



# **NEW IDEAS**

**CITY OF CHICAGO**

**2018 MAYORAL FELLOWS**



**CHICAGO CITY HALL**  
**121 N LASALLE STREET**  
**CHICAGO, IL 60602**

" WE DESIGNED THIS PROGRAM  
TO OFFER **SUBSTANTIVE  
KNOWLEDGE FOR TOMORROW'S  
LEADERS** IN ADDRESSING  
THE WIDE-RANGING NEEDS  
AND ISSUES FOR A LARGE  
METROPOLITAN AREA.

YOU WILL SEE WHAT WORKS  
AND WHAT DOES NOT WORK  
AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY,  
BECOME **A FUNDAMENTAL  
VOICE IN FIGURING OUT WHY.** "

- MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL

# DIRECTORS' NOTE

## Fellows,

**Congratulations on a remarkable summer.** You are some of the smartest, brightest, and hardworking individuals and it has been a treat for us to get to know each and every one of you. You have all had the unique opportunity to experience the inner-workings of municipal government and were able to contribute directly to making Chicago a better place for its many residents.

Through your efforts, you recommended approaches to increase uptake of the STAR scholarship, explored ways to enhance Chicago Police Department hiring practices, researched the impact of Chicago's Minimum Wage Law, aided in events such as the Chicago Investors Conference and ThinkChicago, and, on some occasions, even helped draft speeches for Mayor Emanuel.

You also proposed **New Ideas**, found in this book, that the City of Chicago should consider implementing. We hope that as you look back on your time in the Mayor's Office, you realize how much the many projects you worked on and your new and innovative ideas presented in this book will continue to move the city forward.

You should be proud for completing one of the most demanding programs in the country. You not only worked hard on your projects, you spent quality time with many of the City of Chicago's Commissioners during our **Fellows Talks Series** and were able to see first-hand how departments and sister agencies keep the City running smoothly with our **Department Tours**. You also heard from a number of non-profit and advocacy groups that work closely with the City of Chicago during our weekly **Brown Bag Lunches**.

We hope that your time here has been an experience that you will never forget. You have been an awesome group with so much talent. We have both enjoyed having you here and working with you this summer, and we know that you will continue to excel in all that you do and succeed in your future endeavors.

**Stefan Schaffer  
& Margaret Gach**  
Mayor's Office Fellowship  
Program Directors



2018 fellows, program directors, and departmental interns with Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

# THE 2018 FELLOWS

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**IDEAS**



# CITY SERVICES



# BUILD CAPACITY FOR CHICAGO COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS

Increase access to long-term affordable housing

**Sarah Bloom**

## WHY IT MATTERS

Despite substantial effort over the past decade to make housing affordable, nearly half of all adults living in Chicago are spending more than they can afford on their homes and apartments, and folks are making enormous sacrifices to deal with the burden. Homeownership in the Chicago area fell last year to its lowest point in 16 years as more people continued to rent than buy. And that decline in homeownership in Chicago increases when accounting for race. Among the nation's largest metro areas, Chicago has the biggest gap between white and black households homeownership rates (74.1 percent of white households, compared to 39.1 percent of black households).

## HOW IT WORKS

In 2006, Chicago founded the Chicago Community Land Trust (CCLT) to address the increasingly limited supply of affordable housing and to provide families a tool for economic mobility. Because CLT homes are assessed at the affordable price, those who buy CLT homes make on average between 60 and 65 percent of the area median income and would likely not be able to purchase a home in the private market. CLT's stewardship protects homeowners and neighborhoods by stabilizing owners; they ensure that properties are not abandoned or turned into absentee rentals, provide basic maintenance and rehabilitation, and replace vacant buildings or lots with functional homes. In exchange for the subsidies and reduced property taxes, CLT homeowners agree to resell the home to another income-qualified buyer at an affordable price when they are ready to move on. The affordable resale price is the original affordable price plus a portion of any increase in the market value, giving the owner a return on the investment. CLTs can also be used as a tool to address the pressure gentrification puts on many low-income residents of rapidly appreciating, often high-opportunity urban neighborhoods, (such as Logan Square, Pilsen, Humboldt Park, and Avondale) that price families out of their communities.

Despite the substantial gains of CCLT over the past decade, the model is limited in scope, largely due to an issue of capacity. Chicago's CLT planned to close on 150 units in 2007 and 150 to 200 units each year thereafter. Yet, in the past 10 years, the program has only closed 120 units. There is only one paid staff member managing and operating the citywide Land Trust. With an additional hire, CCLT could make major advances to their model.

## NEXT STEPS

An additional staff member could address the following needs to strengthen CCLT:

- A policy to ensure and enforce the formal written agreement for stipulations regarding affordable housing (as it is currently informal and unenforceable)
- An "opt-in" addition to the model for existing, older owners who already reside in neighborhoods that are gentrifying
- Acquisition of more land (from City-owned land, the Cook County Land Bank Authority, bank REO properties, delinquent property tax sales, Receiverships, etc.)

# IMPROVE ACCESS TO CITYKEY FOR SOUTH SIDE RESIDENTS

Expand mobile printing sites & apply local business discounts

**Fatema Chamak**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The CityKey ID Program, operated by the City Clerk's office, offers Chicago residents a valid government-issued photo identification card that serves as a Ventra card, Library card, and offers discounts for prescriptions and select businesses and cultural institutions. Since its launch in April 2018, over 13,000 of the allocated free 100,000 CityKey ID cards have been printed. Despite the demand, preliminary zip code data suggests that the initiative is being under-utilized by residents of South Side neighborhoods, which are majority African-American. Out of 5,700 zip codes obtained, only 1 of the top 15 zip codes represented, were from a predominantly African-American neighborhood. By offering mobile printing sites on the South Side and applying CityKey ID discounts for local businesses on the South Side, the City Clerk's office can utilize a no-cost marketing approach to increase both access and outreach to South Side residents in primarily African-American communities.

## HOW IT WORKS

Mobile printing sites, which are sites where the Clerk's office prints IDs in local communities, increase access to residents who may not have the means to travel to the Clerk's office downtown. By increasing the number of mobile printing sites on the South Side, the CityKey ID can be made more accessible to disadvantaged communities. There are three DFSS community service centers located in disadvantaged Southside neighborhoods, which cater to mostly African-American clients. Centers such as these are ideal partners to host mobile printing sites, due to their outreach capacity to advertise the benefits of the CityKey ID. While increasing access is important, a stronger outreach strategy would make the CityKey ID more desirable for South Side residents by applying local business discounts. Currently, discounts offered through the CityKey ID include some small businesses and large cultural institutions, many of which are not located on the South Side. In partnering with more local South Side businesses, the CityKey ID can be more useful for South Side residents while also incentivizing local business growth.

## NEXT STEPS

- Prepare City Clerk's office with DFSS contacts and local business contacts
- Schedule Fall/Winter mobile printing location/dates on the South Side through DFSS
- Contact local businesses about offering discounts through potential partnerships
- Advertise discounts through a community map of businesses at mobile printing sites

# INCREASE CITY RECYCLING RATES

Funding recycling outreach through municipal operation efficiency

**Zack Wallace**

## WHY IT MATTERS

Chicago has a diversion rate of only 10% of recyclable materials. Comparatively, Los Angeles has a diversion rate of over 75%. One of the primary determinants of achieving a higher rate is the level of investment in recycling outreach efforts. In light of this, the Recycling Partnership's 2017 study to improve recycling in Chicago recommended to increase the budget for recycling outreach to "a minimum of \$1.50 per household annual budget for Program Manager salary, program outreach, and engagement." This equates to annually budgeting \$945,000 for 630,000 households.

In FY2018, the City of Chicago's recycling outreach budget is \$400,000, a 50% increase from the previous year. However, a funding gap of \$545,000 remains to reach the best-practice funding level recommended by Recycling Partnership's study. One method to fill this gap is through establishing greater efficiencies in janitorial operations within municipal buildings. An example of an operational efficiency that has the potential to yield significant savings is to remove desk-side garbage and recycling bins and encourage all city employees to utilize larger, centralized bins located on each floor, kitchen, and printing area.

## HOW IT WORKS

By removing desk-side garbage and recycling bins, the City has the potential to gain significant savings through the reduction of resource use. The City saved approximately \$400,000 annually when it established every-other-day desk-side pickup instead of daily pickup. By removing desk-side receptacles and stopping individual pick-up altogether, the City has the potential to generate even more annual savings. Likewise, by removing desk-side receptacles, the City will benefit from increasing internal recycling rates as well. For example, Etsy removed desk-side garbage and recycling in 2014 and as a result, experienced an 18% drop in waste and a 20% increase in their recycling rate overall.

The current contract for janitorial services was recently initiated in 2018 and will not be up for renewal until 2022 with re-negotiations beginning in 2021. This presents an opportunity to analyze the impact that increasing the total budget for recycling outreach has on recycling rates, as well as to conduct a pilot within City Hall to determine the effects of removing desk-side receptacles. If both analyses yield a positive result, this information can be used in the contract re-negotiations to renew and maintain 2022 funding levels. This will save the City of Chicago approximately \$800,000 annually, which can be utilized for a variety of initiatives including recycling outreach.

## NEXT STEPS

- 2018-2019: Communicate and conduct City Hall Pilot, measuring waste and recycling levels after bin removal
- 2020: Analyze impact of FY18 budget increase to recycling outreach through measuring the number of contamination tags issued and overall tonnage of recycled materials
- 2021: Enter into contract renewal negotiations using results from City Hall Pilot and outreach budget increase studies
- 2022: Renew contract maintaining 2022 funding level (pending study results)

# RECYCLE BANK PARTNERSHIP

Improve measurement. Promote participation.

