

Cook County Policy Roadmap

Five-Year Strategic Plan for Offices Under the President



Executive Summary

November 14, 2018

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Letter from the President

To the Residents of Cook County:

Cook County is the heart of the nation's third-largest metropolitan area. It is home to more than half of both the region's population and its economic activity. Cook County and the rest of the metropolitan region form an integrated and interdependent community serving the needs of its residents and businesses.

Cook County government plays a pivotal role in serving and supporting the needs of those who live and work here. We are responsible for promoting the health, welfare and safety of our 5.2 million residents. We manage the nation's largest consolidated court system and largest single-site jail campus. We influence the effectiveness of the region's transportation system, provide recreational opportunities and promote economic growth. We accomplish these objectives through the services of 11 separately-elected Cook County officials and other appointed and independent agencies.

The *Cook County Policy Roadmap: Five-year Strategic Plan for the Offices Under the President* has been developed by the Office of the President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners. As President of the Board of Commissioners, I am charged with leading the County's policy, budget and fiscal activities. In addition, I oversee the Offices Under the President, which includes six bureaus and 34 departments.

This plan outlines my office's priorities over the next five years. It identifies the principles that will guide our activities, including a focus on racial equity to ensure that all Cook County residents have opportunities to prosper, participate and reach their full potential no matter their race, gender, geography or socio-economic status.

This plan establishes goals and strategies for our work on justice, health, economic development and the environment. It defines our criteria for serving as responsible stewards of the County's infrastructure, and establishes the standards of efficiency, transparency and good customer experience that will continue to guide the operations of the County; while also ensuring we have a talented, diverse and productive workforce. The *Policy Roadmap* lays out the strategies we will use to achieve our goals and the metrics by which we will measure our success.

The *Policy Roadmap* is the result of an inclusive process in which employees and hundreds of volunteers played an active role to help the County define its future. It reflects the views expressed at numerous community meetings held throughout the County, as well as the input gathered from our opinion survey. These engagement efforts allowed us to hear directly from residents about what they believe it will take to make Cook County a leader in building vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities where people want to live, learn, work and play. Further, it incorporates detailed suggestions from non-profit partners, small businesses, residents and community groups that provided feedback during the public comment period. I thank all who participated. I also extend my sincere gratitude to the Civic Consulting Alliance for their invaluable, pro bono assistance throughout this process.

The *Policy Roadmap* is a beginning. It will guide our actions, and we will consistently monitor results against our expectations to make sure we meet our goals. It is a dynamic document and will be updated periodically. It will also be the basis for the launch of our public dashboard in early 2019, which will measure our progress in meeting our objectives and provide a window into the work we are doing to realize the *Policy Roadmap*. We are committed to an administration that is accountable and transparent. In that spirit, please continue to give us your opinions and suggestions for ways we can improve.

Sincerely,



Toni Preckwinkle

Introduction

The *Cook County Policy Roadmap: Five-year Strategic Plan for the Offices Under the President* lays the foundation for the next five years of work by the Offices Under the President (OUP) of Cook County, under the leadership of the President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners. The 5.2 million residents of Cook County are served by local governments that include the City of Chicago, 135 suburban towns and municipalities, hundreds of school districts and special purpose governments, as well as Cook County government itself.

OUP is only one part of the complex system of government responsible for the welfare of the residents of Cook County and the broader northeastern Illinois region. The President is not only responsible for the offices that directly report to her; she is also responsible for coordinating stakeholders, identifying policies and solving problems throughout County government. Since taking office in 2010, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle has established a foundation for long-lasting and systemic changes in government policies and operations.

Under the leadership of President Preckwinkle, OUP has crafted the *Policy Roadmap*, our

first comprehensive, policy-driven strategic plan since the administration's 2011 transition plan, to institutionalize existing reforms and provide sustainable benefits to Cook County residents. The *Policy Roadmap* incorporates key policy priorities and strategic objectives to address the major public policy challenges residents face, and reflects the Preckwinkle administration's core values and vision for fostering safe, thriving and healthy communities.

The *Policy Roadmap* reflects a shared vision for Cook County. The drafting process was designed to gather and incorporate input and feedback from employees, residents, community groups, other governmental agencies and partners in the non-profit, civic and private sectors. We are grateful to all who made their voices heard throughout the planning process over the past year (see fig. 1).

