

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

**2018 Budget Statement to the City Council Committee
on the Budget and Government Operations**

October 30, 2017

Karen Tamley, Commissioner

Good morning, Chairman Austin and esteemed members of the City Council. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities' (MOPD) budget request for fiscal year 2018.

MOPD promotes total access, full participation and equal opportunity for people with all types of disabilities. Our comprehensive approach to systemic change for people with disabilities includes: the delivery of direct independent living services; public education and awareness about disability issues; policy reform; and initiatives with the goal of making Chicago the most accessible and inclusive city in the nation. Additionally, MOPD provides disability-related expertise to City departments and sister agencies, as well as to private sector companies and non-profit organizations.

This past year has been very productive and successful for MOPD.

2017 Program & Services Accomplishments:

MOPD worked with BACP to develop the accessibility requirements for Transportation Network Provider (TNP) vehicles in order to start providing service to customers with mobility disabilities – making Chicago the first city to do this. TNP companies received the City's approval for their accessibility plans, and are in the process of implementing those plans. Currently, Uber has added 86 accessible vehicles to their fleet.

In 2016 and 2017 YTD, MOPD provided over the phone and in-person information and referral assistance to 57,754 individuals, in-home personal assistance/homemaker services to 378 individuals (28,102) and independent living services to 523 individuals. MOPD provided 115 assistive devices to people with disabilities.

MOPD's HomeMod Program continues to be in high demand. Since the beginning of the program in 1992, 1,100 home accessibility modifications have been made to the homes of Chicago residents with disabilities. In 2016 and 2017 YTD, 132 homes have been modified for accessibility, which include lifts, accessible entryways, kitchens and bathrooms. We have already begun the preliminary work for more modifications that will begin in 2018.

To further address the need for home modification, an IGA between MOPD and CHA was executed to provide home modifications to participants of CHA's Housing Choice Voucher

Program. CHA is projected to begin allocating funding from its Modification Fund to MOPD's HomeMod Program for use toward making the homes of qualified households accessible.

MOPD distributes free amplified land-line phones and adapters (for cell phones) to individuals who are hard-of-hearing and unable to use the telephone. In 2016 and 2017 YTD, MOPD distributed 506 amplified land-line phones and cell phone adapters which generated \$20,240 in revenue for the department. Outreach for the program included participation at 57 exhibits and fairs, including the City's annual Senior Fest and CHA Residents Symposium. This program has served clients in five additional languages during this past year (Chinese, Vietnamese, Polish, Russian and Spanish). In 2016, MOPD was awarded a \$1,500 bonus for finishing in third place statewide (of 28 selection centers) for the most equipment distributed. For 2017 YTD, MOPD is in second place.

In 2016 and 2017 YTD, Chicago Meals on Wheels has collaborated with MOPD to provide home delivered meals to a total of 252 people with disabilities under the age of 60, who are unable to prepare their own meals or have support for meal preparation. This initiative fills a gap in current services. MOPD plans to expand this program in 2018.

Finally, MOPD staff and interns have been conducting surveys of the pedway system throughout the downtown area. The purpose of the surveys is to determine the level of accessibility and what would be required to ensure full accessibility for Chicagoans and visitors with disabilities to utilize the system.

Emergency Preparedness Planning & Public Safety for People with Disabilities

MOPD has continued to partner with the Office of Emergency Management and Communication (OEMC), the Chicago Fire Department (CFD) and other departments to ensure that people with disabilities are included in the City's emergency planning. In 2016 and 2017, MOPD:

- participated in various OEMC work groups and tabletop exercises to ensure that the disability community is represented in all emergency related planning;
- continued working with OEMC to develop a strategic plan to ensure that emergency shelters utilized by the City are accessible to the disability community;
- worked with OEMC, CFD, DFSS and the Department of Law to identify ways to provide alternative resources to individuals who call 911 for non-emergency and non-medical assistance; and
- increased its role in the City's emergency weather response through well-being checks and distributing information on warming shelters and other disability-specific information.

Making Chicago a More Accessible City

MOPD and the Commission on Human Relations (CCHR) started implementing the new disability regulations drafted by MOPD for the Human Rights Ordinance. The regulations went into effect on July 1, 2017. An outreach and educational initiative was launched to provide the

disability and business communities a better understanding of the regulations' accessibility standards and to be more informed of their rights and obligations under the Human Rights Ordinance. On June 16, MOPD and CCHR co-hosted a roundtable meeting with representatives from disability organizations to inform them and their members of the new regulations.