**Robert P. Degnan**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Chicago has a dismal rate of recycling. In 2014, the first full year following the rollout of the City's Blue Cart Program, reports indicate that just over 11% of the city's refuse was diverted away from landfills toward recycling facilities. In 2015, this rate fell to 10%. In 2016, it fell yet again to 9.1%. By comparison, San Francisco claims to divert 80% of its refuse toward recycling facilities and Seattle diverts nearly 60%. Exacerbating the problem is the fact that the city's data on recycling is incomplete. The above percentages reflect only the recycling rate for residential buildings of 4 units or less. Buildings with 5 residences or more are not captured in the data. Clearly, improvements are needed.

## HOW IT WORKS

The issue of recycling in Chicago presents a dual dilemma. First, we need to more accurately measure the true city-wide recycling rate. Second, we need to increase the true diversion rate by creating economic incentives for residents to recycle.

It is estimated that "roughly 45% of Chicago's housing stock is comprised of condominiums and rental properties" of five units or more. These residences are not included in Chicago's recycling rate. Additionally, refuse and recycling services for these residences are provided not by the Department of Streets and Sanitation (DSS), but by private waste hauling firms. If private haulers of refuse and recyclable materials operating within the city were required to report what they collect by weight, the result would be a much more accurate assessment of residential recycling. Such data should be provided monthly by the private waste hauler to the city, according to DSS zone, which will allow for analyses of seasonal variation in diversion patterns. Capturing residences in buildings with 5 units or more may, by itself, increase the overall recycling rate.

Once a more accurate assessment of the city-wide recycling rate has been established, incentives can be created to boost residential recycling. Taxing schemes, such as pay-as-you-throw, are unlikely to be politically palatable to Chicagoans. One option is to collaborate with Recycle Bank, a certified B corporation which partners with retailers and municipalities to provide rewards such as retail discounts to those who recycle based upon how much they divert. Such a collaboration would involve developing the capability at the curb to measure how much is being recycled per household.

## NEXT STEPS

- The City of Chicago should adopt an ordinance requiring all private residential waste haulers operating within the city to collect and report data on a monthly basis for both total refuse collected and total recyclable material collected
- Determine the feasibility of a collaborative effort which would include the City of Chicago, Recycle Bank, and private residential waste haulers operating within the city
- Assess which areas are most appropriate to establish pilot programs for collaboration
- Retrofit relevant city equipment with necessary means to measure recycling materials being disposed per household

# RE-PURPOSE THE CITY'S ACCESSIBILITY FUND

Over 20 million dollars sitting dormant – and rapidly growing

**Sarah Bloom**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City's Accessibility Fund is supported by fees paid by taxi and TNP companies (\$.10 per vehicle, per ride) which is used to improve the services of taxicabs and transportation network vehicles for people with disabilities. While the fund has successfully tripled the number of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs) since January of 2016, the fund has become bloated. As of June 30, 2018, \$21,111,866.12 is currently dormant, increasing by at least 1 million dollars each year.

## HOW IT WORKS

Since 2014, the Fund has provided subsidies to incentivize the on-boarding of new WAV taxicabs as well as subsidies for the expenses associated with the maintenance operations of WAVs. The Fund contributes to the Centralized WAV Taxicab Dispatch Service (Open Doors Organization) and awards subsidies to TNPs that provide WAV trips. As of June 2018, \$5,092,008 has been disbursed. While BACP is actively working to increase incentives for usage of the fund, the scope of the problem and the goals for outcomes are still unclear. The fund has no target number of WAVs that would adequately satisfy the need, nor does it stipulate how long the program will last.

While this fund sits largely unused, there are related accessibility concerns that are in desperate need of money. For example, although 100% of city buses and railcars are accessible, the CTA's All Stations Accessible Program (ASAP) is short \$2.1 billion of their goal, having only secured money for 8 of the 42 stations they need to fund to make rail stations 100% accessible.

Since 2006, CDOT has completed 96,292 ADA compliant curb cut ramps of the nearly 300,000 that are needed—leaving over 200,000 ramps that have yet to be constructed. The cost to construct an ADA compliant ramp averages \$6,000/ramp but can cost up to \$10,000-\$50,000 for specific locations (such as on a bridge structure).

The City's Small Accessible Repairs for Seniors (SARFS) have outstanding needs for ramps and handrails for senior citizens. They have a waiting list of over 100 units that need to be serviced, costing a range of \$1,500 to \$5,000 per unit.

With the few examples listed above, it is clear there are many issues, varying in size and scope, that deny people with disabilities from having full participation and equal opportunity in all aspects of life. Expanding the use of the Accessibility Fund can ensure that strides are made.

## NEXT STEPS

- Create an RFI/RFP to quantify the need, demand and use of WAV (could be modeled largely after Washington DC's Annual Report on Accessible Vehicle-For-Hire Service)
- Continue to compile related accessibility concerns to determine the best use of the Fund
- An ordinance change would be required for any use of the Fund beyond WAV

# WINTER LIVABILITY & DESIGN

A first-ever comprehensive, intentional approach to improve winter quality of life in Chicago

**Mark Bennett**

## WHY IT MATTERS

Winter comes every year, and the predominate attitude in Chicago (and many other northern cities) is simply to hunker down and hope for an early end. But the problem isn't that winter is inherently unbearable. The problem is that we're not sufficiently planning and designing a livable winter city. This is an issue of culture, programming, regulation, and design. Some city entities are already thinking more about winter: Parks, for example. Some, less. For instance, the 44-page Street and Site Plan Design Standards mention "winter" zero times. A city poorly designed and programmed for winter livability faces significant consequences including: social isolation, impaired mobility, decreased physical activity, lost retail opportunities, lost tourism, a disadvantage in recruiting outside talent, and overall diminished quality of life.

## HOW IT WORKS

How instead can Chicago develop an intentional approach to embracing and enhancing winter livability and design? How can we improve our lived outdoor winter experience? (This isn't about the Pedway!) Look to Edmonton—the first North American city to establish a holistic winter livability effort. In 2012, Edmonton hired two dedicated staff members and created a working group to establish WinterCity: a comprehensive plan for winter livability. The plan outlined projects to boost winter activities and festivals, established ideas for improved winter transportation, created guidelines for year-round outdoor cafes and even went so far as to encourage television weather forecasters to change how they talk about the cold. Edmonton, Alberta also established Winter Design Guidelines, which aim to establish best practices for improving exposure to sunlight, buffering wind, adding color and light and massing structures to vastly improve the winter experience in both public spaces and private developments. Developers have been eager and excited to adopt the new approach. And the response citywide has been enormous. Thirty-seven percent of Edmontonians say they do more outside in the wintertime now and 44 percent say their perception of winter is now more positive.

This is a scalable effort, but I propose Chicago seek grant, economic development and/or tourism dollars to hire a small dedicated staff and bring together a volunteer working group to help Chicago establish its own winter livability and design plan. Finally, it's critical this is a **citywide** effort. We must be thinking about enhanced livability that can scale to every neighborhood - not just tourism opportunities in the Loop.

## NEXT STEPS

- Secure funding to hire 1-2 full-time staff
- Establish a volunteer working group of citizens and experts to survey existing conditions and establish recommendations
- Utilize dedicated staff to spread messaging and guide city agencies through more intentional winter planning

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A vibrant night scene at a community event. In the foreground, a man in a grey polo shirt and a woman in a striped t-shirt with 'DIEM' on it are dancing joyfully. The man is holding a yellow and white program. The background is filled with other people, some with their arms raised, under blue and yellow lighting. A large white number '2' is in the top right corner.

**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

# CREATE AN OFFICE OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Encouraging Chicagoans to be involved in their community

**Eric Mayo & Max Schmidt**

## WHY IT MATTERS

A city can only be truly successful if its citizens are active and engaged decision-makers. The best measurement we have for civic engagement is voting, and for local elections, turnout rates are quite low. Moreover, direct involvement on the part of residents, such as through volunteer work, gives residents a sense of connection that has been shown to improve voter engagement. Other cities have created offices to encourage civic engagement among its citizens, and Chicago should follow suit. Currently, there are many potential projects that, given their electoral nature, are not well suited for an elected office, or may simply be dispersed across multiple departments. By creating an office solely dedicated to improving citizens' connections with their government, we can increase civic activity, help to coordinate civic engagement, and make sure every Chicagoan feels connected and heard.

## HOW IT WORKS

The Office of Civic Engagement would function as a non-partisan, independent agency within the city government. Some of its functions could include:

**Voter Engagement** – Government has typically sponsored voter registration drives. However, as of July 1st, Illinois now automatically registers all eligible voters. As such, the new department should shift their focus to encouraging registered voters to vote by using the latest research in behavioral science. For example, studies have shown that people are more likely to vote when they think about when and where they will vote ahead of time. The Office of Civic Engagement could create a campaign to encourage residents to create a voting plan and then take steps to remind voters of that plan.

**Volunteer Coordination** – The office could serve as a clearinghouse to connect residents looking to help their communities with local non-profits.

**Non-Partisan Election Information** – In New York City, each registered voter receives a guide with a brief biography and platform provided by the candidates. Providing a similar guide in Chicago would allow voters to make a more informed election decision as well as remind them to vote.

## NEXT STEPS

- Brainstorm other potential service areas
- Develop partnerships with relevant community groups



# EXPAND PROJECT COORDINATION TO INCREASE PUBLIC INPUT

Streamlining the process of public input within the City

**Max Schmidt**

## WHY IT MATTERS

Public input plays a significant and vital role in every effort undertaken by the City of Chicago, and the city benefits from a wealth of public and non-profit organizations with developed proposals of their own. While the City works to respond and coordinate with many such proposals, Chicago lacks a centralized means of receiving and responding to them. In recent years though, the City has implemented smaller programs within departments such as DOT to coordinate their own internal plans in real time. By expanding these systems to encompass a larger portion of City projects and to involve a public component, Chicago can boost its efficiency, provide a more unified voice to public partners and better engage with all residents.

## HOW IT WORKS

In 2012, the Chicago Department of Transportation implemented an Office of Project Coordination to oversee the real-time coordination of projects within the public right of way across multiple service providers. Through city-wide project mapping and administrative coordination, this system has saved Chicago residents more than \$129 million. This system can provide a framework for expansion to other City departments, recognizing that better coordination across multiple services is a benefit to projects of all kinds, not simply physical development.

