PHASE I ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT DESIGN

The goal of Phase I was to determine built environment outcomes on which to base the assessment and develop a methodology to test whether those outcomes are impacted by zoning and land use. The Steering Committee developed and agreed on key definitions of equity, sustainability, and public health to guide the creation of a list of prioritized outcomes. MPC and the Urban Institute used those outcomes to devise an analysis approach and identify key data sources. This approach was strengthened through a literature review and discussions with practitioners in other cities that have conducted impact assessments. Additionally, the Steering Committee, along with input from organizations participating in Focus Groups, identified a series of challenges and successes around the zoning and land use process that will be explored further as part of Phase II.

- **Definitions to Guide the Assessment**
  The Steering Committee developed definitions for Equity, Sustainability, Public Health, Health Equity, Equitable Development, and Environmentally Sustainable Development to guide outcome creation and establish a common language for discussions. In smaller groups, committee members created initial definitions and then provided feedback on each group's definitions. Through a mixture of discussion and consensus voting final definitions for each term were agreed upon along with important considerations that came up as part of the conversations. Key definitions for Equity, Sustainability, and Public Health are listed below. Here are all the final definitions and additional information.

  - ***Equity:*** Outcomes and processes that result in fair and just access to opportunities and resources by way of repairing past harms and transforming power dynamics so that everyone, but particularly oppressed groups, both historically and presently, have the power and resources that they need to thrive.

  - ***Sustainability:*** An inclusive, systemic approach that improves and integrates environment, climate, health, social equity, and economic vitality in order to create thriving, healthy, diverse, and resilient communities and natural ecosystems for this generation and generations to come.

  - ***Public Health:*** The physical, mental, and social wellbeing of individuals and neighborhoods and populations. All of these are shaped by social and physical structures, conditions, and processes.

- **Built Environment Outcomes to Assess**
  The Steering Committee used the definitions to first individually develop a list of built environment outcomes that they would like to see in Chicago. This list of more than 120 outcomes was consolidated by MPC based on commonalities amongst them into approximately 40 outcome themes. With input from the Focus Groups and through a series of Steering Committee meetings, the outcomes were further consolidated and prioritized into a list of 13 through consensus voting and discussion. This list of Prioritized Outcomes is grouped, and color coded by topic category shown in the table below. These outcomes will be analyzed as part of the assessment to determine how they are impacted through zoning and land use policy.

Steering Committee Outcomes	Zoning Relationship
Accessible Community Amenities	
Affordable grocery options and healthcare providers accessible in all neighborhoods	Medium
Accessible outdoor green spaces, parks, and trails within neighborhoods for walking and biking	High
High quality public schools that are accessible within neighborhoods	Low
Economic Development	
Strong and vibrant business corridors with diverse business opportunities to support economic needs and resiliency of communities, including revitalization and preservation of existing commercial corridors	Medium
Neighborhoods have diverse opportunities for employment with a mix of uses that support each other	Medium
Planning and incentives for existing and new builds (incentives to retain existing as well as new)	High
Housing and Buildings	
Diverse and affordable housing options (subsidized, affordable, workforce/middle, market, luxury) are available in every neighborhood include options for the job insecure and unhoused populations	Medium

Land Use	
Decrease in polluting/harmful industries in neighborhoods, particularly focusing on cumulative impacts on overburdened communities	High
Address climate change and adaptations needed for it, including promoting green infrastructure and energy efficient building stock that is less reliant on carbon-based fuels	Medium
Productive use for all land, particularly vacant land, with productive being defined as something that is beneficial to the local community and aligns with community needs	Medium
Mobility / Land Use	
Public transit that is affordable, reliable, and safe located in hubs that include housing, businesses, recreation and other services	Medium
Mobility	
Safe, walkable, and accessible streets, sidewalks and amenities that provide access to basic needs including work, school, stores, healthcare, etc. and incorporate the policies of Vision Zero Chicago	Low
Public Safety	
Little threat to personal safety or property	Low

- **Process Challenges and Successes Identification**

  The Steering Committee and Focus Group participants identified where they have experienced challenges and successes through interacting with the development process in Chicago, specifically related to zoning changes. Through interactive meeting activities, participants noted where in the zoning review process they witnessed or experienced particular successes and challenges and provided details of what occurred. There were approximately 150 unique comments, which were all logged, coded, and synthesized by MPC into primary and secondary themes. Primary themes and the number of times a success or challenge was documented that related to a primary theme is shown in the chart below.

  Based on the review of the primary and secondary themes, MPC identified the challenges with the highest counts. These themes will be reviewed in more detail as part of phase II. They are as follows:

Primary Theme	Challenge Count	% of Challenges	Success Count	% of Successes	Total Count	% of Total
Public Review	34	29.8%	10	34.5%	44	30.3%
Applicant Process Requirements	23	20.2%	3	10.3%	26	17.9%
Aldermanic	16	14.0%	7	24.1%	24	16.6%
City and Departmental	11	9.6%	9	31.0%	20	13.8%
Process Participation	13	11.4%	0	0.0%	14	9.7%
Code Related	9	7.9%	0	0.0%	9	6.2%
Accountability	8	7.0%	0	0.0%	8	5.5%
Total	114		29		145	

Based on the review of the primary and secondary themes, MPC identified the challenges with the highest counts. These themes will be reviewed in more detail as part of phase II. They are as follows:

- Public Review
  - Public Hearings do not allow for a fair view of community input and/or support
  - Community meetings are not transparent about outcomes and what residents can and cannot influence

- Process Participation
  - The zoning process is difficult to understand

- Aldermanic
  - No consistent ward level and community engagement process on land use decisions

- Applicant Process Requirements
  - Process is difficult to start and complete.