As we implement the *Policy Roadmap*, Cook County residents have the opportunity to remain active and engaged to ensure Cook County meets their needs. We are committed to having a transparent and effective government that is aligned with our residents' priorities while providing them with quality services.



From left: bike path at Miami Woods; Old Cook County Hospital, under renovation; bike racks at a multi-modal transit center.

Development Timeline

6 POLICY PRIORITIES 29 OBJECTIVES 130 STRATEGIES

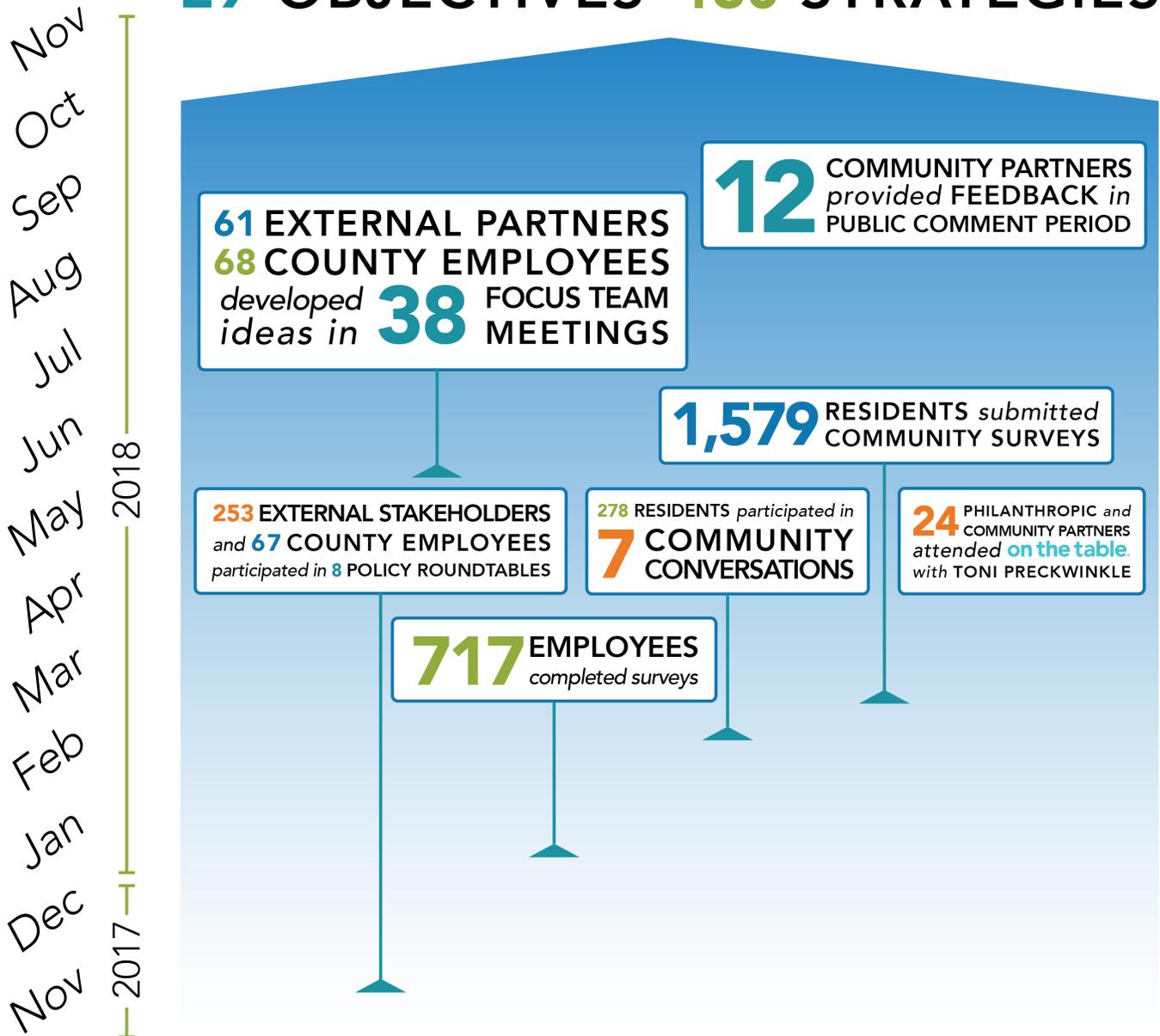


Figure 1, a timeline of the planning process. For more detail on the feedback process, visit www.cookcountyil.gov/service/policy-roadmap to read the Policy Roadmap Community Conversation Report.