While the inclusion of more wrap-around and full stream services throughout city initiatives increases success for consumers, this multi-pronged approach can also produce redundancies, gaps in provision, and generally reduced efficiency. A centralized system for coordinating these systems could be built utilizing the systems already in place throughout the city, as well as existing partnerships with public and private partners.

This system could also serve as a central receiving center for outside proposals. By centralizing this process, the City can coordinate internal review and response to plans in a unified voice, reducing conflicting or partial responses. Though a response to every citizen proposal may be ambitious, human and automated screening of key indicators such as scale, viability, or location, could quickly funnel a reasonable level of proposals. Finally, for any programs which are adopted and implemented either by or in partnership with the City, this system could help coordinate the various departments and outside groups involved.

## NEXT STEPS

- Evaluate the technical requirements for the expansion of existing systems within DOT and other departments. Work with partners to facilitate this expansion, providing direct economic benefit.
- Determine method of evaluating financial and other benefits from any increased efficiency in order to respond to changes, needs, and successes throughout the system
- Work with outside groups throughout the city to develop an equitable and efficient means of evaluating and responding to input, including fair screening criteria

# INCREASE NEIGHBORHOOD REPRESENTATION IN CPD

A place-based recruitment campaign to hire officers from every Chicago neighborhood

**Michelle Long**

## WHY IT MATTERS

Chicago's police force does not reflect Chicago's diversity. The Chicago Police Department (CPD) and Department of Human Resources (DHR) are tasked with hiring a police force representative of Chicago's diversity per the Mayor's mission to hire 1,000 new officers. Current recruitment efforts targeting minority applicants ultimately fail to yield a force representative of Chicago's diverse residents. Many community groups raise concerns that representation of Chicago's neighborhoods and socioeconomic backgrounds within the force remains an issue, in addition to a lack of diversity on the basis of race and ethnicity.

## HOW IT WORKS

To increase representation in Chicago's Police force, the Mayor's Office should lead CPD and DHR in launching a recruitment campaign to hire officers from every neighborhood in Chicago. This strategy aims to hire police officers that represent Chicago's diversity, while simultaneously encouraging hyper-local community participation in CPD reform efforts.

Literature shows that recruiting for neighborhood representation rather than racial/ethnic diversity will yield particularly motivated applicants from traditionally underrepresented groups to serve as active ambassadors for their communities. Active representation among recruits would reduce the perception of a stereotypical threat among recruits and promote a culture of civic engagement, encouraging recruits to join the force to serve their hyper-local communities and take active roles in CPD reform efforts.

To ensure hyper-local participation, the Mayor's Office should leverage Beat Facilitators and District Commanders to push recruitment efforts. Many of the retired "Be the Change CPD" marketing materials will suffice for this effort, however, the City should prepare to support District Commanders and Beat Facilitators with neighborhood-specific communications needs for a more targeted approach.

## NEXT STEPS

Leverage Beat Facilitators to push neighborhood recruitment:

- Coordinate recruitment timeline across DHR, CPD, and District Commanders
- Map incoming applicant geographic data to target underrepresented neighborhoods and wards
- Strategize with Aldermen, community leaders, and advocacy groups to further unify recruitment efforts
- Encourage Beat Facilitators to usher traditionally underrepresented recruits through the application process

# MAYOR'S OFFICE CORE EQUITY TEAM

Integrating racial equity into all of Chicago's policies & practices

Margaret Decker

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Chicago has a history of institutional discrimination that has led to long-term racial disparities in the City. Housing discrimination, voter disenfranchisement, and unequal distribution of funding have contributed to Chicago becoming one of the most segregated cities in the US. There is currently no strategic plan for promoting equity on a City-wide level, and gaps in access to resources can be exacerbated by practices that do not consider this context. Addressing the racial equity gap is essential for Chicago to maintain its place as a world-class city.

## HOW IT WORKS

The Equity Core Team's goal is to incorporate equity-focused practices into City operations. The team will be composed of cross-departmental leaders who will assist each City department in thinking about equity in their work. The majority of departments already have strategic plans that outline steps for reaching goals relevant to their mission, and so these established frameworks are an ideal place to incorporate equity practices. The Equity Core Team will begin their work in the Department of Public Health, which is already working to advance equity through the Healthy Chicago 2.0 strategic plan. CDPH has joined the Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE) and formed partnerships with local equity-focused organizations such as Elevated Chicago. They have also held all-staff health equity trainings and are considering how to best engage community members in their action plan.

The Equity Core Team can support this work by identifying opportunities for collaboration and bringing diverse ideas to the table. For example, CDPH's Healthy Chicago 2.0 plan and the Sustainable Chicago 2015 plan both have goals of increasing access to healthy food in minority neighborhoods. Equity Core Team members can also share what equity looks like in their departments. The Department of Procurement Services' incentive program for minority- and women-owned businesses is a model that could be adopted in other City contracting processes.

In the long run, the Equity Core Team will expand efforts to all City departments. From Streets and Sanitation to the Department of Cultural and Special Events, strategies for racial equity will be woven into the framework of Chicago's institutional practices. This commitment to equity sets Chicago up to reduce racial disparities and ensure that all residents can thrive.

## NEXT STEPS

- Recruit City staff with experience working on equity initiatives to join the Equity Core Team
- Create a long-term Equity Core Team mission statement, set of goals, and plan for implementation across City departments
- Partner with CDPH to develop an action plan that includes measurable and time-oriented equity goals, steps to reach them, and methods of evaluating success
- Expand collaboration to all City departments to incorporate equity-focused goals and action steps into already established strategic plans

# PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Engaging residents in funding decisions to better meet community needs

**Margaret Decker & Erica Pincus**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Chicago's 2017 budget includes \$81.1 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the Federal government to support economic development in low-to-moderate income communities. As part of CDBG, grantees are required to provide for and encourage citizen participation in determining how the funds are allocated. In Chicago, CDBG funds are currently allocated by city departments for programs and initiatives, which are then often implemented through community organizations and delegate agencies. This leaves the decisions about how the funds will be spent inaccessible to residents of the communities that will be impacted.

## HOW IT WORKS

We recommend allocating one million dollars of the CDBG funds to low-to-moderate income communities through a participatory budgeting process. Aldermen can apply for funding by submitting a plan for how they will engage their communities in a participatory budgeting process. Two pilot wards will be selected by a review committee composed of City staff and from Participatory Budgeting Chicago (PB Chicago). If successful, the funds allocated for participatory budgeting can be expanded by one ward per year until ten wards are engaged.

Selected wards can receive support from the Participatory Budgeting Project (PBP) and PB Chicago, and can utilize interactive texting platforms such as coUrbanize, Neighborland, or Textizen. Examples of potential projects include social services such as ESL programs for immigrant youth, or capital improvements such as community gardens.

Participatory budgeting for CDBG funds was implemented in Oakland, CA, supported by the PBP, via a pilot in 2017 wherein over 1,200 community members voted to decide how to spend \$784,678 over two years. In Chicago, a number of aldermen already leverage participatory budgeting for aldermanic menu funds, and PB Chicago has projects in nine wards. This solution would scale the interactive process and would help Chicago better meet the requirement that CDBG grantees engage the public in determining how funds are allocated.

## NEXT STEPS

- Develop and launch an application process to identify two pilot wards based on need and aldermanic buy-in to the participatory process
- Partner with PBP, PB Chicago, and a civic tech texting platform to implement a pilot project next year, allocating one million dollars of CDBG funds between two communities
- Set up a process to evaluate the success of the program as measured by metrics related to community improvement, participation rates, and satisfaction with the process
- If successful, and consider increasing the allocation by one community per year until ten different communities across the City are engaged

An aerial photograph of a city skyline at dusk. The foreground is filled with a dense grid of multi-story brick and concrete buildings. In the background, a cluster of taller skyscrapers is visible against a darkening sky. A large, white, stylized number '3' is overlaid in the top right corner of the image.

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# **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

# CHICAGO SAVINGS ENVELOPE

Enabling Chicagoans to pay for long-term investments

Janice Hu

## WHY IT MATTERS

It can be hard to save for the long-term, especially if you live in poverty. One intervention that has changed behavior has been putting cash into a physical “Savings Envelope” to pay for longer-term expenses, such as a \$650 water bill payment. Placing money into a separate account or physical form of storage, such as an envelope, increases self-control and savings. However, you might not want to keep such a large wad of cash at home. Where do you keep it? Where can you keep it securely without needing to pay a fee, meet a daily minimum balance requirement, or prove your Social Security number?

## HOW IT WORKS

Create an accessible “Savings Envelope” program within and across community banks in Chicago. The “Savings Envelope” benefits two groups: 1) those who do not have savings accounts at commercial banks, and 2) those who do have savings accounts but need help with financial management. The responsibility of the institution is to store the physical envelopes for the participant. To reduce the bank’s risks of holding savings that may be used for purposes illegal according to the Patriot Act, the “Savings Envelope” amount must be designated for a disclosed, legal reason and may not exceed a certain amount.

The “Savings Envelope” will increase accessibility by removing the rigorous requirements for identification (legitimate Photo ID, including CityKey, is accepted, but Social Security will not be required), removing the minimum daily balance requirement, and offering greater geographic accessibility due to the number of participating organizations. Though you may not qualify to open an account at the bank closest to your home because you do not have a minimum balance or cannot pay the fees, you can keep your cash savings in your “Savings Envelope” to be stored there.

For those who already have a savings account, the Savings Envelope program instills additional discipline to prepare and plan for mid- to long-term payments and expenses.

