

EQUITABLE FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Partner Toolkit & User Guide

A quick guide for project highlights, sharing the research and its findings with others, and navigating the website.

The Equitable Financial Incentives project was designed to better understand how equity is centered in the way the City of Chicago uses financial incentives to attract investments to communities. MPC reviewed six incentive programs in Chicago to track where funding has gone and develop recommendations to improve incentive use to advance equitable development.

What are the project goals?

- Provide basic information about six public funding sources that are classified as incentives.
- Understand how equity has or has not been a driver of incentive use.
- Provide a clear, accessible picture of where and how incentives have been used in Chicago for the past 10 years.
- Determine whether incentive use aligns with socio-economic factors that can indicate areas of advantage and disadvantage.
- Identify recommendations to improve the equity outcomes of incentive programs in collaboration with advisors.

What are the key findings?

- Incentive programs, broadly, do not center equity in their processes or outcomes.
- Incentives are difficult to access for applicants with resource constraints and limitations.
- The outcomes and impacts of incentives use in Chicago are unclear.

What are the recommendations?

- **Develop and Track Outcomes**
 - » Develop outcomes around increasing equity and align with citywide goals and values.
 - » Report on outcomes in a transparent and effective way.
- **Prioritize and Align Incentives to Achieve Equity**
 - » Identify priority areas to achieve city goals and objectives for equity.
 - » Align incentives use with priority areas and outcomes determined by criteria that includes equity.
- **Ease Application Processes**
 - » Fund and support a technical assistance liaison role.
 - » Create a common, streamlined application for all incentives.
- **Streamline Funding and Communication**
 - » Provide quicker review and better communication around funding.
 - » Provide bridge funding as part of the allocation for awardees when resource needs and disbursement do not align.
- **Improve Accountability**
 - » Require centralized reporting across all programs that use financial incentives.
 - » Develop a civic oversight committee to annually review incentive use across the different programs.

How can I share the research and results of this project with others?

MPC launched this interactive website to serve as an advocacy tool. **The ultimate goal of the website is to change the policies and processes around financial incentive programs in Chicago to be more equitable.** We want to move policymakers to make updates and provide the data and information needed for community organizations and advocates to push for change. The more people know about this site, the better.

We hope that this information is helpful in advocacy efforts and provides local developers, entrepreneurs and businesses with an extra resource about incentive programs, sparking dialogue about how they have been used for projects historically and how they can be used in the future.

Here are some promotional resources for sharing this work with other partners and advocates. These resources are meant to make communication simple for all involved. The below posts are only recommendations. If you would like to edit them to make them more aligned with your organization's position, please feel free to do so.

Images for the example posts are available for download [here](#).

Post #1: New Research and Website Launch

Copy

- **Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn:**
 - » Every neighborhood in Chicago should provide residents with the opportunity to thrive. New research released by the Metropolitan Planning Council shows financial incentives, which can stimulate development, are not used equitably. The use of financial incentive programs can bring new jobs, retail, housing, and amenities to communities. These programs must be strongly rooted in equity in order to work for everyone. Check out the research on the brand-new website here: www.equitableincentives.org for more info & to learn about MPC recommendations on how financial incentives can be revised.
- **Twitter**
 - » New research on financial incentives released by @metroplanners. Chicago incentive programs do not center equity in their process or outcomes. Explore equitableincentives.org to find where incentives have gone and review the recommendations to promote equitable development.

Post #2: Urge Survey

Copy

- **Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn:**
 - » Your input is needed! Chicago incentive programs do not center equity in their process or outcomes. Explore the new MPC equitableincentives.org to find where incentives have gone, to review the recommendations to promote equitable development, and to participate in an important survey. Together we can make Chicago's financial incentives programs more equitable, so that all communities can thrive.
- **Twitter**
 - » Your input is needed! Chicago incentive programs do not center equity in their process or outcomes. Learn more and take a brief survey at the link below. Together we can make Chicago's financial incentives programs more equitable, so that all communities can thrive. <https://www.equitableincentives.org>.

Tags and Hashtags

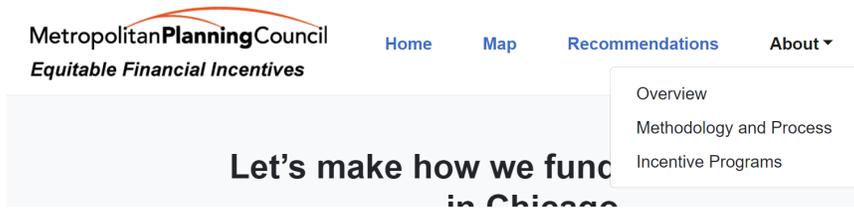
- » #MakeFundingEquitable
- » #EquitableIncentiveUse
- » #EquitableFinancialIncentives
- » @metroplanners
- » @chitrust

How can I use the Equitable Financial Incentives website?

There are four main sections of the site: Home, Map, Recommendations and About. The toolbar at the top allows for easy navigation:



The user can select from a dropdown of three options after selecting the About tab allowing the User to read more about the project's goals by going to the Overview Page, the Methodology and Process for conducting the research and developing the recommendations or review additional information about Incentive Programs.



