT hosted a virtual training with public way stakeholders, including CDOT field staff and representatives from some of the largest design and construction firms in Chicago, to discuss "Coexisting with Cyclists". The training consisted of CDOT's Complete Streets team presenting requirements that stakeholders must abide by to ensure the safety of cyclists. In addition, Complete Streets staff walked through several real life scenarios of noncompliant bike lane obstructions and how to remediate them in the future.

A policy directive was issued to all CDOT field crews reminding them to provide adequate clearance for cyclists, to use extra caution when making turns, and to exit vehicles carefully. To ensure that CDOT staff who operate city vehicles are mindful of bicycle infrastructure, stickers were installed in approximately 200 work vehicles to remind drivers and passengers to keep bike lanes clear of any and all obstructions.

Vision Zero Action Plans CDOT recently hired a Vision Zero coordinator to continue to advance and implement the strategies outlined in the Vision Zero Chicago Plan. Stemming from the 2017 plan, CDOT is working closely with communities to develop location-specific action plans for the identified High Crash Areas, the majority of which are in historically disinvested communities. CDOT completed the Vision Zero Downtown Action Plan earlier this year and is currently working with community members in Greater Englewood, Washington Park, and Grand Boulevard to develop the Vision Zero South Side Action Plan.

While these Vision Zero action plans have a distinct focus on eliminating fatalities and serious injuries, Vision Zero principles are integrated throughout all CDOT projects. Safety is at the forefront of CDOT planning, design, and construction.

Road Diets Road diets are projects that reduce the number of travel lanes on multi-lane roadways to curb vehicle speeds and reduce crossing distances for pedestrians. These projects may also present opportunities to repurpose vehicle lane space into bicycle lanes, bus lanes, and/or increased sidewalk width.

CDOT recently completed a road diet on Jackson Boulevard through Columbus Park. To enhance safety for all roadway users, this half-mile-long, four-lane road through the park was converted to three lanes with new bus-boarding islands, painted bump-outs, protected bike lanes, and pedestrian refuge islands. The safety improvements have had a dramatic effect on traffic speeds. According to automated speed camera data, the average speed decreased by 10%, and **the number of speeding violations decreased by 75%** (March-July 2021 compared to March-July 2022).

CDOT also recently cut the ribbon on a new streetscape improvement along Michigan Avenue between Cermak and 24th Place. The Motor Row Streetscape implements a road diet, reducing four travel lanes to three, and reducing crossing distances for pedestrians. Other improvements include widened sidewalks, new crosswalks, new landscaping, and LED smart lighting. The enhancements encourage drivers to slow down and make it easier for pedestrians to cross safely.

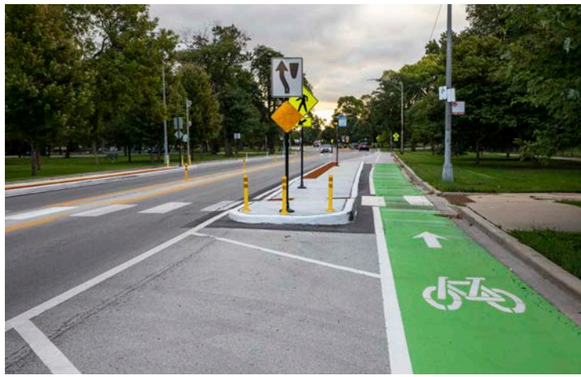


Photo: Chris Wolff

"By investing in infrastructure projects, we are doing more than just improving the appearance of our streets — we are also investing in the safety of our residents, encouraging economic development, and generating community pride. Streetscape investments represent one of the many ways we are combatting an increase in dangerous driving. A few miles per hour can make the difference between life and death, which is why we're putting physical measures in place to help drivers slow down and calling on all Chicagoans to do their part to monitor their speed."

— MAYOR LORI LIGHTFOOT

Goals 2 4

Chicago Mobility Collaborative

In June 2022, CDOT launched the Chicago Mobility Collaborative (CMC), a new public forum exploring the intersection of walking, biking, transit, public space, mobility justice, and accessibility. Four times a year CMC will bring residents and community organizations together with CDOT to help build a safer, equitable, and more accessible transportation system for everyone.

While prior transportation advisory committees have focused on single issues, the CMC hopes to bring together a diverse ecosystem of advocates to look at our infrastructure system comprehensively. By drawing on the Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Council (MBAC), Mayor's Pedestrian Advisory Council (MPAC), and the Vision Zero Advocacy Group, the CMC will be positioned to address overlapping and interdependent goals and concerns.

