



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 19, 2022

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**THE CITY OF CHICAGO HONORS GLOBAL ACCESSIBILITY AWARENESS DAY**

*Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot joins Commissioner Rachel Arfa from the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities and other City Leaders in Celebration of Digital Inclusion and Accessibility*

**CHICAGO** — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) join to celebrate the Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD). GAAD honors digital inclusion and accessibility, which impacts the more than one billion people with disabilities. This celebration includes a panel comprised of user experts with disabilities discussing digital accessibility best practices for a variety of disability needs, including people who have mobility disabilities, are blind or have low vision, are deaf or hard of hearing, or have intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The celebration includes a vaccine clinic, an opportunity to test out the City's new adaptive seated scooters provided by Lime, Spin, and SuperPedestrian. The event features a dance performance by ReinventAbility — a dance group that creates dance performances and opportunities for individuals with and without disabilities; this performance is included as part of the City of Chicago's Year of Dance, through the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE). DCASE and MOPD will also be announcing the creation of a mural that will capture disability narratives, by artist Sam Kirk, displayed on the building at 2102 W. Ogden Avenue.

"Global Accessibility Awareness Day provides us with an important opportunity to honor the technological advances that have increased accessibility for people with disabilities, as well as recognize the hard work ahead of us when it comes to increasing digital accessibility," said Mayor Lightfoot. "We simply cannot stop our digital accessibility work until all people with disabilities have full, unrestricted access to the apps, websites, and communications they need to live fulfilled lives. I am proud to join MOPD in deepening the City's commitment to this mission and strengthening our partnerships with the disability rights advocates who have been leading this work for years."



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Earlier this month, Mayor Lightfoot launched the [Chicago Digital Equity Council](#), which seeks to close the digital divide, improve internet access in our vulnerable communities, and ensure every resident, including residents with disabilities and senior citizens, can access the internet. This work includes a focus on equity and inclusion. MOPD works closely with our partners across the city, including Assets, Information and Services (AIS), which leads our digital infrastructure, and also is a partner of the newly formed Digital Equity Council. MOPD is partnering with the Chicago Digital Equity Council to host a community engagement session focused on disability accessibility needs to obtain diverse input as part of the commitment to this work.

“Digital access is a core part of our overall commitment to increasing and advancing accessibility, and we are honored to partner with Mayor Lightfoot and the Chicago Digital Equity Council. This year marks the first time that the City of Chicago is participating in the international GAAD celebration, bringing together our communities,” said MOPD Commissioner Rachel Arfa.

“Increasing arts access is one of DCASE’s core goals, and we are proud to partner with MOPD to celebrate GAAD and to launch a series of initiatives that will engage artists to create programs by and for people with disabilities, including a new mural by Sam Kirk and an artist in residence program at the MOPD field office,” said Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events Commissioner Erin Harkey.

In the coming weeks, Chicago will be granting licenses to Spin, Lime, and, SuperPedestrian to operate shared scooter programs throughout the city. As a result of the feedback received during the two pilots, accessibility requirements are included as part of the license agreement.

“As the landscape of micromobility in Chicago continues to grow and expand, it’s critical that we include accessibility as part of that expansion,” said Chicago Department of Transportation Commissioner Gia Biagi. “Thanks to our partnership with Commissioner Arfa and the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities, our scooter program includes requirements to make the program available to more Chicagoans without becoming a nuisance on our sidewalks.”

In addition, the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) collaborates with MOPD to ensure residents across Chicago have the resources they need.

“We believe that all Chicagoans, no matter their age or ability, should be able to access the services they need to help them live independently in their communities and homes,” said Department of Family and Support Services Commissioner



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Brandie Knazze. “DFSS and MOPD work to address the complex needs of older adults and people with disabilities through partnerships and linkages to food, benefits, and other supportive services. We are proud to celebrate Global Accessibility Awareness Day.”

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