Overview of Cook County Government

The services provided to the 5.2 million residents of Cook County are the responsibility of eleven separately-elected public officials, including the President of the Board of Commissioners. Those services fall under five broad mandates:

- ▶ Promoting healthy families through access to community-based care and other public health services;
- ▶ Promoting equitable economic and community development;
- ▶ Supporting the criminal justice services and the administration of court services;
- ▶ Building, managing and conserving County assets through finance and administrative services; and
- ▶ Collecting revenue to fund County government through property assessment and taxation services.

Cook County Government

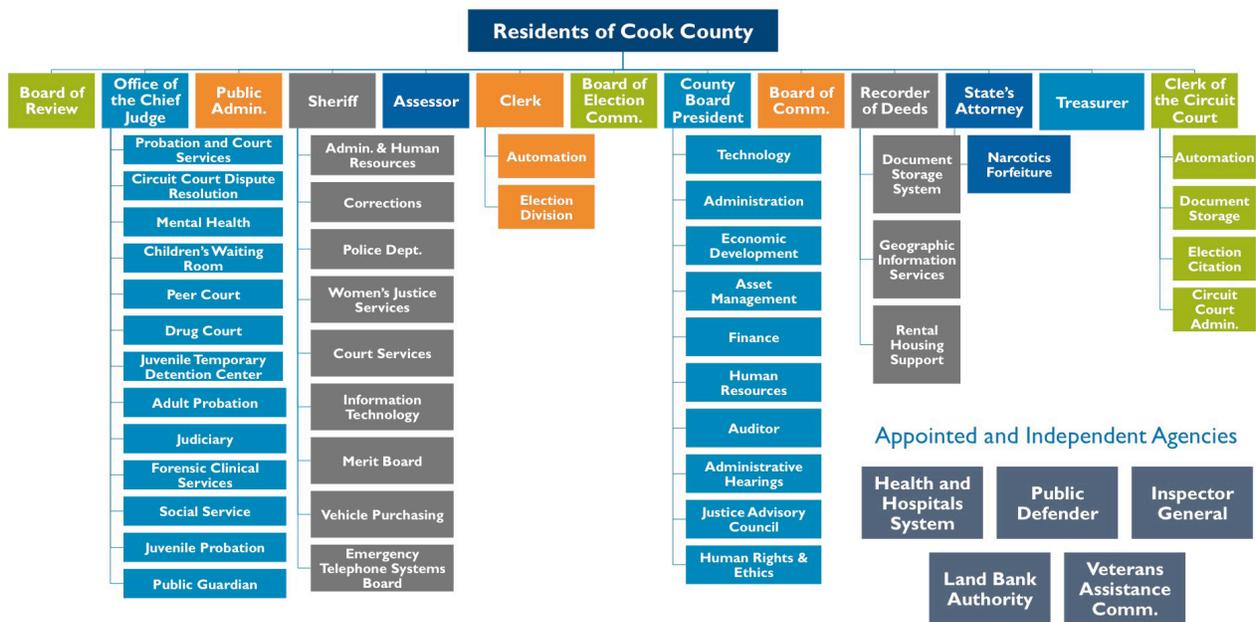


Figure 2, organizational chart of Cook County Government.

Overview of Cook County Government

The President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Cook County and presents an annual balanced budget to the Board of Commissioners, provides leadership on key policy issues facing the County and oversees the Offices Under the President (OUP).

The *Policy Roadmap* takes an expansive view of the challenges and opportunities Cook County faces, as well as the steps we must take as a region to promote greater prosperity, equity and resident wellbeing. Therefore, while the majority of the Policy Roadmap focuses on OUP's specific roles and responsibilities, it also includes objectives that look beyond our statutory responsibilities and require us to continue improving coordination and collaboration with partners to achieve the best outcomes for residents.