Nearly 200 Chicagoans attended the inaugural meeting in June and about 160 joined us again in September. Next steps before the December 2022 meeting include further refining the role of the leadership committee of the CMC to ensure that community voices are included in all aspects of planning and running the meetings.

"The Chicago Mobility Collaborative will provide a new opportunity for conversation and collaboration with CDOT to build a better and more inclusive transportation network. Chicago is a multi-modal city and that is what this collaborative will represent. Whether you primarily get around by walking, biking, taking transit, or anything in between, we look forward to working together to make a safer, better-connected city."

— GIA BIAGI, CDOT COMMISSIONER

Goals 3 4

Chicago Al Fresco

After positive feedback to the Expanded Outdoor Dining Program, which originated during the COVID-19 pandemic, CDOT and the Department of Planning and Development partnered with Choose Chicago to launch Chicago Al Fresco in Spring 2021. Chicago Al Fresco is an initiative to increase outdoor dining opportunities and create additional areas for businesses and community organizations to design creative long-term outdoor public spaces. The program encourages chambers of commerce and other neighborhood community groups to think beyond emergency traffic barricades and construction cones to propose and build design-forward outdoor community spaces.

CDOT reviewed applications for the program and helped shepherd proposed ideas through the permit process. Fifteen qualifying community organizations were awarded $2.3 million through Choose Chicago to participate in Chicago Al Fresco. These organizations proposed projects which demonstrated how placemaking can be a tool to activate public spaces and incorporate community activity on the City's South and West Sides. The applications produced an outpouring of creative ideas for transforming the public way into active community spaces for eating, street vending, storytelling, movie nights, and music and arts programming with the use of street furniture, pavement treatments, plantings, lighting, and other placemaking tools.

Photo: Purple Photo

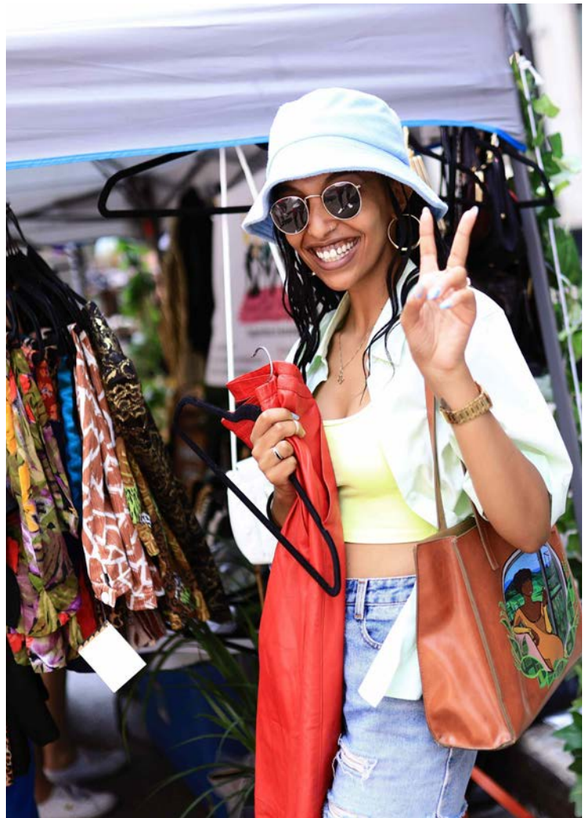


Photo: Purple Photo

Goals 3 4

Activating Downtown Streets

In June 2021, the City of Chicago released the Central City Recovery Roadmap, a follow-up to the COVID-19 Recovery Plan, to define immediate and near-term goals to support reopening of the City as COVID restrictions ease and workers and tourists return to the downtown area. Under the theme of "activate", the Central City Recovery Roadmap recommended expanding outdoor dining and retail, community organization-led gatherings, and placemaking activities on both Michigan Avenue and State Street. CDOT partnered with downtown organizations to assist in planning and executing new programs that would bring lively activity back to downtown streets. These new programs included "Meet Me on The Mile," sponsored by The Magnificent Mile Association; "Lunch on LaSalle," sponsored by the Building Owners and Managers Association of Chicago (BOMA/Chicago); and "Sundays on State," sponsored by the Chicago Loop Alliance.

