

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON ANNOUNCES MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE LAUNCH OF CUT THE TAPE INITIATIVE

Johnson Administration reaches series of policy milestones from the Cut the Tape report, creates Cut the Tape Task Force, appoints new Director of Process Improvement

CHICAGO — Mayor Brandon Johnson today made three major announcements as part of his signature Cut the Tape initiative to streamline and expedite housing and commercial development. The announcements include the completion of several policy initiatives that were outlined in the [Cut the Tape Report](#), the appointment of Abigail Sullivan as the inaugural Director of Process Improvement, and the creation of the Cut the Tape Task Force consisting of nearly 50 development leaders.

“The Cut the Tape report provided more than 100 policy ideas to streamline and expedite housing and commercial development in our city, each with a forecasted timeline of completion,” said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. “Today, I am proud to announce that we have reached several of those milestones in just three months as we continue towards our goal to make the process of development and collaboration with the City stronger for our partners in the business sector and strengthen our communities and commercial corridors.”

- **Cross-Departmental Coordination**
 - Hired a Director of Process Improvement in the Mayor's Office
 - Launched the Cut the Tape Task Force with nearly 50 development leaders
 - Created a cross-departmental roundtable to monitor and troubleshoot development projects in the City's pipeline
- **Design Review**
 - Launched a working group to update and streamline DOH's Architectural and Technical Standards (ATS) Manual
- **Environmental Review**
 - Created an environmental checklist for developers
 - Eliminated Phase 1 and Phase 2 environmental review as a requirement for sale for environmentally cleared parcels for all City programs
- **Financing and Contracting**
 - Developed and published process maps that comprehensively describe the City's multifamily financing and closing process

- Eliminated the review of developer-GC contracts by the DOH Construction Compliance team
- Dedicated funds to a Department of Planning and Development (DPD) pre-development grant fund
- Introduced an ordinance to consolidate DPD Capital Grant funding requirements, structures, and sources of three programs into two grant tracks: Medium and Large
- Created a checklist to make the steps for Redevelopment Agreement (RDA) execution and payment requisition more clear
- **Permitting**
 - Launched working group to determine how to improve internal coordination on ARO processes from intake through lease-up
 - Revamped the business license website to make finding and applying for licenses more user-friendly
- **Zoning Board of Appeals** (currently open for public comment at chicago.gov/zba)
 - To begin accepting electronic signatures and PDF copies of original signatures for components of ZBA applications
 - To add the option of site photos to the application checklist
 - To create a more simplified public hearing packet
 - To publish sample forms to clarify the Reasonable Return Economic Analysis form needed for ZBA
 - To publish applications, plans, findings of fact, and staff recommendations to ZBA website

Abigail (Abby) Sullivan will serve as the new Director of Process Improvement in the Mayor's Office. Sullivan's career has focused on process improvement and policy change, and most recently, she served as the Chief Operations Analyst for the Chicago Public Library (CPL). Prior to that, Sullivan served in roles at the Chicago Office of the Inspector General (OIG), the Council Office of Financial Analysis (COFA), and in several City Council offices as the Director of Economic Development, working on various aspects of zoning and development.

"We heard loud and clear from our development community that the Mayor's Office needs a dedicated point person to facilitate coordination across all departments involved in the development process," said **Deputy Mayor for Business and Neighborhood Development Kenya Merritt**. "As part of the Cut the Tape initiative, Mayor Johnson promised to create a new role to lead this work, and we are proud to have Abby bring a strong background in development and a wealth of experience to our team."

Today also marks the launch of the Cut the Tape Task Force with nearly 50 development leaders to provide support in the strategy and implementation of the Cut the Tape initiative. The Task Force includes developers, general contractors, leaders in the trade industries, architects, attorneys and more. Task Force members will serve a one-year role and work directly with the Mayor's Office to support on refining a multi-year process

improvement strategy; providing expertise to support City staff in addressing policy and program barriers; helping to identify key metrics to measure success of policy changes; and raising awareness to promote the program's mission and equity-related goals to different audiences.

“Our administration is guided by compassion, competency and collaboration, and the members of our Cut the Tape Task Force bring all of that and more to the table,” said **Chief Operating Officer John Roberson**. “We know that to create a better, stronger, safer Chicago, we must all work together to enable efficient affordable housing and commercial development, and we are committed to doing that, investing in people and creating opportunities for businesses to further strengthen our communities.”

Task Force Members

- Mark Angelini, Mercy Housing Lakefront
- Kate Ansorge, IFF
- Bennett Applegate Jr, Applegate & Thorne-Thomsen, P.C.
- Joy Aruguete, Bickerdike Redevelopment Corp.
- Phillip Beckham, P3 Markets, LLC
- Kemena Brooks, The Community Builders
- Liz Butler, Taft
- Maggie Cassidy, Community Investment Corporation
- Shawn Clark, CRG
- Allison Clements, Illinois Housing Council
- Thomas Cuculich, Chicagoland Associated General Contractors
- Cecilia Cuff, The Nascent Group
- Richard Darche, John Lyle & Associates, Inc.
- Katherine Darnstadt, Latent
- Yasamin Enshaeian, DL3 Realty
- Bryan Esenberg, NHS Chicago
- Kendra Freeman, Metropolitan Planning Council
- Shevaz Freeman, KMW Communities
- Trisha Girdwood, LBBA (formerly known as Landon Bone Baker Architects)
- Veronica Gonzalez, The NHP Foundation
- Graham Grady, Taft
- Cornelius Griggs, GMA Construction Group
- Kevin Hall, Illinois Housing Development Authority
- Wendell Harris, Chicago Community Loan Fund
- Bonita Harrison, Sunshine Management
- Rizwan Hussain, Sigma Engineering
- Melanie Jefferies, Milhouse Development
- Tania Kadakia, Wrought Iron Partners Consulting and Development
- Fred Krol, Sterling Bay
- Rafael Leon, CMHDC (Chicago Metropolitan Housing Development Corporation)
- Amy Masters, BOMA/Chicago

- Rishab Mehan, Chicago Housing Authority
- Renauld Deandre Mitchell, Moody Nolan
- Heather Morrison, MAPS
- David Reifman, Croke Fairchild Duarte & Beres
- Guacolda Reyes, The Resurrection Project
- Rachel Rhodes, National Equity Fund
- Paul Shadle, DLA Piper LLP
- Tony Smith, SB Friedman Development Advisors, LLC
- Ben Stammers, V3 Companies, Ltd.
- Ta Juana Tang, Tandem Ventures
- William Tippens, Related Midwest
- Jaime Torres Carmona, Canopy
- Loretta Ivette Trevino-Rivera, Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA)
- Shelly Tucciarelli, Visionary Ventures NFP Corporation
- Steven Vance, Chicago Cityscape
- Luis Vazquez, Toro Construction Corporation
- Cat Vielma, Red Stone Equity Partners
- Ernie Wong, site design group, ltd.

To learn more about this initiative, visit chicago.gov/CutTheTape.

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