MOPD worked closely with the CTA to develop the All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP). The goal is to create a blueprint for making the CTA rail system 100 percent accessible over the next 20 years. Increasing the accessibility of CTA's rail stations will provide more transportation options and remove barriers for people with disabilities wanting to use public transportation to travel throughout the city. Currently, 101 of 145 (70 percent) CTA stations are accessible. Two stations (Quincy and Wilson) are currently under construction. ASAP modifications will include new ADA compliant elevators, power assisted doors, ADA compliant fare collection, signage, customer agent kiosks and staff restrooms; increased platform clearances, adjacent crosswalks and streets. Various way-finding elements are also being considered. Once approved by CTA leadership, ASAP will enter a strategic planning process, which includes securing funding and community partners.

One of MOPD's key functions is to increase accessibility throughout the city and achieve greater compliance with federal, state and municipal laws. MOPD's Accessibility Compliance Unit (ACU) works to guarantee the ongoing accessibility of commercial and residential buildings through the provision of permitting, pre-permit reviews and technical assistance to developers and architects. For 2017, YTD, ACU documented 787 plan reviews and 214 pre-permit plan reviews; generated \$18,700 in fees from preliminary plan reviews; responded to 1,669 requests for technical assistance; and conducted 14 site surveys.

Additionally, ACU:

- conducted accessibility reviews of the City's major infrastructure projects, including CTA Blue Line (Pulaski) and Red line stations (Lawrence, Argyle, Berwyn, Bryn Mawr); IMAX Theater @ Navy Pier, City Colleges' Richard J. Daley Campus, Apple Store, Steppenwolf Theatre, Lake Shore East Community (three residential towers), Shakespeare Theater; and
- worked with the Department of Aviation to make additional accessibility improvements, including an animal relief area on the airside. Work will continue in 2018 on improving taxi cues for people requiring wheelchair accessible taxis.

Disability Awareness Training

MOPD also works to make Chicago more accessible and inclusive through its training programs. In 2016 and 2017 YTD year, MOPD provided disability awareness and etiquette training to public and private employees (48 sessions and over 3,154 individuals). Of note, some of conducted sessions included the Transportation Security Administration, Taste of Chicago vendors, Greater Chicago Food Depository, Chicagoland Business Leadership Network and the

School of the Art Institute. Additionally, MOPD is working with other employers to explore the possibility of providing training via video in order to reach the maximum number of employees within their respective businesses. These employers include Grant Thornton, CNA, Illinois Employment First and the Chicago Park District.

Initiated in 2015, MOPD continues to hold enrichment training session for its own staff to improve our customer service by increasing awareness of all types of disabilities and their related issues. The selection of presentation topics was based on a survey of MOPD staff. The sessions are held quarterly and conducted by subject matter experts outside of the department. This year's presentations included the City's new Municipal ID program (City Clerk's Office), immigration rights (Legal Assistance Foundation) and interacting with people who have mental illness (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill). In December, we plan to hold our final session of the year at the Greater Chicago Food Depository. At this session, MOPD staff will hear about the results of its recently concluded research on "food insecurity" within the disability community.

Promoting Employment and Economic Opportunities

In order to address the high unemployment rate of people with disabilities, MOPD drafted a resolution, sponsored by Mayor Emanuel and Alderman Maldonado, establishing the Task Force on Employment and Economic Development for People with Disabilities. The purpose of the task force is to advise the City on ways to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities by 1) encouraging economic development through entrepreneurship; 2) facilitating alignment between job training, referrals and service providers; 3) facilitating greater preparation of students in higher education for careers; and 4) examining City/County policies that promote and/or discourage employment. The work of the task force is expected to take 12 months after Council approval.

MOPD worked with the Department of Procurement Services to amend the Business Enterprises Owned by People with Disabilities (BEPD) Program. The amendments reduced the total contract amount required to be performed by BEPDs, which will result in increasing the number of BEPDs able to participate as a subprime; and increase the bid incentive, in some cases doubling the amount from two to four percent. The amendment also enables prime contractors to use the incentive toward current bids rather than future bids. Finally, the program was expanded to include businesses owned and operated by service-disabled veterans.