Offices Under the President

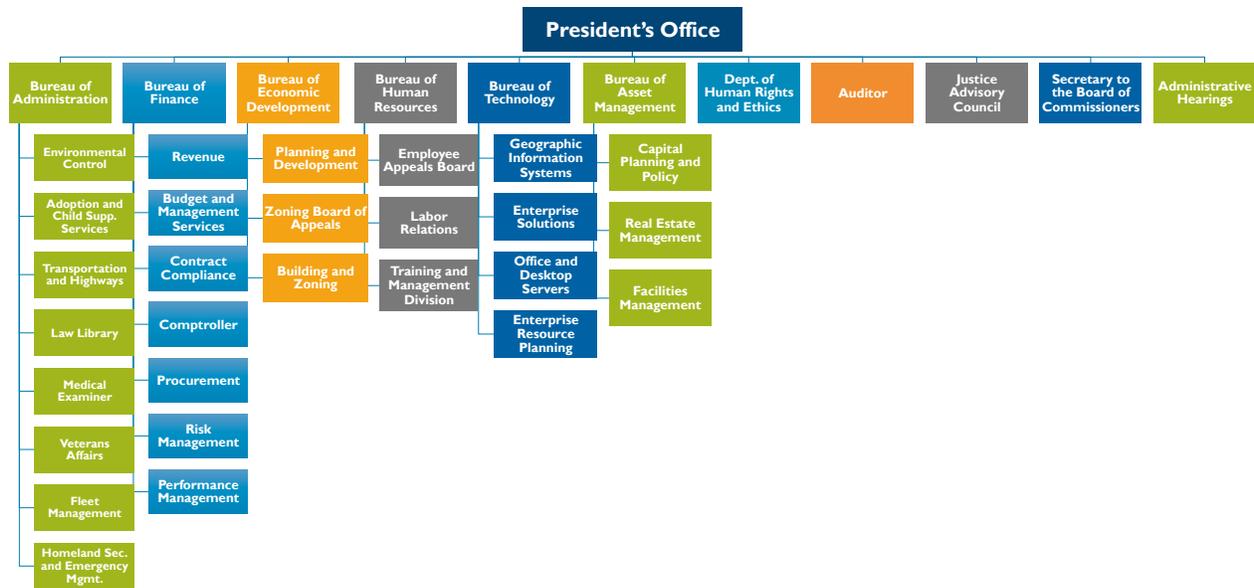


Figure 3, organizational chart of Offices Under the President.

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

To serve as a good steward of public resources by building equitable and sustainable communities for all residents.

Vision

To be a leader in building vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities where people want to live, learn, work and play.

Values

Equity • Engagement • Excellence

Equity

Promoting equity, specifically racial equity, has been a central principle of OUP under the leadership of President Preckwinkle. Historically, government has played a role in creating and maintaining racial inequities. Despite progress, racial inequities are still deep, structural and pervasive and racial anxiety is on the rise in our current political climate. At its core, our focus on racial equity centers around ensuring residents can enjoy the full array of recognized civil and human rights, and includes work to protect those rights regardless of immigration or documentation status. While governmental bodies need strong partnerships with non-profit, public and private sector stakeholders to address inequities, we have a unique responsibility to reduce inequity by ensuring policies and fiscal decisions consistently meet the needs of all residents, especially residents who are often marginalized and excluded from decision-making.

Approaching our work through a racial equity lens will strengthen our institutional ability to apply a

Median Household Income by Race in Cook County



Figure 4, infographic of median household income by Alexandra Ensign. Source: Statistical Atlas, analysis of Census Bureau Data 2000–2010 and American Community Survey Data 2012–2016.

structural approach to other forms of marginalization. This framework will also help us address compounding inequities, such as the intersection of race and disability, the intersection of race and gender and the intersection of race and economic status.

Policy Priorities

With our mission, vision and values in mind, we identified six policy priorities for OUP to concentrate its efforts on over the next five years. A central theme throughout our policy priorities is the commitment to ensuring Cook County is a welcoming community and can reach all of its residents, including those who are often marginalized. We will foster communities that are healthy, vital, safe and thriving, sustainable, smart and open.

Given OUP's role in supporting individuals and communities throughout

Cook County, the first five policy priorities relate directly to the services Cook County provides to residents. The sixth policy priority details OUP's commitment to achieve the highest standard of efficiency and accountability in the provision of our services.

Together, these policy priorities create the comprehensive agenda OUP will follow to provide innovative and essential services to residents in an effective, efficient manner and ensure Cook County is an exceptional place to live, work, play and visit.



