



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

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

**Chicago Planning to Build on 2017's Progress in the New Year**

From academics and public safety to neighborhood infrastructure and economic growth, the men and women who work for the City of Chicago achieved real results for the city's residents in 2017. With the calendar set to turn on Monday, the City is already working to build on 2017's the gains in 2018.

"In Chicago, we are helping our children achieve incredible academic heights, we are investing in the fabric of our communities and we are growing new jobs for our residents," said Mayor Emanuel. "We are not about to rest. In the next year we will improve city services like street lights, we will improve police operations from technology to staffing to community relations, we will invest in our children's classrooms, and we will work to ensure Chicago's brightest days are ahead for every neighborhood in the city."

Below is a sampling of the work, and results, accomplished in Chicago in 2017:

**RECORD-BREAKING ACADEMIC SUCCESS:** Chicago Public Schools (CPS) student achievement outcomes continue to dramatically improve as Mayor Emanuel and CPS continue to invest in new resources and establish new goals for students.

- CPS students achieved a four-point gain in the graduation rate, with [77.5 percent of students earning a diploma](#), and this year's rate of freshmen [on-track to graduate is the highest on record at 88.7 percent](#), up more than 28 percent since 2011.
- More Chicago elementary students than ever before are [meeting or exceeding standards for math and reading](#); for a fifth year in a row, CPS students have outscored national peers in both subjects.
- [Analysis](#) from a leading expert at Stanford University shows Chicago's students learn and grow at a faster rate than 96 percent of school districts in the country – including wealthy districts.
- And according to Ingenuity's [State of the Arts Report](#), 66 percent of CPS schools are rated as strong or excelling in arts education programming.
- For the first time, CPS and its students started a new school year with adequate and equitable funding after the state passed historic legislation to reform an education funding formula that had been woefully inadequate.
- To encourage postsecondary planning and success beyond high school, CPS also became the first large urban district in the country to require high school students to develop a [postsecondary plan](#) to graduate; City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) supports this plan with

programs like the Star Scholarship, which provides eligible CPS students with the opportunity to earn an associate degree completely free of cost. More than [2,900 Star Scholars](#) are currently enrolled at City Colleges.

**PUBLIC SAFETY GAINS:** The City has continued its efforts to provide the best tools, training and technology to first responders.

To date, Chicago Police report a 15% reduction in murders and a 21% reduction in shootings – with 20 of 22 police districts achieving a reduction in shootings.

- In 2017, 1,116 new recruits entered the Chicago Police Academy, along with the promotion of 70 lieutenants, 214 sergeants, 270 detectives, 119 field training officers, and 9 captains. These hiring efforts are part of the Mayor and Superintendent’s commitment to add nearly one thousand officers to the streets by the end of 2018.
- Mayor Emanuel and Superintendent Johnson successfully led advocacy in Springfield for passage of the [Safe Neighborhoods Reform Act](#), a balanced legislative effort to reprioritize Illinois sentencing laws, with a focus on accountability in our criminal courts for repeat felony gun offenders.
- CPD’s proactive gun violence enforcement strategy targeted those individuals who illegally carry guns in Chicago’s neighborhoods, resulting in more than 8,700 gun recoveries on the year.
- The Mayor and CPD [published a gun trace report](#) providing a data-driven analysis of the source states and dealers for crime guns on our City’s streets, with a detailed and comprehensive set of policy solutions to help CPD curtail the flow of illegal firearms into Chicago.
- The Mayor led passage of an [ordinance to disrupt the illegal secondary market for cell phones and create disincentives for criminals to commit cell phone thefts and robberies](#) – along with any associated violent crimes. The ordinance provides enhanced tools for Chicago Police and BACP to target unlicensed and noncompliant businesses that illegally deal stolen and used phones, and improves consumer protections to diminish or eliminate a stolen phone’s value on the secondary market.
- The Chicago Police Department (CPD) implemented a new [use of force policy](#) following significant public review; equipped all patrol officers with [body cameras](#) one year ahead of schedule; expanded [strategic nerve centers](#) that provide technology to help police prevent, combat and respond to violent crime in the south and west sides of Chicago; and moved the [Office of Community Policing](#) under the Office of the Superintendent and appointed Deputy Chief Dwayne Betts to lead the effort.
- The [Civilian Office of Police Accountability](#) was launched to replace the Independent Police Review Authority.
- Police recruits began to receive [cultural awareness training](#) at DuSable Museum of African American History, and all 911 call takers and dispatchers completed [mental health awareness and de-escalation training](#).
- The City announced it will build a new, state of the art [Public Safety Training Academy](#) in West Garfield Park.
- The City’s first responders took on new and innovative training modules in various capacities. Police recruits began to receive [cultural awareness training](#) at DuSable Museum

of African American History, all 911 call takers and dispatchers completed [mental health awareness and de-escalation training](#), and the City launched its first collaborative interagency mental health training at the Fire Academy – a scenario-based training module for responding to individuals in mental health crisis that incorporates CPD, CFD, OEMC call takers, EMS hospital systems, and mental health experts to align policies and best practices into a single curriculum.

