

# SMALL BUSINESS SCORECARD



**Chicago is Making Strides to Support and Grow Small Businesses Across the City!**

**Through the Creation of the One-Stop-Shop Business Center:**

14,400 applicants	have benefited from a Health Consultation prior to starting their food business or at licensing
2,800 businesses	have acquired a Building Occupancy Placard, eliminating multi-agency coordination
2,600 entrepreneurs	have received free 1:1 business counseling, legal assistance, financial assistance, and tax support

**Through the Paperless Initiative:**

3,400 businesses	applied for their business license online in 2017-- six times more than 2016!
9,000+ businesses	have received emails notifying them of their license application status and next steps.

**Through License and Inspection Modernization:**

40 licenses	have been consolidated from 117, eliminating redundancy and reducing red tape
2,600 home-based businesses	can now operate under modernized regulations.
10,000 businesses	have seen a reduction in license fees.
2,000 businesses	have had unnecessary inspections eliminated.

**Through Public Way Permit Streamlining:**

5,600 permits	have reduced their issuance time by 30 days.
1,050 sign permits	have reduced their issuance time by up to 63 days.

**Through our Financial Support and Access to Capital initiatives:**

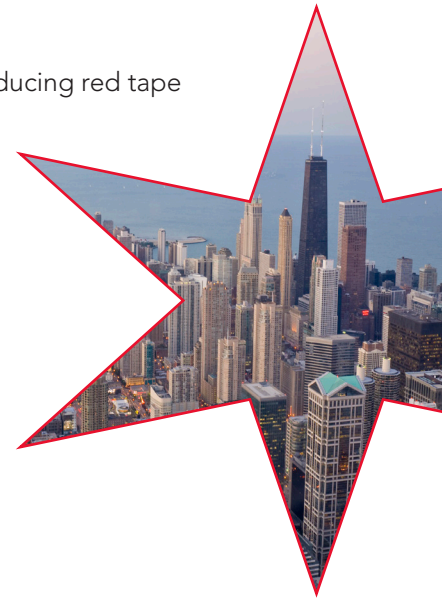
286 businesses	have received microloans totaling \$3.4 million, creating or maintaining over 1,200 jobs.
105 businesses	have received the technical training and bank connection they need to acquire \$5.2 million in loans through our Small Business Opportunity Centers.
51 businesses	have received \$5.1 million in grants to revitalize commercial corridors through the Department of Planning and Development's (DPD) Retail Thrive Zones.
868 businesses	have received \$60 million in grants, averaging \$69,000, for remodeling work through DPD's Small Business Improvement Fund.
57 businesses	have received over \$6 million through DPD's Neighborhood Opportunity Funds.

**Through our FREE Business Planning Support:**

19,000 businesses	have received free trainings offered by the City.
373 entrepreneurs	have received a Small Business Startup Certificate.

**Through our Neighborhood Business Development Centers:**

72 Chambers	have received grants to support small businesses across the city and provide them free business support and technical assistance.
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**THANKS TO MAYOR EMANUEL, CHICAGO IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS**

(See Reverse Side for Description of Initiatives)



# SMALL BUSINESS SCORECARD

## DESCRIPTION OF INITIATIVES



### **One Stop Shop Small Business Center**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel launched the Small Business Center (SBC) to provide small business owners a one-stop-shop resource to help launch and grow their business in Chicago. Operating out of the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) City Hall Office, entrepreneurs come to the SBC to receive one-on-one consultations with a Small Business Consultant, who helps them navigate the licensing process, including meeting with representatives from the Departments of Health and Buildings. Business owners receive health and zoning consultations and obtain occupancy placards at the SBC. Additionally, entrepreneurs can receive free business and financial counseling services through the Solution Station.

### **Paperless Initiative**

Mayor Emanuel has committed to make licensing quick, easy, and painless for business owners by providing entrepreneurs with modern, efficient, and effective online services. Today, all primary business licenses can be applied for and renewed online. This has reduced unnecessary paperwork and wait time for entrepreneurs resulting in 60% of all license issuances occurring within one day of payment. Additionally, BACP created an email notification system that provides license applicants with customized emails that include license "on-track" status updates and inspecting department contact information.

### **License and Inspection Modernization**

The Mayor's business friendly reforms have focused on streamlining and modernizing the license and inspection process. In 2011, Chicago had more license types than Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Phoenix, and Atlanta combined. Today, we have eliminated and consolidated license types to reduce total licenses from 117 to 40. This has greatly reduced unnecessary confusion and duplicative license applications that wasted time and money for business owners. Additionally, Chicago is allowing innovation to prosper through the Emerging Business Permit to allow innovative businesses to operate when a license category does not exist.

### **Public Way Permit Streamlining**

To continue the emphasis on eliminating red tape and saving business owners time and money, we have streamlined the permitting process for all items on the public way, including signs, canopies, benches, awnings, and marquees. Additionally, the City Council approval process has been reformed to reduce permit issuance time specifically for signs by over 60%.

### **Financial Support and Access to Capital Initiatives**

Gaining the financial capital needed to launch or grow a business is often the biggest stumbling block for entrepreneurs. Through Mayor Emanuel's Chicago Microlending Institute, the City has provided direct capital to our partner organizations for them to provide hundreds of microloans (\$5,000 - \$25,000) to business owners at low interest rates. The Small Business Opportunity Center Program provides partner agencies the financial assistance they need to prepare entrepreneurs for loans and to connect them with high-quality lenders. The Department of Planning and Development oversees three capital-providing programs: the Small Business Improvement Fund, the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, and the Retail Thrive Zone Initiative. Providing better access to capital is necessary to support economic growth in all areas of the City, and Mayor Emanuel has fulfilled his pledge to support all business owners through numerous capital access initiatives.

### **Business Planning Support**

Opening a business requires technical expertise and knowledge that can be expensive and difficult to acquire. BACP has enhanced its free Business Workshop to connect business owners with content experts in everything ranging from digital marketing to writing a business plan to cybersecurity - some are offered in a variety of languages targeting Chicago's diverse neighborhoods. Workshops are offered at City Hall weekly and at "On the Road Expos" held quarterly in the neighborhoods. Opening a business requires taking a risk- we are committed to providing the support resources necessary to minimize this challenge.

### **Neighborhood Business Development Centers**

Chicago is only as strong as its neighborhoods. Our local chambers and community organizations provide an indispensable service to the community and the City provides these organizations with the resources they need to support local business owners and entrepreneurs. Through the Neighborhood Business Development Centers (NBDCs), Mayor Emanuel is investing in more than 70 delegate agencies to support the success of area businesses through technical assistance, neighborhood marketing, and troubleshooting for City-related issues.



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