"Meet Me on The Mile" took place on three Sundays in August, September, and October. The events featured "Sunday Spectacles" on portions of Michigan Avenue closed to vehicular traffic. "Lunch on LaSalle" provided a unique opportunity for office workers to dine in the middle of LaSalle Street every Tuesday in July and August. And "Sundays on State" closed the street on eight different Sundays from July to September to offer a celebration of arts, culture, food, drinks, and active recreation. All three event series were well-attended and provided an economic boost to nearby businesses.

Goals 3

Greencorps Chicago Youth Program

The Greencorps Chicago Youth Program (GCYP) was relaunched in summer 2021 and grew in 2022 to provide nearly 200 high school students with 20 hours weekly of paid summer employment for six weeks. GCYP is a summer youth employment program that connects young people, ages 15 to 19 from CPS high schools, to career opportunities and service projects in the sustainability and environmental fields, including bicycling, urban agriculture, and horticulture. GCYP is a collaborative between CDOT, CPS, and WRD Environmental and is hosted at seven CPS schools.

This year, GCYP participants assembled many of the bicycles that will be distributed through Bike Chicago, the City's new program to provide 5,000 free bikes and safety equipment to eligible Chicagoans by 2026. As part of their participation in the program this year, GCYP youth received a bike of their own and gained skills related to bicycle safety. Participants learned how to build a bicycle from a box, properly use bicycle maintenance tools, and fix a flat tire. This annual program provides young people with new skills and opportunities while supporting the development of the local green job economy in Chicago.

"These are lessons that will be with them forever so when they get older and have their own children who need a bike they can simply build it themselves. This is also showing them how to be a team player by working together and even getting much-needed exercise."

— ALDERMAN EMMA MITTS, WARD 37

A CDOT THAT WORKS

CDOT recognizes that only through establishing an internal culture of equity, inclusivity, and positivity will our 1,300 employees be able to work most effectively as a team. CDOT has prioritized making the department a great place to work and will continue to identify ways to support our dedicated staff.

In turn, this internal investment enables CDOT staff to best serve the community. We know that within Chicago, each community is unique, and it is necessary to engage local residents and businesses early in every planning process in order to best respond to community needs. Over the past year, CDOT has elevated engagement efforts, improved access to public materials, increased internal process efficiencies, and has hired new staff to focus on community engagement and safety.

Strategic Plan Goals

1. Improve relationships with communities and be more responsive to local needs
2. Improve CDOT's ability to recruit and retain staff
3. Make CDOT a great place to work
4. Deepen our relationships with partner agencies
5. Improve CDOT processes to maximize impact and efficiency
6. Prioritize workplace safety and staff support

Equity Challenge

"Our communities are often left out of the real decision-making process and find out about projects and major issues that affect our neighborhoods after they have already been decided. We want our communities to own the transportation planning process (without being overburdened and appropriately compensated for time) and establish a transparent and comprehensive partnership with CDOT, which includes the leadership, communication, and decision-making being centered in our neighborhoods that include the most marginalized voices."

- Transportation Equity Network

Goals 1

Meaningful Community Engagement

While COVID has changed how people interact with one another and how CDOT approaches community engagement, it has opened up more avenues for creative ways to engage in meaningful conversation with community members. Additionally, increased comfort for gathering in groups has also brought renewed excitement and eagerness to converse and improve our local streets and neighborhoods. Over the past year, CDOT has expanded outreach to Chicagoans through ongoing Vision Zero outreach and community meetings, increasing access to public materials, releasing a Chicago Works survey, holding adaptive cycling sessions, and engaging in city-wide initiatives.

Chicago Works Survey CDOT strives to expand the methods we use to engage with communities. This year, to better understand and prioritize what types of capital projects the City should invest in through the Chicago Works program, a new Chicago Works Survey was developed and posted on the City's website. The survey was promoted and open to all Chicagoans through spring and summer 2022 and provided an avenue for direct feedback to CDOT. It asked respondents what type of Capital Projects they would most like to see the City make additional investments in and if there was a specific project they would like to suggest. Through August 2022, the survey received over 500 responses. This information will be taken into consideration in future years of capital improvements programming.

Vision Zero South Side Action Plan Outreach As part of the Vision Zero South Side Action Plan, CDOT has worked closely with the Greater Englewood, Grand Boulevard, and Washington Park communities to understand local priorities and to establish long-lasting relationships. CDOT looked for ways to support and join the ongoing work in the neighborhoods by meeting residents and stakeholders where they already were, such as standing meetings. Interactive events such as safety walks and pop-up engagement at community fairs included activities that helped stakeholders envision and understand the infrastructure improvements that could come to the neighborhoods, while also generating ideas on community actions to encourage safer behaviors on our streets.