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- **Research Questions and Assessment Approach**
  The primary research questions that will be answered by this project are the following:

  - What are the public health, equity and environmental impacts produced by Chicago's current zoning and related land use planning processes?
  - How do outcomes differ by neighborhood?
  - What changes to zoning and land use can be implemented to improve sustainability, racial, and health equity?

  Urban Institute developed an approach to conducting the assessment that uses the Steering Committee's list of Prioritized Outcomes. The goal of the assessment is to determine 1) whether and where each of the outcomes exists in Chicago; 2) the degree to which it exists; 3) whether the distribution is equitable; and 4) whether the outcome is related to zoning.

  The steps for conducting the research include the following:

  1. Map and quantify outcomes citywide
  2. Spatially test whether the distribution correlates with significant differences in racial/ethnic demographics or health metrices
  3. If an uneven distribution is confirmed, and the unevenness is related to different racial groups or health metrics, then:
  4. Run analysis to assess whether and how much individual zoning elements are likely to have caused the inequitable distribution

  As a first step, MPC and the Urban Institute will focus on seven of the thirteen outcomes. These outcomes were selected because they are more likely to be impacted directly by zoning and a causal link between zoning and the outcome may be able to be determined. A draft of the secondary research questions for each of the seven outcomes along with proposed data sources is included in the table below:

Outcome	Research Questions	Data Sources
Affordable Housing	1. What is the supply of housing at different prices within this neighborhood, and how does that align with resident incomes across Chicago? • To what degree are residents of this neighborhood able to access quality, affordable housing in the neighborhood? • To what degree are residents of ANY Chicago neighborhood able to move into this area affordably? 2. How much does zoning determine the under or over-supply of housing at different price points relative to housing needs and incomes of the city's population as a whole?	• Affordable Rental Housing Resource List • First American Parcel Data • Selected Housing Characteristics • Community Data • Five-Year Plan Quarterly Reports • Affordable Unit Rental Survey • Affordability Risk Index • Home Ownership and Rental Affordability Estimates • Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy • Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Properties
Business Corridors	1. How are commercial uses distributed across the city, and does this distribution have significant relationships to underlying or surrounding zoning, demographics, geography, or other characteristics? 2. How have these changed over time?	• Land Use Inventory • AllTransit scores • Smart Location Database • Business Licenses - Current Active • Inclusive Growth Score • Zip Codes Business Patterns • Weekly Spend • ACS Data: 2010 Census Tract Geographies

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Outcome	Research Questions	Data Sources
Pollution Exposure	1. Is exposure to sources of pollution disproportionately concentrated in some communities versus others? 2. Are mechanisms to reduce pollution (e.g., trees, etc.) disproportionately concentrated in some communities versus others? 3. What role does zoning play in the distribution of pollution and mitigation measures by neighborhood?	• Weekly Mobility Trends • EJ Screen • Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool • Toxic Release Inventory • Pollution • Tree Canopy Map • ACS Data: 2010 Census Tract Geographies
Transit Hubs	1. What are the built environment, zoning, and demographic characteristics of neighborhoods surrounding different kinds of transit stations, and how do they relate to each other? 2. What are the public health and racial equity implications of the distribution of these zoning and building patterns around transit?	• WalkScore • Chicago Works • RTAMS • AllTransit • Smart Location Database • ACS Data: 2010 Census Tract Geographies
Productive Land Use	1. How is the distribution of vacant and parking land related to zoning categories and demographics? 2. Does the distribution of vacant and parking land have implications for racial equity, public health, and sustainability?	• Natural Solutions Tool • Land Use Inventory • ACS Data: 2010 Census Tract Geographies
Groceries & Healthcare	1. What is the distribution of affordable grocery options and healthcare providers across the city, and are there any significant differences in racial/ethnic groups' spatial ability to access them? 2. Does the distribution correlate with inequitable health outcomes across neighborhoods? 3. To what extent does zoning influence the distribution of grocery stores and healthcare providers?	• Weekly Spend • ACS Data: 2010 Census Tract Geographies • Low Food Access • Food Access Locator
Climate Adaptations	1. What is the distribution of climate adaptation zoning requirements across the city, and how does this distribution relate to demographics, public health data, and environmental health indicators? 2. How has zoning over time contributed to climate harms/mitigation?	• Green Infrastructure Baseline Inventory • Natural Solutions Tool • EJ Screen • Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool • Toxic Release Inventory • Smart Location Database • Heat Vulnerability Index • Chicago Wilderness Data Hub • Tree Canopy Map • ACS Data: 2010 Census Tract Geographies