## NEXT STEPS

- Consult with community banks to understand risks and restrictions. Define what constitutes a legal reason for the savings and the maximum amount to be held at a bank.
- Design Savings Envelope with Behavioral Science principles and consultants
- Partner with community banks to set up Savings Envelope program
- Pilot “Savings Envelope” concept with low-income Chicago residents
- Measure impact: how many people sign up, level of satisfaction, does it change saving or spending behavior
- Develop plan to scale across multiple banks in Chicago’s low-income neighborhoods

# CONNECT VACANT PROPERTY OWNERS TO ENTREPRENEURS

Surveying property owners to facilitate business growth

**Andrew Corzo**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The goal of this survey is to create a framework in which entrepreneurs can connect with owners of vacant properties. Vacant storefronts are a multifaceted issue for the communities in which they are located. Vacant storefronts exist all over the City, both in economically disadvantaged and wealthy neighborhoods. Their presence lowers the economic potential of the neighborhood, while limiting the services provided to its residents and reducing the City's tax base. This project will produce a compiled list of property owners who would be opening to renting to short-term "pop-up" businesses. The survey will also inform the City of the reasons behind the vacant storefront problem, from the perspective of the owners.

## HOW IT WORKS

A list of addresses of vacant commercial spaces and the names of owners has been compiled. Future Fellows will have access to a selection of properties that is representative of the 3 different sections of the City. Using a standardized survey, future Fellows will be able to contact vacant property owners by phone or mail to administer the survey. Contact information for various Chamber of Commerce organizations has also been compiled, allowing Fellows to administer the survey to them as well. The survey will ask:

1. How long has the property been vacant?
2. What are the main barriers to renting out your space for businesses?
3. Would you be amenable to a temporary "pop-up" business renting out the store for a short-term lease?
4. Would you be amenable to a program in which residents could write /send a text to say what they would like to see in the vacant spot?
5. What else would you like the City to do to help rent out your space?

## NEXT STEPS

- Administer the survey via phone or mail
- Compile a list of businesses amenable to hosting pop-up businesses
- Post the list online and distribute it to various Chambers of Commerce
- Consider printing and distributing physical copies of the list
- Write a report noting common trends among responses from property owners

# DIGITIZE THE TASTE OF CHICAGO

Celebrating the diversity & food excellence of Chicago through small businesses

**Amir A. Kazi**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The Chicagoland Small Business Survey 2018 states that over 88% of small businesses are concerned about revenue growth, and 67% of businesses need help with marketing. Unfortunately, most small businesses lack the ability to conduct large scale publicity. These small businesses, especially in the food industry, lose out on significant potential revenue to more mainstream players.

Compounding this issue, Chicago faces a problem of segregation and cultural isolation between communities and neighborhoods. People tend to stay mostly in their own boroughs (or go to certain mainstream areas like Downtown, Lincoln Park, etc.), instead of venturing to far out areas. This is due to either a lack of information about entertainment or transport options, or due to misperceptions about neighborhoods.

## HOW IT WORKS

The intervention to aid these pain points is to produce a video blog series, similar to the Chicago Stories podcast conducted by the Mayor. The series would feature a food-related small business (ranging from restaurants, cafes, stalls and food trucks) every week, where the host along with the business owner and employees talk about the small business and its place in the community. An important component of each episode would be the presentation of the recipe of one of their specialties. Each episode will also mention the various methods, especially CTA and other forms of public transport, to reach these small businesses from various other parts of the city. This initiative can also be branded under 'One Chicago' with the broad idea being that regardless of how diverse the city is, we are all united by the great food in this city.

Not only will this help small businesses in low-income neighborhoods of Chicago, but it will also bring customers from across other parts of Chicago into the community, spurring cross-neighborhood economic development. This helps to reduce inequity, as well as build bridges that help social integration and cohesion. From a policy perspective, this can be coupled with CTA efforts to get more people to use public transportation via highlighting ease of transport to these businesses via CTA. These small businesses can also partner with the CityKey initiative by giving discounts to CityKey members, thus helping the uptake of CityKey cards by the general public.

The City of Chicago has an in-house media team that can help produce the series, with 15-20-minute episodes. Additionally, the city can also partner with various organizations including the Small Business Center, Small Business Saturday etc. Selection of the small businesses can be done through nominations by NBDCs (Neighborhood Development Centers).

## NEXT STEPS

- Develop a production plan, and create focus groups of small businesses to assess what content to include in these episodes
- Interact with the NBDCs, and train them on publicity and other protocols



# TURN VACANT COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES INTO POP-UPS

Direct outreach to targeted property owners

Ryan Fitzsimons

## WHY IT MATTERS

Chicago had over 8,500 vacant or partially vacant commercial properties in 2017. These properties qualified for a tax break, which lead to diminished tax revenue while simultaneously diminishing the economic vitality of commercial corridors.

Many business owners are reluctant to sign leases in economically depressed areas due to the risk associated with these communities. Reaching out to property owners to become registered pop-up sites would allow businesses to try a new location with less exposure to risk.

## HOW IT WORKS

According to both World Business Chicago and Boombox, a pop-up concept that specializes in micro retail, there is strong demand by businesses for pop-up space. The way the pop-up permit is currently structured, both the business and the hosting location need to be appropriately permitted. While there are several organizations that are well suited to providing assistance to potential pop-up entrepreneurs, there does not appear to be a mechanism to promote the pop-up hosting permit.

All of the vacant and partially vacant commercial properties from 2017 have already been identified with the address of the property owner. In order to appear in this data set, the property owner needed to try and fail to find a tenant. By directly reaching out to these individuals, the city will be providing them a valuable tool to attract a new tenant.

Once property owners apply for and receive the pop-up permit, this information should then be posted on the BACP website and also pushed to the neighborhood chambers of commerce. This will then facilitate the matching of pop-up entrepreneurs with hosting sites, which will help ensure the success of the pop-up permit more generally.

Lastly, the pop-up outreach should be continuously analyzed to determine the response rate for the direct mailing. Once this has been established, further data should be gathered on the success of the pop-ups that go into these new spaces to encourage other entrepreneurs to utilize the space in the future.

## NEXT STEPS

- Compose communication to owners of vacant property making persuasive argument to apply for the pop-up hosting permit
- Send communication to targeted owners in early January 2019 to coincide with the rollout of the pop-up permits
- Simultaneously work with the neighborhood chambers of commerce and World Business Chicago to encourage entrepreneurs to get the pop-up business permit

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**EDUCATION**

# EXPAND COLLEGE-PREP ESL

## Preparing newcomers for college success

**Kyle Svingen**

### WHY IT MATTERS

Chicago has a long history of being a welcoming destination for immigrants. Today, there are thousands of newly arrived immigrants seeking a better future in Chicago. Chicago Public Schools has a robust English as a Second Language (ESL) program that serves its 65,000 English Language Learners (ELLs). In 12th grade alone, more than 1,400 ELs receive ESL services from CPS.

The City Colleges of Chicago, however, identifies far fewer ELs, with only 29 students ages 18-24 enrolled across its college-prep ESL classes. Surely, many students are reclassified as “English Proficient” and do not require additional ESL courses. Others may be enrolling in other post-secondary options. However, it stands to reason that if 1,400 need ESL support in 12th grade, many will need continued support in CCC. The 1,400 12th grade ELLs certainly need to continue their academic and English language growth to be competitive in the 21st century economy.

### HOW IT WORKS

CCC will partner with CPS to build a pipeline for students in high school ESL classrooms throughout Chicago. Every 12th grade ELD classroom in CPS should take a field trip to Harold Washington College, which houses all college-prep ESL courses. CPS and CCC will coordinate so that all ELLs take the English placement test in high school so that enrollment is as easy as possible.

While CCC offers basic (non-college-prep) ESL classes at 70 convenient locations throughout Chicago, college-prep ELD courses should continue to only be offered on CCC campuses. This will keep students in a collegiate environment and give them confidence to continue their studies after successfully passing out of ESL. Eventually, CCC’s degree-granting programs will have more students enrolling who have already shown the student skills to complete rigorous college-prep ESL coursework.

There are thousands of 18-24 year olds English learners who have already left CPS and haven’t enrolled in ESL programs in CCC. These students will need to be re-engaged through a targeted outreach program which should be co-facilitated by CCC and non-profit partners already working in Chicago’s multilingual communities.

### NEXT STEPS

- Conduct additional research to understand outcomes for the 1,400 12th grade ELLs in CPS
- Coordinate with relevant offices in CPS and CCC to strengthen pipeline from 12th grade ELD courses to City College ELD courses
- Connect CCC with community leaders and nonprofit groups to improve outreach to immigrant populations not currently in CPS or CCC

# HYDROPONIC FARMING EDUCATION

## Equipping a new generation for hydroponic farming

Janice Hu

### WHY IT MATTERS

The average farmer in the United States is 59 years old, yet food production will continue to be a necessary part of society. Current agricultural practices are unsustainable. Hydroponics is a new type of farming that is gaining traction and is likely to replace current agricultural practices. Hydroponics, where plants are grown without soil and use a mineral nutrient solution in a water solvent, can grow food year-round in more sustainable ways, conserving both space and water. Chicago Public Schools, whose goal is to prepare students for jobs of the future, especially high-paying jobs, should incorporate hydroponic farming education.

### HOW IT WORKS

CPS should direct resources for a Hydroponic Farming Lab education for high school students. The curriculum will meet the National Science Standards requirements. Hydroponic towers can be easily set up in classrooms, do not take up much space, and require minimal effort to manage. While growing plants in the towers, students can learn a biological and technical curriculum in an effective hands-on manner. The simplicity of the individual unit lab set-up is analogous to the “butterfly net” that is common in elementary school classrooms, but these towers teach more complex topics and can prepare high school students for hydroponic jobs of the future. Furthermore, unlike traditional farming or urban gardens, this biology education can be utilized year-round.

Resources for this sort of program are already in place. It meets the goals of CPS, which are to either give students a higher likelihood of seeking higher education, or to equip them with skills that lead to high-paying jobs, potentially partnering with community colleges. Furthermore, CPS recently added 3 more years of laboratory science to their graduation requirements, made possible by a \$75 Million Investment in State-of-the-Art High School Science Labs. Part of this investment can be used for hydroponics set-up.

