



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**ICYMI: MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON LEADS THE MOST TRANSFORMATIVE
WEEK FOR DISABILITY JUSTICE IN CHICAGO'S HISTORY**

Mayor Johnson announced initiatives and investments this week to make Chicago the most accessible big city in the United States.

CHICAGO — In honor of Disability Pride Month and as part of his commitment to stand up for the most vulnerable, this week Mayor Brandon Johnson took major steps forward in making Chicago a more accessible city for Chicagoans with disabilities through a series of new initiatives and investments.

Red Line Stations Opening

On Monday, Mayor Johnson joined Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) acting President Nora Leerhsen and elected officials for the [opening of four newly-renovated Red Line stations](#). The modernized stations are fully-accessible with escalators, elevators, and wider platforms. The re-opening of these stations marks the first time this many stations have been opened at once since 1993.

The project has also included full reconstruction of the Red and Purple Line Express track structure and the installation of a new signal system which combined will provide smoother, quieter and more reliable rides for CTA customers. With these stations, more than 75 percent of CTA rail stations are now accessible to customers with disabilities, and CTA is working toward securing funding and planning to make the rest fully accessible as part of the agency's ambitious All Stations Accessibility Plan (ASAP).

See photos from the ribbon cutting [here](#).

Executive Order Curbing Smoking on CTA

On Tuesday, Mayor Johnson signed an executive order directing resources toward building a "[Safe and Smoke-Free](#)" public transit system. The executive order directs Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) to aid the CTA in their efforts to eliminate smoking on the trains. The Mayor has also directed his Intergovernmental Affairs team to work with



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legislators in Springfield to ensure there is adequate funding provided for CTA and regional transit that includes resources to enforce the ban on smoking.

The full text of the Executive Order is available [here](#).

ADA 35 Year Anniversary

On Tuesday, Mayor Johnson joined the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) and MOPD Commissioner Rachel Arfa to [celebrate the 35th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) at Malcolm X College. The program honored community partners, recognized innovative employment programs, and spotlighted visual and performing disabled artists.

The ceremony was preceded by a panel on youth disability employment featuring representatives of and graduates from After 22, One Summer Chicago, and Project Wright Access. This year also marks the 35th anniversary of the formation of MOPD, created shortly after the passage of the ADA in 1990. MOPD is the largest municipal office devoted to disability services in the nation.

See photos from the anniversary event [here](#).

Largest Investment in Shelter Infrastructure in History

On Wednesday, Mayor Johnson announced a [historic \\$40 million investment in capital improvement](#) funding to modernize homeless shelter facilities throughout the city. This investment is the largest investment into shelter infrastructure in the history of Chicago.

"Now more than ever it is important for all of us to honor our disability community and protect our civil and disability rights, programs and services that help all of us live independently and thrive in each of our 77 communities," said **MOPD Commissioner Rachel Arfa**. "These are values that are more important now than ever."

The Mayor made the announcement at St. Leonard's Ministries on the Near West Side, a shelter that has served returning residents for more than 70 years. Mayor Johnson has consistently advocated for additional resources for returning residents, creating the City's first [Office of Re-Entry](#) specifically to serve their needs. See photos from the announcement at St. Leonard's [here](#).



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As the Mayor told [WVON's Matt McGill](#), investments like these are about more than just infrastructure improvements, they ensure every Chicagoan can live securely with the dignity they deserve.

The funding will support major improvements to seven shelters across Chicago. The funds will improve more than 750 permanent shelter beds and develop 350+ non-congregate beds to provide more individuals and families a private sleeping room and bathroom with secure storage space.

“Whether it's reopening mental health clinics, expanding our CARE program, or making historic investments into homeless shelters, that’s what the people of Chicago asked me to do—and we're doing it,” said **Mayor Johnson**. “In fact, at one of the facilities [we invested in] the women had to walk through the men's corridor to get to their beds. And at that same facility, the residents who were utilizing this shelter had to stand up to eat because there was no dining area, no air conditioners, no elevators to be able to help people who have other severe medical needs. This is about providing and giving dignity to our people and I'm going to keep doing that.”

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