CDOT co-created with community members a range of events including walking tours, roundtables, and workshops. The engagement process relied on coordination with community partners to customize events to best fit each neighborhood's needs and desires. CDOT also collaborated with local community partners on safety workshops. More than just listening sessions, safety workshops allowed participants and the project team to co-develop the safety improvements that community members were most interested in and help define action steps for the City.

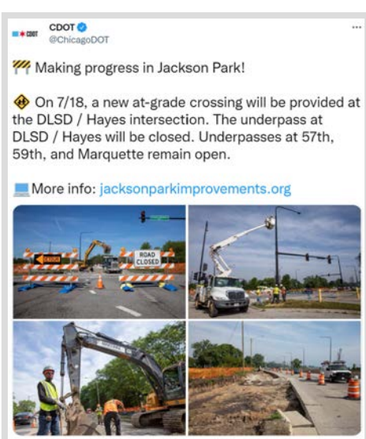
Together with the community, the following goals were established:

- Make walking, biking, and transit safer and more comfortable
- Use transportation investments to support ongoing economic development efforts, including INVEST South/West, that are creating more essential destinations within the communities
- Align community input and traffic safety analysis to co-identify areas of highest need

SAFE (Streets are for Everybody) Ambassadors
For 20 years, CDOT's SAFE Ambassadors have helped Chicagoans walk, bike, roll, and drive safely. The education and outreach team tirelessly conducts and participates in events throughout the City, including community bike rides and events, learn to ride a bike classes, bike helmet fittings, bike light giveaways, bike safety at schools, and engagement for ongoing CDOT projects. In 2021, the SAFE Ambassadors attended 125 events throughout the City and engaged with over 11,000 people, including 2,200 school children.

Increasing Accessibility to CDOT Materials
To continue to improve CDOT's relationships with communities and to be more responsive to community needs, CDOT is distributing door hangers to provide notice of street resurfacing in multiple languages. This provides communication directly to those impacted and will continue to be integrated throughout CDOT programs.

To ensure transparency and increase accessibility to the work we are doing, CDOT also distributes a quarterly e-newsletter with updates on department news and projects. We have also increased our presence on social media, highlighting projects and ongoing work through frequent Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter posts.

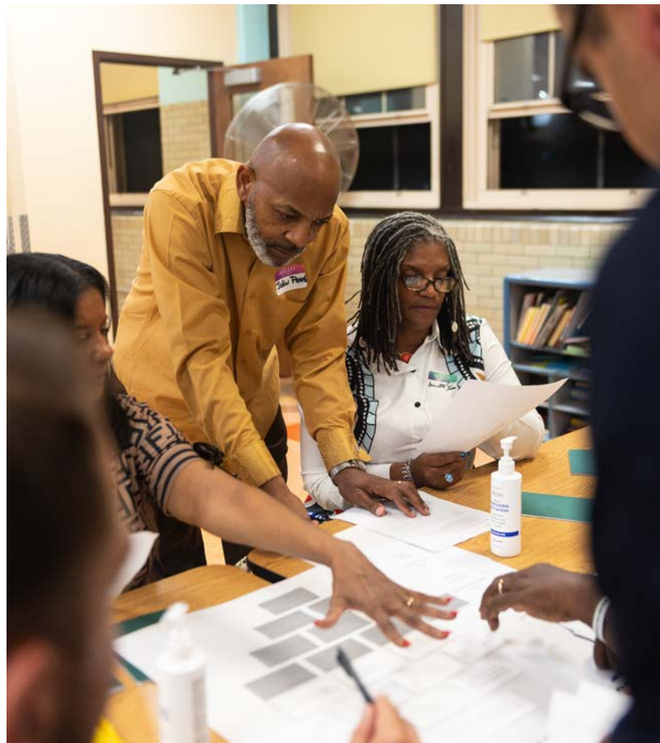


Adaptive Cycling Sessions In summer 2022, CDOT and Divvy held a series of free adaptive cycling sessions for riders with disabilities. Led by Adaptive Adventures, a leading national organization providing adaptive recreation experiences, riders were provided access to an adaptive mobility device—such as a tandem bike, hand cycle, or recumbent trike. The sessions were held throughout the city — in Douglass Park, Montrose Harbor, Marquette Park, and 31st Street Beach. The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities led extensive community outreach that helped to shape this adaptive cycling program, including research into several successful adaptive cycling programs in New York City, San Francisco, and Portland.