### NEXT STEPS

- Gain better understanding of costs, space requirements, and limitations. Speak to existing hydroponic education efforts, including Square Roots and Food Science Lab
- Develop curriculum for hydroponic farming education and partner with CPS teachers and administrators to tailor curriculum to meet graduation requirements and funding eligibility
- Develop business plan for covering costs of hydroponic towers and technology
- Pilot in one or a handful of Chicago high schools to test viability and effectiveness

# ONE SUMMER CHICAGO: JUMPSTART

Enhancing a tiered One Summer Chicago model to provide additional pathways to City Colleges

Jessica Jones

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City currently offers myriad youth workforce and educational programs via single or jointly-managed initiatives by the Department of Family and Social Services (DFSS), City Colleges of Chicago (CCC), and Chicago Public Schools (CPS). These include occupational- and sector-based learning programs such as Jumpstart to Jobs, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and Centers of Excellence – as well as credit-garnering options, including City Colleges Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment programs.

Research shows that the most sustainable youth violence-prevention programs are those that include employment, mentorship and educational components. In last year's One Summer Chicago (OSC) Report, 70% of participants listed attaining a two- or four-year college degree as their personal goal. However, only 18% reported receiving college prep experience over the OSC term.

## HOW IT WORKS

As One Summer Chicago demand outweighs availability, Chicago can extend the reach and impact of this successful program by integrating City Colleges and CPS Dual Enrollment and Jumpstart to Jobs/CTE opportunities into the OSC model. This would serve to increase retention within the CPS-to-CCC pipeline – using OSC programming as a launching pad to CCC.

One Summer Chicago is already moving into a more tiered program and training model, which has led to the creation of OSC Plus (with added one-on-one mentoring) and the 2018 Chicagobility pilot (for 14- and 15-year-olds). One Summer Chicago: Earn & Learn would keep intact the existing OSC structure, but would provide additional educational opportunities for participants. Aimed at CPS students, primarily ages 16 to 17, who currently meet the benchmarks for CCC Dual Enrollment, OSC Earn & Learn seeks to align OSC with existing CPS/CCC educational and workforce readiness strategies. The pathway would extend a Dual Enrollment option to the OSC cohort, incorporating an amended Dual Enrollment application into the OSC portal. Over six weeks, eligible and chosen students would align with one of City Colleges' Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways, where they would supplement a 10-hour work week in that field with a 10-hour CTE course on a City Colleges campus, earning three free credits while being paid for their work experience. Suggested rollout would take place at Olive Harvey College with a Management/Logistics focus, or at Richard Daley with a Manufacturing focus, both of which have existing local industry partners. In addition to increasing students' likelihood of high school graduation, strengthening college applications, and helping to reduce post-secondary education costs, this approach would also help OSC expand its model to strengthen CPS-to-CCC retention and meet increasing student demand.

## NEXT STEPS

- Identify CCC campuses and CTE pathways/courses ideal for rollout
- Engage with DFSS, CPS, CCC and City staff on refining program design
- Explore possibility of a pre-OSC term mailer to all CPS students eligible for Dual Enrollment

# ONE SUMMER CHICAGO: EARN & LEARN

A "paid-to-learn" model for expanding One Summer Chicago

**Jessica Jones**

## WHY IT MATTERS

In last year's One Summer Chicago Report (OSC), 70% of participants listed attaining a 2- or 4-year college degree as their personal goal. However, only 18% reported receiving college prep experience over their OSC term. OSC is available to teens and young adults ages 14 to 24, meaning not all participants are currently enrolled in school. In fact, in 2018 1,300 OSC students ages 18 to 24 were not enrolled in any post-secondary education. These are the students that the City is at risk of losing from the pipeline: they are no longer in high school, are not enrolled in college, but are still engaged with the city through OSC. Many of these students do/did not meet the requirements of Dual Enrollment and thus, many do not have a clear foot-in-the-door to future educational opportunities.

City Colleges' Developmental Math and English courses are not taken for earned credit, but are courses for those students who did not test into credit-bearing Math and English. If these courses stand in the way of a student's City Colleges enrollment, they must pay to take a course that effectively sets them further back from their goalpost.

## HOW IT WORKS

One Summer Chicago: Earn & Learn offers a "paid-to-learn" opportunity, making City Colleges' Developmental Math and English courses a participant's summer job. While the program could be made available for high school juniors and seniors, this avenue is primarily meant to capture the 1,300 OSC students who are not enrolled in any post-secondary education.

Instead of losing these young adults after their summer with OSC, this program would offer the alternate option to take Developmental Math and/or Development English courses on a City Colleges campus for 20 hours per week over a six week term (for both transitional courses) – instead of a traditional OSC work placement. Students would get paid the minimum wage as if they were placed with a City Agency. Similar to a workforce position, if a student misses class, they would not get paid. However, students would receive a U-Pass Ventra card with waived transportation fees for the summer. Students who pass the course(s) could receive an additional monetary bonus.

This program would allocate funds that City Colleges has set aside for OSC students, and instead, pay them to take courses that typically limit their ability to enroll. Passing these courses would equate to having to take and pass placement tests, and would provide a clear stepping stone for enrolling in CCC in the fall or spring after OSC. While paying students to take Developmental Math/English courses may sound counterintuitive, this conversation was already started at Olive Harvey College, and has been rolled out in states like Louisiana.

## NEXT STEPS

- Collaborate with City Colleges and City Education Policy staff to develop strategic plan
- Determine payment amounts for attending and passing summer Developmental courses

# TRANSFORM PUBLIC SPACES INTO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Encouraging language development & engaging children to read

**Jeanette Agustin**

## WHY IT MATTERS

It is estimated that 54% of Chicago Public School students do not meet reading standards and 61% of low-income households do not own any children's books. Research has shown that by the time a child is 4 years old, advantaged children have both more quantity and more quality words addressed to them than the most disadvantaged. Exposing children to language early on is critical for brain development and academic success. The proposal is for the City to transform public spaces to learning opportunities, encouraging language development and playful thinking.

## HOW IT WORKS

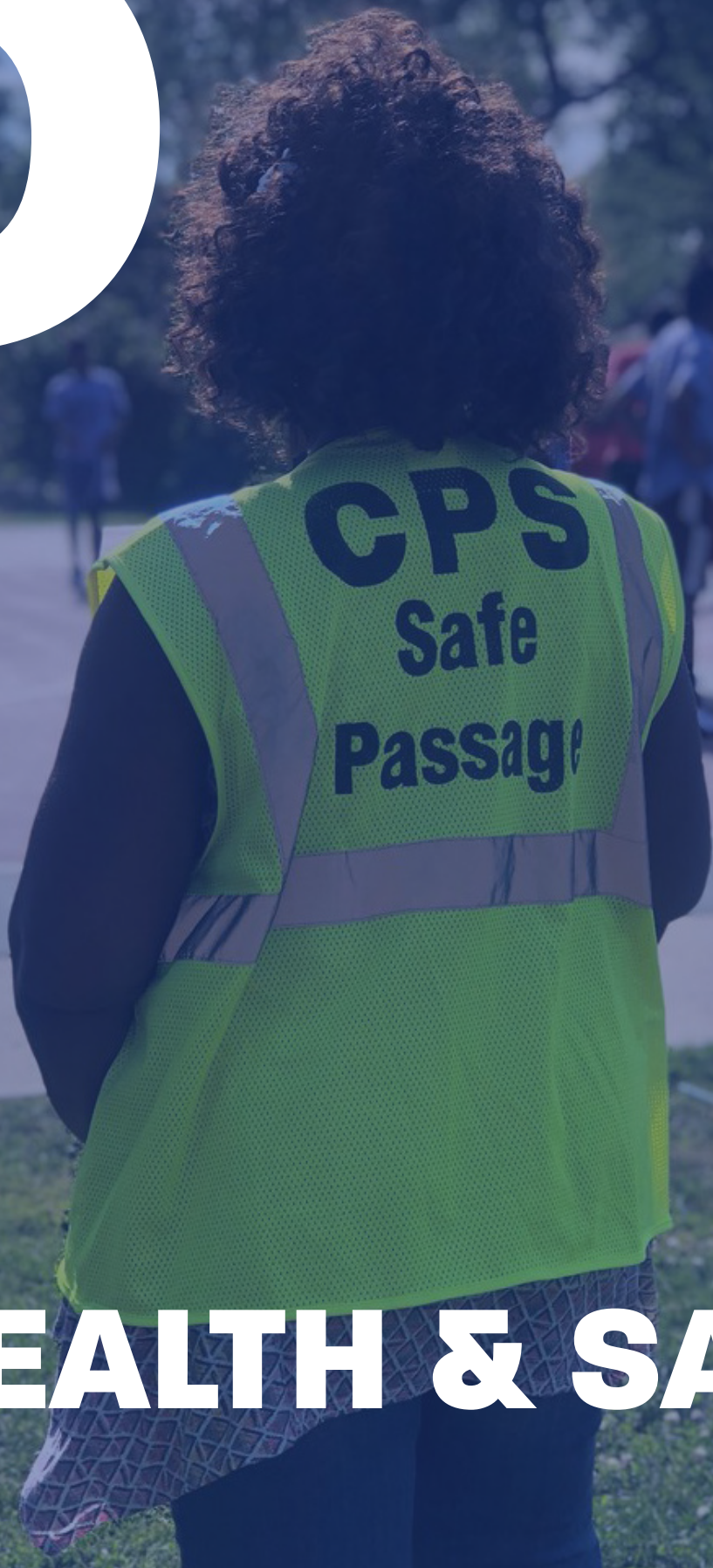
In 2017, 11 city agencies and departments formed the Early Learning Interagency Team (ELIT) to collaborate on issues that impact children. ELIT will target public areas and activate those areas as opportunities for learning and parent-child interactions. Public spaces like parks and public transportation stops will integrate letter/number puzzles, magnet letter mazes, still pictures to tell a story, and interactive playful patterns. Additionally, buses, trains and public transportation stops will encourage reading by providing free books in areas where books are not typically located. Providing books in these settings will reach children that may not have a library card or are not visiting the library. This will not only promote reading, but also promote using idle time while riding the CTA. Concurrently, the City will promote visiting public libraries and signing up for a library card by providing a ReadBox (functions like RedBox but instead of using a credit/debit card a library card account is used). This would also be an avenue to promote City Key library card capabilities.