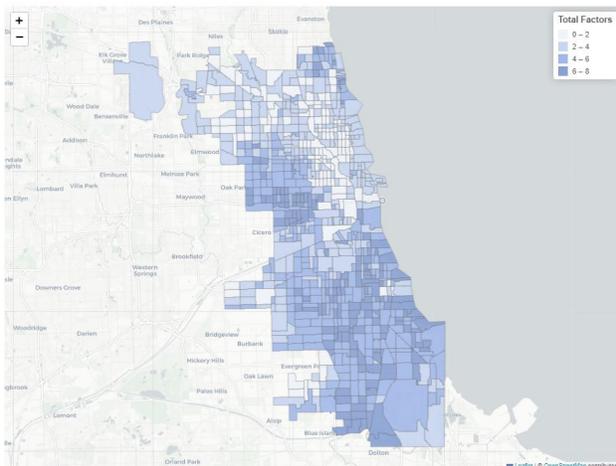
HOME

Home is the landing page that provides an easy way to go to the other information-packed pages. It contains direct links to take the user to the Map to explore where funding has gone in Chicago, read the High-Level findings, go to the detailed Recommendations, Take a Survey, and learn more information about financial incentive programs.

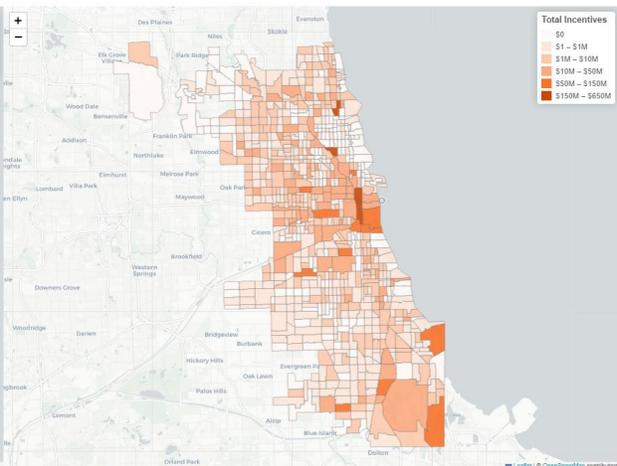
MAP

The Map page provides a side-by-side comparison of MPC's economic advantage and disadvantage index adjacent to the amount of incentive use for each of the six programs individually as well as an aggregate total.

Factors that indicate economic advantage or disadvantage
This index includes 10 socio-economic factors that define longstanding symptoms of disinvestment.



Where incentives have gone
Total investments from incentives between 2010-2021.



The process for how MPC developed the factor index as well as information on data sources and compilation is available on the [methodology page](#). Users can select how they want the maps to display data by selecting the geography from the choices of Community Areas, Census Tracts, or Wards.

Browse by geography

Community Areas

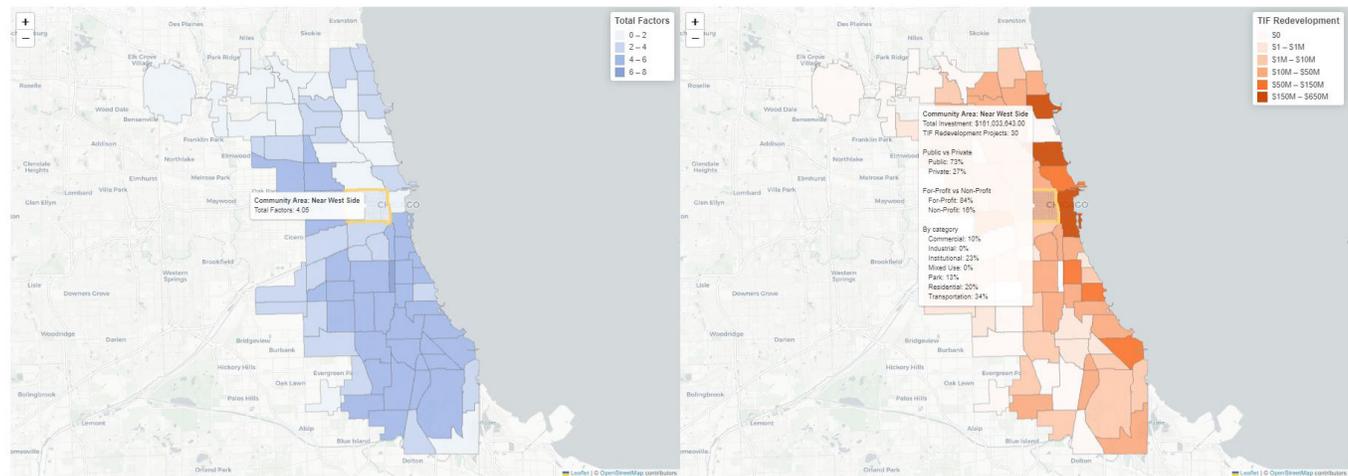
Census Tracts

Wards

Users can also choose which of the six financial incentive programs they would like to review in more detail. All of the incentives have one tab except for Tax Increment Financing (TIF), which has been divided into three categories. TIF Total, provides the aggregate of all projects approved to receive TIF, TIF Infrastructure provides information on projects that receive TIF money to build and repair roads and street infrastructure, like alley repaving, pedestrian improvements, and lighting upgrades, TIF Development lists public and private projects that have Redevelopment or Intergovernmental Agreements approved by City Council.