Healthy Communities
Health and Wellness



Vital Communities
Economic Development



Safe and Thriving Communities
Criminal Justice



Sustainable Communities
Environment and Sustainability



Smart Communities
Public Infrastructure



Open Communities
Good Government

Healthy Communities

OUP will foster *Healthy Communities* for Cook County residents and OUP employees through its work and partnerships in health and wellness. In partnership with Cook County Health (CCH), President Preckwinkle’s administration has expanded our public health scope by creating and expanding the CountyCare Medicaid managed health plan. Due to this expansion and the Affordable Care Act, more than 300,000 residents annually have access to vital, high quality, affordable health services. In addition, more than 16,000 justice-involved individuals have enrolled in Medicaid, qualifying them to access healthcare services in the community when they are released from jail.

In addition to these vital healthcare-related initiatives, the *Policy Roadmap* sets forth objectives and strategies to address the social and environmental conditions that effect residents’ health, including access to housing, safe recreational spaces and clean air and drinkable water.

OUP also recognizes that the health and wellbeing of its employees plays a key role in advancing healthy communities. OUP will intentionally foster a healthy and productive workforce through initiatives that include increasing employees’ access to trauma-informed mental health services, healthy food and physical activity options. OUP will also work to create healthy work environments centered around employee engagement and feedback.

Goal

Improve the physical, mental and social wellbeing of Cook County residents and communities.

Objectives
1. Reduce health inequities for all residents by addressing the racial disparities and the social, physical and economic conditions that impact health.
2. Improve access to and integration of high-quality responsive healthcare and information.
3. Support an active and healthy lifestyle and healthy communities.
4. Advocate for increased community safety through a public health approach to violence reduction.
5. Improve the health and wellbeing of the Offices under the President’s workforce by fostering a supportive, healthy work culture.

Vital Communities

OUP will foster *Vital Communities* through its work and partnerships in economic and community development. With more than 5.2 million residents, Cook County represents the core of the region's population, jobs, businesses and productivity.

Since President Preckwinkle created the Bureau of Economic Development in 2012, Cook County has been an active participant and leader in the region's economic development and planning.

Cook County intentionally focuses on reducing inequities in areas that have historically experienced disinvestment in infrastructure and a loss of jobs and economic opportunity, especially south suburban Cook County.

In its efforts to advance economic opportunity for all, OUP pursues inclusive and regional growth with a focus on job creation, increasing regional collaboration and capacity and building resilient communities.

Goal

Pursue inclusive economic and community growth by supporting residents, growing businesses, attracting investment and nurturing talent.

Objectives

1. Champion a regional approach to grow the economy and combat racial and economic inequality.
2. Grow key economic clusters by launching and supporting industry-led partnerships.
3. Support expanded opportunities for local businesses, women- or minority-owned firms and firms owned by people living with disabilities.
4. Invest in and support quality housing and core services to improve regional equity and access to opportunity.
5. Open access to economic prosperity for all by investing in workforce and talent development.
6. Base transportation investments on their capacity to promote equitable economic growth.

Safe and Thriving Communities

OUP will foster *Safe and Thriving Communities* through its work and partnerships in criminal justice. Like other jurisdictions, Cook County has seen a significant decline in arrests over the last two decades, particularly regarding arrests for violent crimes. Cook County has also seen a significant reduction in the jail and juvenile detention populations. These population reductions have allowed Cook County to focus on bail reform, further reducing the jail population and addressing the racial disparities within the criminal justice system with the support of

a prestigious award from the MacArthur Foundation’s Safety and Justice Challenge.

Under President Preckwinkle’s leadership, OUP has partnered with broad coalitions to champion expanded automatic expungements for juveniles. We have also worked to pass legislation to end 5-year mandatory probation sentences for certain juvenile offenses; end most automatic transfers of juveniles to adult court and raise the age of the juvenile justice system to include 17-year-olds. These trends and accomplishments provide an opportunity to initiate proactive policy goals and adopt

Goal

Create safe communities and an equitable and fair justice system.

Objectives
1. Develop comprehensive and coordinated planning and preparedness to proactively address violence in highly impacted communities throughout Cook County.
2. Align criminal justice investments and strategies to prioritize the needs of individuals involved in the criminal justice system.
3. Increase alternatives to detention and access to supportive services for justice-involved residents.
4. Cultivate multidisciplinary collaboration to advance criminal justice reform that incorporates the voices of affected communities.
5. Inform criminal justice decision-making by improving collection, analysis, interagency sharing and public release of justice-related data.