These transformed public spaces will be reinforced with community events and campaign ads to emphasize the impact that talking, singing and reading to children early on has on their language development and ultimately, their academic success. These events and ads will educate parents on how early language experiences set the foundation for a child's future. The community events will go beyond the scope of the classroom setting, engaging parent-child interactions in activities typically not considered educational activities. The primary target areas will be communities that are considered the most disadvantaged as they will be the ones that need the most encouragement and engagement. This transforming initiative will ensure that Chicago continuously works towards improving the success for every child before they even enter Pre-K.

## NEXT STEPS

- Determine the community areas that are most disadvantaged and target those areas first
- Identify potential sponsors to sponsor community events, books and play space for parks
- Create an advertising campaign that outlines the importance of parents engaging children in play and reading
- Collaborate with partners that can design and build the play spaces and ReadBox

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**HEALTH & SAFETY**



# CHICAGO HEALTHY CITY INITIATIVE

Making healthcare accessible for all of Chicago

**Jeanette Agustin**

## WHY IT MATTERS

According to the Chicago Department of Public Health, there is an estimated 14.3% that remain uninsured in the city. Every year, hospitals are faced with hundreds of millions of dollars from uncompensated care. Simultaneously, there are uninsured individuals that are not receiving the appropriate care, only treating symptoms as they become too severe to handle with home remedies. These financial and health implications negatively affect the state of the City. Cook County Health & Hospitals System, CCHHS, offers CareLink which is a free program that helps Cook County residents cover the cost of care at any CCHHS facility. CareLink assigns a primary care provider to an individual and provides preventative care. However, CareLink is limited to CCHHS facilities. Chicago needs to focus on creating a healthy city to ensure a stable economy and healthy productive workforce.

## HOW IT WORKS

The City would partner with community organizations advocating for universal healthcare to address the health disparity gap. The City's partnership with these organizations would leverage the organizations' ability to expand CareLink. The ability to get a meeting with a CEO of a hospital would be simplified by having the support of the City. Expanding CareLink to other hospitals would allow for: 1) eligible participants of CareLink to seek care outside of CCHHS system and 2) hospitals to share the responsibility of making healthcare accessible to everyone. In the long run, providing healthcare access to all would result in a healthier city, preventing diseases and not just treating them. As a result, expanding CareLink to include public and private hospitals in Chicago would benefit the economy of the city and its workers.

The financial implications of expanding CareLink are enormous, but the City could assist with financing the programs by implementing a corporate head tax. CareLink is already subsidized by fees individuals make on a sliding scale. All not-for-profit hospitals are required by law to provide charity care to maintain their not-for-profit status. Consequently, hospitals budget a certain amount to be used to cover these uncompensated costs. These hospitals are already providing a form of charity care, but by having them participate in CareLink the concept of charity care would be streamlined.

## NEXT STEPS

- Identify community organizations that are advocating for healthcare access
- Form partnerships with public and private hospitals incentivizing participation in CareLink
- Implement and determine an appropriate corporate head tax to assist with funding costs
- Educate the public on available health insurance choices
- Inform the public that CareLink exists and is an option for them as a last resort

# MIND THE WATER HAZARDS

Additional signage along the Chicago Lakefront to warn residents of risks due to rip currents and undertows

Mary Nicol

## WHY IT MATTERS

Free and easy access to Chicago's twenty six miles of lakefront is one of the City's greatest features, but it also presents significant risk. Loss of life is a serious concern as evidenced by the tragic drowning of a young Chicago resident on July 6th, 2018.

Rip currents and undertows are significant factors in fatal drownings on Lake Michigan, and there is an increased likelihood that rip currents occur near Chicago's many jetties or piers. However, little awareness exists around these hazards, and residents frequently swim when lifeguards are not present, or when hazardous conditions exist.

## HOW IT WORKS

Despite possible fines for swimming at Chicago's beaches when lifeguards are not present, many residents still swim, and often jump off of jetties and piers. Through surveying several Chicago beaches, no signage regarding water hazards were found. Permanent year-round signage at Chicago's beaches that make residents aware of the hazards of swimming in Lake Michigan, particularly near jetties or piers, and how to act if caught in a hazard, will reduce the risk of fatal drownings.

A large bright sign should be placed near the main entry of each of Chicago's beaches, along with additional signs or paint-stenciled warnings on the piers and jetties where residents are likely to jump off the structures. The use of symbols is critical to reach non-English speaking residents, and to represent how to escape hazards.

Following the drowning on July 6th, 80 signs were placed on lifeguard perches along the Lake warning residents not to swim when lifeguards are not on duty. The cost was \$236.75 per sign placed (sign production and labor costs included). Implementation of additional signs to warn residents of water hazards would cost around \$19,000 plus ongoing maintenance costs.

## NEXT STEPS

- Immediate: Chicago Park District identifies strategic location of signs, focusing on areas where the most dangerous hazards often form, designs the sign, and places them accordingly
- Longer Term: Chicago Park District continues their evaluation process of how to use swim lessons and technology to train and warn residents to be better prepared for water hazards

# NURSING HOME GRADES

A system of signs that would display the inspectional results of skilled nursing facilities

**Marianne Rofail**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Chicago needs to undertake an active role in promulgating awareness of substandard nursing home facilities. Currently, Chicago contains 185 nursing homes certified by Medicare & Medicaid, excluding privatized entities. Of these, 40% currently pose below-average deficiencies that are in violation of state and federal regulatory standards. It is therefore incumbent on the City to foster compliance while providing knowledge to Chicagoans of the facilities' status quos.

## HOW IT WORKS

The City does not currently post the inspectional status of a nursing home; nor does any other US municipality. This would be a new step in creating prominent awareness for the public. Inspections are conducted annually, statewide by the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, but these results are never physically displayed. A sign containing the inspection grade of the given year, posted in a conspicuous manner, would create a dualistic mechanism of both accountability and education.

Displayed signage can readily provide an indication of facility status. There are four enforcement deficiency levels, stipulated at the federal level: no actual harm with potential for minimal harm; no actual harm with a potential for more than minimal harm that is not immediate jeopardy; actual harm that is not immediate jeopardy; immediate jeopardy to resident health or safety. A number correlating to each deficiency would represent the given inspection, with 1 representing least severity and 4 representing highest severity. This numerical score representing the inspection results would be displayed on a sign posted at or near the facility's main entrance.

## NEXT STEPS

- The City would require that all SNFs (skilled nursing facilities) within Chicago post, conspicuously, this sign at all times, until the next inspection takes place
- The Chicago Department of Public Health would be the appropriate entity to implement this posting system
- CDPH can also utilize this system as a platform for penalization, fining those facilities that refrain from prominently and continuously posting their inspectional grades

# SCHOOL SHOOTINGS PREVENTION

An interventionist approach targeting the behavioral & contributory causes of mass shootings at high schools

**Marianne Rofail**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Chicago needs a preventative strategy for school shootings because teens can access guns in the home. Child Protection Laws in Illinois only mandate that a firearm owner lock the weapon if there are minors under the age of fourteen in the home. Therefore, pursuant to 720 ILCS 5 § 24-9, it is lawful for a parent or guardian to leave a gun in an unsecured or unlocked location where there are 14- to 17-year-olds in the household. Students struggling with mental or emotional instability whose parents/legal guardians have a firearm in the home are at risk of inflicting harm upon themselves or other students/school personnel.

Amongst school shootings where at least four people were wounded or killed, 53% of these incidents were conducted using a gun acquired from the child's home. While Chicago Public Schools do have a protocol in place for response to an active shooter, this does not preclude the possibility of a mass shooting taking place. The proliferation of school shootings across the US, particularly the two mass school shootings this year, is an alarming trend that Chicago must shield its schools against.

## HOW IT WORKS

**Part I: The 'My Classmate's Keeper' Campaign**

The first component of this program is augmenting CPS' current safety initiatives with a campaign that intervenes upon discovery of warning signs. According to FBI analysts of mass shooters, warning signs include preoccupation with guns and gun violence, isolation, behavior changes, mental-health issues, and drugs /alcohol use. Classmates and friends of a respective student would be most privy to such warning signs. Whether discovered in social media, in-person discussions, or sheer observation, students would notify their teacher or school psychologist of the particular warning sign. From there, the student would be provided the appropriate therapeutic counseling to avert any dangerous action. Supplementing this therapy would be long-term mentorship, to ensure the child's rehabilitation. In this way, the causative roots of mass shootings are addressed through intervention.

**Part II: Parental Pledging**

Because parents are key stakeholders in this policy issue, garnering their involvement is particularly instrumental. Parents whose children have exhibited disciplinary problems on a recurrent basis can pledge, voluntarily, that their child will not have access to any firearms in the home, even if they exceed the statutory age minimum. This pledge would be informally written, maintained under confidentiality by the school.

## NEXT STEPS

- Collaborate with CPS' Office of Social & Emotional Learning, and pilot this program at CPS' trauma-informed schools
- Utilize CPS' recent recruitment of 160 social workers and 94 special education case managers to help provide necessary resources

# SECURE THE CTA AGAINST TERRORIST ATTACKS

Technology, design guidelines & communication strategies to protect CTA riders

**Matteo Vanella**

## WHY IT MATTERS

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) carries about 1.7 million people each day, being the second largest transit system in the country. Because the CTA provides fast mass transit service, it may be chosen by terrorists as a target with a potentially high number of casualties, as well as anonymity. Besides human casualties, a terrorist attack on the CTA rail system would have negative consequences for the entire city, such as significant reduction in tourism, a decrease in transit ridership, a possible economic slowdown, and a general paranoia among the population.