Twenty-seven years after the passage of the ADA, people with disabilities unfortunately remain twice as likely as their non-disabled peers to be living in poverty and nearly half of those remain unbanked or underbanked. To address this issue, MOPD and the City Treasurer's Office are forming the Financial Advisory Council for the Empowerment of People with Disabilities (FACED). The advisory council will provide a platform for community and financial institution engagement to help improve the financial health for this underserved community. The advisory council's members will include organizations that represent the interests of people with

disabilities, as well as local, state and federal agencies that work on financial literacy and economic empowerment. Its first meeting will be held in mid-October.

Unemployment among working age members in the disability community remains a serious issue in Chicago and nationwide. To combat this problem, MOPD provides comprehensive benefits counseling to Chicago's Social Security disability beneficiaries of all ages under a federal Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) grant from the Social Security Administration (SSA). MOPD's SSA-certified Community Work Incentives Coordinators inform individuals who are working or on the brink of work how employment will impact their current SSA benefits. During 2016 and 2017 YTD, WIPA staff provided 481 benefits analyses, while referring 1,462 individuals for job training/placement assistance through our network of WIPA Program Partners. WIPA Program Partners consist of approximately 80 members who represent entities that provide services that help support individuals with disabilities as they seek employment, further education, transportation, housing and legal assistance. Of those beneficiaries who were referred by WIPA staff, 202 gained employment and received benefits analyses. WIPA staff conducted 273 presentations (4,394 individuals), that included educators, students, parents, adults within the disability community, counselors and case workers at community-based organizations, as well as local, state and federal government agencies.

Employment services:

MOPD's Youth Employment Program (YEP) is collaboration between MOPD and Chicago Public Schools-Office of Diverse Learners Support and Services (ODLSS). YEP consists of a series of job readiness and career exploration activities that take place throughout the school year (and into the summer) for transition-aged CPS students with disabilities. The components of YEP include a Student Transition Fair, Job Shadow Day and One Summer Chicago internship opportunities. In addition, MOPD and ODLSS hosted its first Parent Expo this past spring. Over 200 students, their parents, educators and community-based service providers attended our inaugural event.

- Job Shadow Day: This past spring, 327 students were placed with various types of businesses and agencies for Job Shadow Day. These students experienced a day of hands-on career exploration activities with companies such as PepsiCo, AT&T, Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services, Anti-Cruelty Society, Chicago Department of Aviation and Northern Trust.
- One Summer Chicago: MOPD, ODLSS and DFSS worked together to implement a paid summer internship program under One Summer Chicago. A total of 84 students participated in this seven-week, part-time program, which was an increase of placements over last year's total.
- Partners Breakfast: In August, MOPD and ODLSS hosted a "Partners Breakfast" at Northern Trust, who graciously sponsored the event. Over 60 attendees learned about our YEP plans for the coming school year, as well as YEP successes from this past year. PepsiCo and City Colleges of Chicago provided testimonials on their positive experiences.
- Student Transition Fair: To initiate the YEP activities for the 2016/17 school year, MOPD and ODLSS hosted its 3rd Annual Student Transition Fair last October. A total of 750 students attended this event. Exhibitors included community-based agencies who offer

support services to youth with disabilities, as well as employers with job opportunities. Workshops on resume writing and interviewing were also provided. The 2017/18 kick-off event is scheduled for November 7 at South Shore Cultural Center. In addition to our usual activities for students, this year we are adding more interactive mock interviewing and resume reviews that will be conducted by business representatives who are volunteering their time to assist.

Increasing the Number of Accessible Taxi Cabs and Improving Service for the Disability Community

In 2017, MOPD:

- worked with BACP and the Mayor's Office to develop strategies for better utilizing the Taxi Cab Accessibility Fund (adding 61 WAVs YTD); and
- served on the Selection Committee to award a taxi medallion to a taxi driver who provides excellent service to people with disabilities;

ADA25 Chicago: Legacy Projects

Two years ago, MOPD worked closely with the Chicago Community Trust to launch the *ADA25 Chicago* – a new initiative in recognition of the 25th Anniversary of the ADA.

As one of ADA25's legacy projects, MOPD was very involved with the development of a pilot Leadership Institute for People with Disabilities. The Leadership Institute is designed to build leadership capacity and develop a future talent pool to expand inclusion of people with disabilities on private, public and non-profit sector boards and commissions; in appointed offices and high level professional positions. After a successful pilot program in 2015, the Leadership Institute held its second annual program in early 2017. Since establishing the Institute in 2015, there are now 32 Fellows, 75 network members of disability leaders and 50 civic advancements on boards and commissions.