Sustainable Communities

OUP will foster *Sustainable Communities* through our work and partnerships in environmental justice and sustainability. Under President Preckwinkle’s administration, Cook County has reduced greenhouse gas emissions, pursued energy efficiency and renewable energy sources and supported community sustainability

through projects spanning from community solar to comprehensive transit planning. Additionally, Cook County joined #WeAreStillIn, a national coalition committed to keeping America’s promise of mitigating climate change by meeting the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Goal

Support healthy, resilient communities that thrive economically, socially, and environmentally.

Objectives
1. Ensure environmental justice and a healthy environment for all people and places.
2. Promote livable, sustainable land use and economic development.
3. Reduce climate change and provide ways to mitigate its effects.
4. Capture the job and economic growth potential of making Cook County more sustainable.
5. Create enduring capacity in government and in communities to build a sustainable and resilient future.

Smart Communities

OUP will foster *Smart Communities* by leveraging and improving the County's public infrastructure. OUP's core public infrastructure mission is to provide reliable, modern and innovative infrastructure that allows the County to more efficiently and effectively provide services to our residents. The County's historical neglect of technology, County-managed transportation and

facilities and asset management has required significant financial investment for critical improvements over the course of President Preckwinkle's administration. The transformation taking place is now allowing Cook County to leapfrog over several decades of stagnation and pursue innovative ways to leverage and manage its public assets.

Goal

Provide an innovative infrastructure that will change how we live, work and connect.

Objectives
1. Promote an equitable and growing economy through investments in Cook County's infrastructure.
2. Better serve residents by investing in and deploying proven technology infrastructure.
3. Increase accessibility and connectivity through seamless transportation of passengers and goods throughout Cook County and the region.
4. Be good stewards of County's resources by increasing the value of Cook County's assets.

Open Communities

OUP will foster *Open Communities* and achieve operational excellence by being accountable to our residents, investing in our workforce and continuously improving the effectiveness of County services. Despite representing less than 9 percent of the County’s annual budget, OUP strives to achieve operational excellence within its own purview as well as through its influence

over the County’s broader operations. OUP has worked to overcome institutional obstacles and improve Cook County government by creating a culture and mindset in which elected officials, employees and appointees use problem-solving skills, teamwork and leadership to continually improve processes and operations with the goal of expertly serving residents.

Goal

Ensure that Cook County provides responsive, transparent services and develops a thriving, professional workforce that reflects the communities served.

Objectives
1. Make doing business with Cook County simple, transparent and accessible for residents, municipalities and businesses.
2. Attract and support a diverse, compassionate, high-quality workforce to improve the delivery of services to residents.
3. Ensure the best use of taxpayer dollars by promoting responsible and innovative fiscal management practices.
4. Be transparent and accountable through the use of data.

Conclusion

1 MISSION 1 VISION
3 FOUNDATIONAL VALUES
6 POLICY PRIORITIES
29 OBJECTIVES 131 STRATEGIES

The *Policy Roadmap* outlines our commitment to equity, engagement and excellence and will be our cornerstone for the next five years. We are excited to implement this vision and pledge to remain transparent and accountable to residents. We will launch our public dashboard in January 2019 to provide a tool residents can use to find data on the state of the County and the progress of our work. We will also integrate the *Policy Roadmap* with our existing performance management platform to provide a structure to measure, track and evaluate our goals. Additionally, we will publish annual *Policy Roadmap* progress reports to provide updates on how well we are achieving the ambitious goals we've identified and to share more details about specific programs and initiatives as they are developed and implemented.

The objectives and strategies outlined in this document provide concrete steps we will take to promote residents' health and wellness, foster economic and community development, simultaneously promote public safety and a fair justice system, protect the environment, be responsible stewards of our public assets and provide excellent service to our residents. The *Policy Roadmap* sets forth the Offices Under the President's vision for building vibrant, sustainable and inclusive communities where people want to live, learn, work and play.

The vision set forth in this *Policy Roadmap* was inspired by our residents. We will proudly work towards equitable and sustainable communities for all residents.



Toni Preckwinkle
Board President

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