## HOW IT WORKS

**Technology:** Composed of 1,190 rail cars that run on 222 miles of tracks serving 144 stations, the CTA rail system is too big and too complex to be controlled solely by humans. The fact is that no team, however large, can control the 5,000 cameras in rail cars and 3,000 in stations that the CTA has. But computers can. While human patrolling is a necessary action, technology allows a more efficient control of public transit networks. The installation of surveillance software based on pattern or facial recognition that can constantly analyze the CTA's 5,000 cameras would be the first step to this solution. This software can detect suspicious activities, odd behaviors, or nervous passengers. There is currently available technology that can also see through everyday clothing and identify shapes of guns or other kind of weapons, as well as software that determines in a few short seconds whether an object contains explosives. This idea also recommends the installation of a detection system of chemical and biological threats. These are relatively cheap and easy to install. Some systems are also capable of decontaminating trains and stations of most biological agents in case of exposure.

**Design:** It is important to eliminate all spaces where people can prepare an attack without being seen – such as public phones, vending machines, and public restrooms. Sloped tops can be added to Ventra vending machines to reduce the likelihood that an explosive can be placed on the top of the machine. On cars, spaces located next to the operator's cabin must be closed, as those who stand in that area can easily prepare an attack without being seen.

**Communication:** Two factors that influence the willingness of passengers to report a suspicious package or odd behavior are the ease of doing so and how they will be treated by agency employees. We must implement safe and reliable reporting mechanisms, improve customer service treatment, and provide a mechanism for customers to notify suspicious activity or abandoned packages via SMS.

## NEXT STEPS

- Create a joint collaboration unit with CPD, CTA, and Mayor's Office
- Use the new ride-hailing fee to fund security improvements against terrorist threats
- Create a long-term counter terrorism plan for the CTA

6

**SUSTAINABILITY**



# COMMUNITY GARDENS ON VACANT LOTS

Empowering residents to create local gardens

Ryan Fitzsimons

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Chicago currently owns almost 15,000 vacant lots scattered mostly across the South and West Sides. These vacant lots depress property values by creating eyesores and impose a financial cost on the city in maintaining them. Currently, there is no formalized mechanism in place for neighborhood residents to create a garden with legal standing on these vacant lots. While you see some gardens being created through the Large Lots Program, this requires a property owner to purchase the lot and then pay the necessary taxes. By allowing vacant lots to be used for community gardens, residents will maintain the space and renters especially will be provided with a unique opportunity to improve their neighborhood.

## HOW IT WORKS

To make this program a success, community groups should first prove that they are organized. An organized group should include 3 head gardeners, 10 other interested gardeners, and one community organization partner. Once this organization has been demonstrated, a group should be able to use city owned vacant lots for a nominal fee for up to five years with the option of renewal. If the plot is not being maintained, the land would return to the city.

Much of the infrastructure that is needed to make this program a success is already in place. Following the dissolution of the Department of the Environment, a community group arose called the Chicago Community Gardeners Association (CCGA). CCGA took on some of the previous responsibilities of the Department of the Environment and currently provides several resources to gardening groups including technical assistance, seedlings, and information. In speaking with leadership of this group, they were very interested in this idea and would be willing to help gardens become established.

With the help of CCGA, after a community garden has become established and proven that it is self-sustaining, a different organization called NeighborSpace could help to handle the responsibility of property ownership. NeighborSpace is the only non-profit urban land trust in Chicago that assists in providing basic insurance, access to water, and links to supporting networks. Community gardens, however, would only move onto NeighborSpace once the city had decided that the garden should become permanent.

## NEXT STEPS

- Create an application for use of city-owned vacant land, requiring a letter from the Alderman approving the garden (to make more appealing to City Council)
- Identify several community areas to pilot this program. Ideally, the Chicago Community Gardener's Association would identify the areas with the greatest demand
- Analyze the results of the first year of the program to make corrections and determine whether it should be expanded beyond the initial pilot areas

# FRESH PRODUCE OPTIONS FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Using community shared agriculture to improve health outcomes

**Eric Mayo**

## WHY IT MATTERS

Chicago families, especially those on the South and West Sides, have trouble accessing fresh produce. This leads to poor eating habits. According to Healthy Chicago 2.0, less than 30 percent of adults reported eating the recommended serving of fruits and vegetables, and one in five kindergarteners enrolled in Chicago Public Schools were obese. It is also no surprise that neighborhoods lacking fresh produce also have higher rates of chronic disease.

Most current solutions involve a mobile produce unit, which travels from neighborhood to neighborhood to sell fresh fruits and vegetables. However, in order to purchase produce, customers must be physically present the one time per week the unit is in their neighborhood. Many working families don't have that type of flexibility.

The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model provides a potential solution. Members of a CSA pay up-front so that the farmer has capital early in the growing season, and in return receive a portion of the farm's produce. Surveys of CSA members in both Baltimore and California have shown that membership in a CSA led to increased consumption of fruits and vegetables. By subsidizing CSA shares for underserved communities, the city can incentivize healthy eating habits and lessen incidences of chronic disease.

## HOW IT WORKS

Two partnerships must be developed in order for this program to be successful. First, the city should contract with a CSA to purchase produce shares. While the city will cover the initial cost, the city will recoup some of the cost when they sell the produce to residents. Second, the city should partner with a community center or other neighborhood establishment to assist the city in recruiting families and to serve as a drop-off point for the produce. Additionally, other community organizations and local elected officials should be leveraged to increase outreach and encourage participation in the program.

During the growing season, families would sign up a week in advance and pay for their produce. The next week, families will be able to pick up their produce from the drop-off point at any point that day, and would have the ability to pay for the following week's delivery at that time.

## NEXT STEPS

- Identify potential aldermanic and community partners
- Determine capacity constraints at current CSAs



# GENERATE ELECTRICITY FROM MOVING VEHICLES

Converting kinetic energy into clean electricity

Parag Dassharma

## WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Chicago has so far been able to meet 40% of its target in reducing greenhouse gas emission to comply with Mayor Emanuel's commitment to Paris Agreement. Meanwhile, Chicago ranks twelfth among large cities for fastest average wind speed. This wasted wind, when utilized in doing useful work, can cut emissions from energy produced with fossil fuels and lead us to fulfill our commitment. Overhead highway LEDs, traffic signals and other public amenities can be powered by cleaner forms of electricity by installing small wind turbines in highways and two-way streets. The turbines spin due to air turbulence generated by wind of passing cars and trucks and can harvest electricity from kinetic energy.

Based on published research, the cost of installing one turbine is approximately \$1,600, and each unit is capable of generating seven kilowatts of electricity a day. Power generated annually by four units of such turbine is adequate to meet the annual electricity consumption for an average U.S. residential utility customer. In addition to its energy-generating capabilities, the turbine can be designed with filter sheets that trap contaminated particles and emissions in the polluted air.

## HOW IT WORKS

A vertical wind turbine capable of capturing wind in any direction is placed along roadways that have high volumes of fast-moving traffic. The turbine stands about two-and-a-half meters tall and is made of recyclable carbon fiber, with lightweight blades that are curved and angled so that maximum surface area is exposed to the wind draft from oncoming vehicles. Additionally, since the wind source can fluctuate, the design of the wind turbine must include power storage and a system to distribute the generated power effectively. The electricity generated can be stored in batteries in the form of direct current (DC), which can be converted to alternating current (AC) through an inverter. This electricity can then be used for lighting street LEDs or sold to the grid.

## NEXT STEPS

- Collaborate with CDOT, IDOT and other agencies to plan placement location for the turbines such that it has little negative impact to traffic and no disruption to bird and bee migration
- The city should collaborate with interested energy companies to form a partnership in developing the infrastructure. The energy company should highly subsidize the city's utility bills for the power used from these turbines and as an incentive, the company should be permitted to enjoy a profit by selling 35% of the energy at a discounted rate to lower income areas like South Lawndale and Riverdale. The city can raise additional capital through either private partnerships or advertising revenue.
- Identify a vendor to design the turbine such that cars would cut through enough area of the turbine circumference to create adequate turbulence. The turbines should incorporate several safety provisions into the design, and should have a pleasing appearance with landscape gardens surrounding them on the medians.

# TRANSFORM PILLARS & CITY WALLS INTO VERTICAL GARDENS

Dramatically reduce air pollution

Parag Dassharma & Mallory Traver

## WHY IT MATTERS

In 2018, the City of Chicago was given an "F" grade for air pollution levels from the American Lung Association. Chicago has moved from the 26th to the 22nd most polluted city in the United States as air pollution continues to rise in the city. A solution to the air pollution problem is the installation of vertical gardens on CTA pillars and empty facades of city walls in areas with high congestion. These plants can reduce the levels of toxic gases by 50% to 80% within a 24 hour period. It's been reported that gardens can help to reduce temperature by as much as eight degrees and can decrease noise pollution by as much as ten decibels. By focusing efforts on lower air quality neighborhoods, such as Little Village and Calumet, the health of Chicagoans could drastically improve, as well as beautify the city. Mexico City has installed similar gardens raising investment by reaching out to a group of businessmen who were interested in sponsoring. The City of Chicago should also pursue private investment to raise funds for this initiative, in exchange for advertising space, saving taxpayer dollars.

## HOW IT WORKS

Constructing these vertical gardens require developing a structural frame on the columns of pillars, avoiding direct contact with the hydrophone technology and the concrete structure. This ensures the urban infrastructure is not damaged. Insulating materials are then added to the outside along with layers of recycled plastic cloth, and a fully automated irrigation system. This system irrigates water and nutrients through columns each night, and tracks water, light, and temperature levels through a remote monitoring system. After the structure is completed, plants are incorporated into the structure. Plants that are commonly used on these structures are epiphytes, many types of mosses and lichens, orchids, ferns, and bromeliads. These plants generally do not root in the ground, making it ideal for these gardens. Using hydroponic systems like this also uses around 90% less water than conventional soil-based systems. Rainwater collected in the process is also used through "micro-spraying" to keep plants watered.