2018 Programs, Services and Initiatives

Serving Residents with Disabilities

In 2018, MOPD will continue to provide its full array of services to Chicagoans with disabilities and veterans in response in an effort to reach our goal of making Chicago a world-class disability-friendly city, including

- working closely with the City Clerk's Office to implement the Municipal ID and help lead extensive outreach to the disability community; and
- continuing to lead the Task Force on Employment and Economic Development for People with disabilities and deliver recommendations to the Mayor and City Council by the end of 2018.

Promoting Accessibility Compliance

In 2018, MOPD will:

- begin outreach and technical assistance on the new provisions of Chapter 18-11 of the Chicago Building Code (Accessibility)
- continue revising its materials on how City departments and agencies can ensure that their meetings are accessible to people with disabilities, i.e. how to secure sign language interpreters and provide materials in alternate formats;
- work over the next year with the Chicago Department of Transportation to initiate a program for installing Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) in downtown Chicago. The program will install APS at approximately 100 locations, which will include between 25 and 100 intersections. These installations will be critical for creating accessible paths of travel for pedestrians who are blind or visually-impaired.

Improving Access via Technology

Access to computers, the internet and other technologies have the potential to increase the independence and improve the daily lives of people with people with disabilities. They can provide access to shopping, news publications, and government and community services. Unfortunately, people with disabilities are less than half as likely to own a computer, and are about one-quarter as likely to use the internet. In 2018, MOPD plans to implement new initiatives to address the lack of digital literacy and computer access of the disability community, including:

- developing an airport and large venue, such as Navy Pier, way-finding strategy for people who are blind or visually-impaired;
- working with DoIT and DPS to draft an ordinance or implement a policy that will ensure that all technology purchased by the City is accessible to people with disabilities and meets existing accessibility guidelines. The proposal could result in significant savings for the City. (Retrofitting technology to be accessible is much more costly than purchasing technology already built to be accessible. Utilizing technology that meets existing guidelines would also limit the City's liability under Title II of the ADA); and
- hiring an accessible technology expert to help the City ensure compliance with information technology.

Emergency Preparedness and Public Safety

MOPD will continue its work to ensure that people with disabilities are included in the City's emergency preparedness plans. In 2018, MOPD will:

- Work extensively with the Department of Aviation to revise its Emergency Operation Plan for O'Hare and Midway Airports. MOPD's role will be to ensure that people with disabilities are included in both the emergency preparedness and response.
- continue its partnership with OEMC, CFD, DFSS to provide appropriate and alternative resources to individuals who call 911 for non-emergency and non-medical assistance;

- participate in OEMC’s Mass Care and Sheltering Work Group, which serves as the coordinating body of the City’s Mass Care Operations Plan (emergency assistance, sheltering and human services resulting from natural and/or human caused incidents);
- finalize and implement emergency shelter tier system policy;
- participate in OEMC hosted table top exercises and on-location drills to ensure people with disabilities are included in all aspects of emergency planning;
- hold another Town Hall Meeting on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities (partners will include OEMC and FEMA); and
- continue the efforts of the Pedestrian Access Advisory Committee which MOPD co-chairs with CDOT (the Advisory Committee solicits input from the disability community on city infrastructure affecting pedestrians with disabilities).

Increasing the Number of Accessible Taxi Cabs and Improving Service for the Disability Community

MOPD will continue its work with BACP and the Accessible Taxicab Advisory Council on initiatives that will increase the number of wheelchair accessible taxis and improve services for passengers with disabilities.

In 2018, MOPD will work with BACP to:

- add 100 more WAVs to Chicago’s taxi fleet, for a total of 400;
- utilize funding strategies that will result in the increase of accessible taxis and TNPs;
- initiate strategies to improve taxicab service for passengers with disabilities, including, but not limited to, enhancing driver training;
- monitor the rideshare accessibility plans and ensure that they are delivering timely service to customers using wheelchairs; and
- create a new training video, in collaboration with Olive Harvey College, for taxi drivers on how to provide service to people with disabilities.

In closing, MOPD will continue to provide dedicated customer service and advocacy on behalf of Chicagoans with disabilities in the upcoming year. MOPD’s budget reflects the department’s best efforts to sustain integral programs, services and priority initiatives in the coming year. MOPD will remain steadfast in its commitment to maximize all available resources to increase accessibility, opportunity and independence for people with disabilities who live, visit and work in Chicago.

Thank you.