Choose a financial incentive program

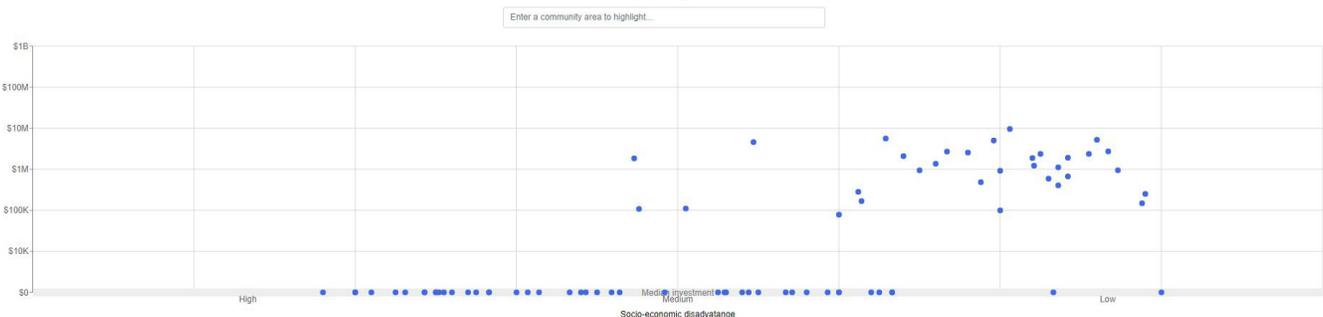
There is a hover function built into the map. If you hover on a tract, ward, or community area, a pop-up box appears that provides additional information about the factors as well as categorization pertaining to the project types that received money.



This page also includes a graphic that indicates where each ward and community area compare to the citywide median. It allows the user to explore which communities and wards have received more or less funding than the median. The X axis indicates the number of factors the areas have aligning with socio-economic disadvantage. The Y axis provides the amount of investment from incentive program. This graphic changes to depict the selections of the users. For example, if the user selects NOF and community areas above the maps, then the graphic will just show the data for NOF. The user is able to review the data in multiple different ways. Hovering over a dot provides the name of the community area or ward as well as the investment amount.

How community areas and wards compare to the citywide median

Above the line, more funding than the median. Below the line, less funding than the median. The y-axis represents total funding for each geography ranging from \$0 to \$1 Billion. The x-axis represents whether each geography has a low, medium, or high number of factors that indicate economic advantage or disadvantage.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations provides the main findings of the research and the targeted draft recommendations. The draft recommendations are organized under five headings. Each heading is its own separate section. There are statements located under the heading. By selecting the statement or the + sign on the right, a dropdown box will appear containing the statement and more detailed information about the meaning of the statement. Reselecting the heading will close the box of detailed information. There is also a survey button located on the right-hand side where you can quickly go to an external webpage to provide your opinion on the recommendations.

Prioritize and Align Incentives to Achieve Equity

Define outcomes for incentive use and align with identified priority areas to achieve city goals and objectives for equity. 

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Assign incentives based on what is needed for development in each neighborhood, with certain areas prioritized for specific incentive use due to their market conditions and socio-economic factors indicating disadvantage or advantage.

Some neighborhoods are only able to support the use of incentives that are structured to act like subsidies or grants. A market typology aligned with socioeconomic development factors needs to be created to help structure which incentives are prioritized where. Having a mission statement and a clear set of goals for each incentive program will help clarify the reason behind its use and the outcome that it is designed to achieve.

Align incentive use with priority areas and outcomes determined by criteria that includes equity. 

ABOUT

The About tab links to three different pages: Overview, Methodology and Process and Incentive Programs.

- The Overview page provides information on the project goals and what the research was designed to accomplish.
- The Methodology and Process page discusses the project's advisors and the external review process. It also provides extensive information on how the data was collected, compiled categorized, and transformed for each of the incentive programs, additional information about how the Socio-Economics Factor Index was created, and definitions for financial incentive and equitable development that MPC used to guide the research.
- The Incentive Programs page is a landing page providing links to an individual page for each of the six financial incentives that this research explores. Links to information about other incentive programs are also provided.

INDIVIDUAL INCENTIVE PAGES

Each of the six incentives has their own individual page that provides basic information about the programs. It also includes the overall value range for the projects, the dates covered as part of the data included in the map, the total number of projects, and additional resources with information about each of the programs including how to apply.

SURVEY

There is a banner at the bottom of all the webpages that links out to a Survey where MPC asks three questions about the Recommendations to get feedback from users.

Take our survey

What do you think of our recommendations? We want to hear from you.

TAKE SURVEY