Budget Engagement Forums CDOT participated in the City's annual series of Budget Engagement Forums, where Chicago residents and community leaders were invited to share their priorities regarding City services. These forums were held in three sessions in July 2022 at Kennedy-King, Malcolm X, and Harry S. Truman Colleges. Each public engagement forum included a City presentation, followed by small roundtable sessions and public comment. Feedback from the forums will be incorporated into the 2023 Responsive Initiatives, developed from the report published by the University of Illinois at Chicago's Great Cities Institute, detailing the data collected from public input. Once finalized, these inputs will be presented with the City's 2023 Budget Recommendations.

"Last year's pandemic recovery budget, planned with invaluable input from our residents, community leaders, and labor organizations enabled us to provide ongoing support to impacted Chicago residents where they needed it most, resulting in more than $1.9 billion in key investments. In planning the 2023 budget, our values of equity and inclusion will continue to guide us in assuring that our budget works for all of our 77 neighborhoods."

— MAYOR LORI LIGHTFOOT



Goals 3

Internal Process Efficiencies

CDOT launched development of a new Enterprise Portfolio System (EPS) in January 2022. EPS will streamline tracking and reporting by centralizing information and connecting directly with other City financial and project tracking systems. In some cases, it will replace existing CDOT databases and disconnected project management spreadsheets that have surpassed their useful lives. As a centralized source of data, EPS will eliminate errors and discrepancies caused by duplicate data entry points. It will reduce time spent reconciling and compiling data from separate systems. Ultimately EPS will be a single source of current, accurate information on all stages of CDOT projects.

EPS will track and report on CDOT infrastructure projects from initial funding and planning through design and construction. It will allow CDOT and external partners to manage and monitor costs, status, payments, and work processes at various levels of detail, from program and project level budget information to construction costs, invoices, and milestones for individual work orders within a larger project. This system is scheduled to go live in late 2023.

Enterprise Portfolio System

48 Interviews were conducted during the recently completed discovery phase

3 Legacy systems will be replaced by EPS

6-10 Existing City systems will connect to EPS

Goals 1 2 6

New Key Positions

In December 2020, CDOT hired a Safety Administrator to help ensure a safe work environment for all CDOT employees, including over 1,000 field and trades personnel. By hiring a Safety Administrator, CDOT was able to consolidate and centralize safety training, management, and resolution of safety concerns. Since starting in December 2020, the Safety Administrator has reinstituted Safety/Toolbox Talks, which provide the Department with an opportunity to share critical information with field crews that do not have regular access to email but are working in and with the public every day. For example, a Toolbox Talk was provided in February and October about gender-based violence including information about resources available, and another was provided in June to promote awareness of cyclists in the roadway. The Safety Administrator has also supported the Department's COVID-19 response, ensuring that we are in adherence with local and state requirements.

In September 2022, CDOT added a Director of Outreach and Engagement to its staff. This position was identified in the Strategic Plan as key to supporting and expanding the ongoing outreach and engagement efforts of the Department. While still new at the time of publishing this document, this position will help develop a framework for outreach and engagement at CDOT, advising staff and consultants on how best to work in and with communities to build long-lasting partnerships and elevate diverse voices in the work of the department. The Director of Outreach and Engagement will also play a key role in the future of the Chicago Mobility Collaborative.

Goals 1 6

Office of Equity and Racial Justice and CDOT Training

Within her first few months in office, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot established an Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ) and appointed the City's first Chief Equity Officer. OERJ seeks to advance institutional change that results in an equitable transformation of how we do business across the City of Chicago enterprise. To assist departments in deepening their understanding of government's role in systemic racism and identifying ways departments can work toward more equitable outcomes, OERJ has provided a number of resources, trainings, and ongoing forums.

For example, a cohort of CDOT staff representing four different CDOT divisions recently completed a 9-month training provided by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity. The training covered the role and responsibility of government in racial equity work, the context and history of racial equity, the implementation of racial equity tools into decision-making, and the understanding of the role community engagement plays in racial equity work.

Another group of CDOT staff participated in Elevated Chicago's Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion training, also focused on the role of government in racial equity work. The nine-month program provided an opportunity to build core competencies of staff with a basic foundation in equity principles and a desire to operationalize them in their current roles.

CDOT participates in other efforts organized by OERJ, such as regular meetings of Racial Equity Liaisons and more public convenings like Together We Heal. CDOT continues to work with OERJ to expand the number of staff that have access to training and ongoing resources to incorporate equity into decision making and the daily work of running the department.

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