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

- The Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, which leverages downtown growth to generate money for neighborhood economies, helped 32 small businesses hire, strengthen and expand by awarding an [initial \\$3.2 million in grants](#).
- An initial \$5 million in grants were awarded to 51 recipients through the [Retail Thrive Zone program](#), which further supports improvements to targeted retail corridors on the West, Southwest and South sides.
- The [new Industrial Growth Zones](#) program has, in its first year, assisted more than 30 new or existing industrial businesses quickly resolve regulatory issues so they can focus on growing their business.
- In October, City Council approved a three-year pilot program designed to generate [new affordable housing](#) on the Near North, Near West and Northwest sides.
- City Council passed a landmark plan to modernize the [North Branch Industrial Corridor](#), which will help it evolve as a vibrant, mixed-use business center and generate tens of millions of dollars for industrial and commercial development throughout the City.
- For the fourth year in a row, *Site Selection* magazine ranked Chicago as the number one City in the country for [corporate investment](#). 351 companies expanded or relocated to Chicagoland this year, creating 11,685 new jobs.
- A new record was set for the most tower cranes to operate in one year – 60 – since the height of the great recession. This record is on top of a five-year record high for building permits issued.
- The City announced it is on track to reaching its tourism goal of [55 million visitors annually](#) at the end of the year – three years early.

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS:**

- As part of an overall plan to modernize Chicago's airports, the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) opened the second phase of the \$220 million [northeast cargo development](#) at O'Hare International Airport, which opened ahead of schedule and has already created approximately 600 permanent jobs.
- CDA also opened a new [Airport Maintenance Complex annex](#) building to be used for the snow program at O'Hare International Airport.
- The Midway Modernization Program is also underway, as officials broke ground on the new [security checkpoint and bridge extension project](#).
- The Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) completed several major transportation upgrades, including the construction of the Wells-Wentworth Connector from Ping Tom Park to 19<sup>th</sup> Street, the reconstruction of the [intersection of Belmont, Western and](#)

[Clybourn](#) and the reconstruction of the [intersection of Damen, Elston and Fullerton](#) and streetscapes on 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Cottage Grove and Morgan Street.

- The [Chicago Smart Lighting Program](#) began to install modern, more reliable streetlight fixtures throughout the City.
- In partnership with CDOT, the Chicago Park District completed Lakefront trail separations from [Fullerton to North Avenue](#), South of Oak Street to Ohio Street and [31<sup>st</sup> Street to 41<sup>st</sup> Street](#).
- At the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), the brand new [Washington/Wabash](#) Chicago Transportation Authority station was completed, which replaced two century-old stations at Madison and Randolph. Further, the Damen entrance to [the Illinois Medical District Blue Line Station](#) was completed.
- As a result of the CTA's 7000-series railcar procurement, ground was broken for the new [\\$100 million railcar facility](#) on the south side of Chicago, which will create more than 300 jobs and will bring railcar production back to the City for the first time in half a century.

**STANDING UP TO PRESIDENT TRUMP:** As President Donald Trump pursues misguided, harmful policies, the City of Chicago is standing up on behalf of its residents.

- After filing a lawsuit against the Trump Justice Department, the Chicago Department of Law won a [nationwide injunction](#) to prevent the Trump Administration from attaching unlawful requirements that would have obligated Chicago and other cities to assist with federal immigration enforcement in order to receive essential public safety resources.
- As the Trump Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rolls back environmental standards and deletes references to climate change from federal websites, CDPH has [strengthened environmental health standards](#) and protections for Chicagoans while creating a new City of Chicago ["Climate Change is Real"](#) website to ensure the public continues to have access to information the EPA has developed over decades of research about the impact of climate change.

**IMPROVING PUBLIC HEALTH:** With a continued focus on improving health equity and health outcomes, the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) reported that the health of Chicagoans has improved in a variety of ways.

- [Teen birth rates](#) have dropped to the lowest level since the department began tracking this metric.
- New [HIV diagnoses](#) dropped to the lowest level since 1990.
- The racial gap between [breast cancer mortality](#) is effectively closing.
- Youth smoking rates have hit another all-time low, following a series of laws passed to discourage tobacco use.