## NEXT STEPS

- Bring CTA, CDOT, IDOT and other agencies on board by overcoming any initial resistance, assuring them that the plants will grow around metal frames, which will be buffered with fabric to avoid damaging the pillar structures
- Raise 5 million dollars which should be adequate to cover around 350 CTA pillars with area up to 25 thousand square meters of vertical gardens
- Identify areas that have the highest congestion and air pollution levels, and evaluate vendors to do the installation
- Finally measure the reduction in toxic exhaust fumes and noise pollution with the help of Array of Things. Based on the success, this could be scaled in other parts of the city by encouraging more public and non-public entities to invest in these gardens.



# TECH & INNOVATION

# 2020 CENSUS: BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Increasing census participation by deploying hotspots & tablets in hard-to-count areas

**J.D. Van Slyke**

## WHY IT MATTERS

In 2020, for the first time, individuals can complete the census online. Yet, a high correlation exists between “hard-to-count” communities and neighborhoods with limited internet access. According to an analysis by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, every person counted by the census translates to \$2,000 a year in federal funds. Several changes at the federal level bring new challenges for cities pursuing an accurate count. Budget cuts at the Census Bureau mean fewer enumerators; permanent legal residents – a significant source of in-demand language skills for the 2010 count – are no longer eligible to work as nonresponse workers; and an untested proposed citizenship question will likely decrease participation from undocumented individuals. Furthermore, a declining population in the Chicago region makes an effective count even more critical. While new capabilities will allow individuals to complete the census online, Chicago’s digital divide persists.

## HOW IT WORKS

Chicago needs a digital strategy to maximize census participation. Investing in mobile hotspots can increase census accessibility for hard-to-count communities. In 2010, the state of Minnesota led the region with the highest census response rate. For the upcoming count, Minnesota allocated \$100,000 to purchase hotspots and iPads, which will be funneled to community-based organizations in areas with hard-to-count populations. I propose that Chicago adopts a similar strategy by creating a turn-key program for community ambassadors to quickly assemble pop-up census action centers at organizations, churches, grocery stores, and community events.

The City would invest in hotspots and tablets and assemble pop-up census action kits. Minimal equipment and simple set-up would allow city staff to move digital assets to optimal locations based on available data. In 2010, Chicago started an ambassador training program to equip community leaders with tools to champion census participation. The City could retool this program to train individuals to check out kits, assemble pop-up census action centers, and train volunteers to help residents complete the census. Chicago Public Libraries are already piloting a program for residents to check out hotspots at select locations. The kits would be distributed to community ambassadors using this existing infrastructure. Post-census, any additional assets would be donated to participating libraries to expand digital access for residents. Complete Count Committees could provide guidance on the best uses for digital assets.

## NEXT STEPS

- Conduct additional research to assess opportunities for partnerships
- Explore the possibility of partnering with public libraries in hard-to-count communities by expanding Chicago’s hotspot lending program
- Partner with corporations, such as Microsoft or Apple, to secure in-kind donations to further reduce costs

# AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE CONGESTION PRICING

Implementing charges for low-occupancy AV trips – while raising revenue for transit & active transportation

**Mark Bennett & Janice Hu**

## WHY IT MATTERS

At its full potential, autonomous vehicle (AV) technology could bring about a transportation revolution on a scale not seen since the creation of the federal highway system. This revolution could bring benefits to cities, but it could also bring enormous harm. One critical issue is a predicted increase in total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and congestion as a result of zero or low-occupancy driverless vehicles. More congested streets mean decreased accessibility for residents who rely on surface-level transit, decreased livability, increased carbon emissions and lost economic potential. Numerous studies using advanced software modeling have predicted significant increases in VMT, including a study from consultants Fehr & Peers who found that, “VMT increased in all nine models when assuming no regulatory requirement for ridesharing.” What policy tools does Chicago have to discourage single-occupancy or zero-occupancy autonomous vehicles?

## HOW IT WORKS

This plan has two objectives: Prevent the predicted increase in congestion and diminished accessibility while also lowering current congestion levels. We recommend the city assess per-mile fees for zero- and single-occupant autonomous vehicles within city limits and specific congestion zones. This concept evolves from already accepted HOV lane systems, but extends to a larger urban network. With sufficient justification that AVs will increase VMT and, therefore, city costs, AV manufacturers should be required to install technology to track and report occupancy and mileage on public roads. The ultimate goal is to encourage shared automobile trips and discourage standing or moving “ghost” vehicles. Further, we recommend the city use the new revenue generated to benefit travel modes intended to give residents alternatives to single-occupancy automobile trips—including transit, active transportation infrastructure and subsidized ridesharing in transit-poor communities. We also believe these policies will reduce the number of cars on the road and reduce parking demand, freeing up land for alternate uses and lowering construction costs. This proposal does not debate whether AVs are good or bad, but rather that they are inevitable and must be properly regulated.

## NEXT STEPS

We are in a window of opportunity: AV technology is on the near horizon, and we must implement policies now while adoption among residents is low and regulation is still politically feasible. Recommended next steps include:

- Compile research projecting anticipated congestion increases and subsequent city costs
- Explore technology required to track mileage traveled and vehicle occupancy
- Research necessary price points to induce desired behavior
- Explore appropriate departmental oversight, including CDOT and the City Clerk’s Office
- Draft necessary legislation

# CHICAGO DIGITAL FELLOWS

Bolstering the City's tech capacity to help modernize government

**Colin Erhardt & Erica Pincus**

## WHY IT MATTERS

City residents increasingly expect to be able to interact with their government through well-functioning digital channels. Further, technology, when implemented with intention, can serve as a force-multiplier for the City's work. Like many municipal governments, Chicago faces challenges with the complexity of implementing new technology projects to better serve the individual modernization needs of City departments. While the Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) manages most of these initiatives, they face resource and human capital constraints that limit their ability to meet these ever-increasing expectations. At the same time, there are a growing number of individuals with tech talent, and tech startups creating civic solutions, who do not know how to navigate the City's complicated hiring processes.

## HOW IT WORKS

Chicago can follow the lead of other tech-savvy cities like Austin, TX to create a tech fellowship program that serves as an in-house consultancy for the City's departments and sister agencies. Fellows will be based out of DoIT, and will work with departments as internal consultants on a project-by-project basis. The departments will pay an hourly fee for these consulting contracts at a lower rate than standard vendor contracts. Fellows will be employed for 18 months, paid for by budget offsets. DoIT currently spends over 12 million dollars annually on third-party services; shifting just 7% of current spending on IT contracts would provide enough funding for a pilot program of eight Fellows. The City could target young, hungry, and hard-working tech specialists looking to directly impact their local community for a short-period of time. This could also serve as an opportunity to attract and retain tech talent in Chicago. In addition to gaining an opportunity to apply their skills to mission-driven work and build a network in civic tech, Fellows would be paired with a mentor from the thriving civic tech community in Chicago.

## NEXT STEPS

- DoIT sends out request for projects to validate the need (similar to the Mayoral Fellowship)
- DoIT develops a job description and application, integrating best practices from other government digital service fellowships
- DoIT gains approval for a line item in the City's budget for the pilot program (which will be offset later via savings in vendor contracts that would otherwise occur)
- DoIT and HR recruit eight Fellows with diverse skills to pilot the program
- DoIT confirms projects, and works with the relevant departments to scope them
- DoIT sets up a process to measure/evaluate the success of the Fellowship, as quantified by vendor contract offsets, efficiency gains, and user experience metrics of products
- In the longer term, DoIT would hire a Program Manager to run the Fellowship program

# EXPAND THE CITY'S USE OF DATA SCIENCE EFFORTS

Partner with local talent to support machine learning projects

Vidal Anguiano Jr.

## WHY IT MATTERS

Private sector organizations have been using machine learning to predict and prevent failures in production lines, forecast consumer demand, and detect fraud. While governments can and have benefited from using machine learning to improve operational efficiencies and better serve residents, governments are often limited in their capacity to implement machine learning solutions due to the costs of hiring contractors or attracting and retaining talent. Despite these challenges, governments at all levels, including the City of Chicago, have accomplished small, but measurable successes in using data science. As an example, in early 2016, the Chicago Public Health Department, in partnership with DoIT data scientists, tested the use of a predictive model to prioritize restaurants for inspection. Compared to “business as usual”, inspectors identified restaurants with critical violations an entire week sooner when compared to conventional prioritization of restaurants for inspection.

Chicago, home to many universities including some of the nation’s top institutions, has much to gain by cultivating and formalizing partnerships that can breed a sustainable model for implementing data science projects across City departments. The model proposed here is to formalize a partnership with the University of Chicago’s Harris School of Public Policy (the Harris School) and, specifically, the Harris School’s Computational Analysis and Public Policy (MSCAPP) program, which specializes in training policy practitioners to scope and execute machine learning solutions for the public and non-profit sectors.

## HOW IT WORKS

DoIT Data Scientists and MSCAPP students can work together to develop a program model that best supports the effective scoping and execution of data science projects. So as not to start from scratch, the program can be heavily modeled after the Data Science for Social Good program, a tried and tested model for scoping and executing data science projects in government. Over the course of an academic year, 2-3 projects can be carried out to fruition and can further demonstrate the value in investing in data science initiatives in the City. For students, these projects will offer invaluable hands-on experience and direct experience with working in municipal government. As an added benefit, the program can serve as a talent pipeline as the City seeks to expand its data-skilled workforce.

## NEXT STEPS

- Develop a detailed proposal addressed to DoIT Commissioner, Danielle DuMerer, which covers the potential structure of the program, definition of procedures, timelines, and intended outcomes
- Co-design a student-led organization with DoIT data scientists and DSSG to ensure common alignment of skills development, project planning, technical tools, and data practices
- Conduct a skills gap assessment to identify skills growth areas that will best support the City’s data science initiatives

# SMART TOURISM FOR A SMART CHICAGO

## Attracting International visitors through innovation

**Matteo Vanella**

### WHY IT MATTERS

In 2017, Chicago received only 1.4 million foreign visitors, a relatively low number compared to cities like New York (12 million), Vegas (8 million), Miami (8 million), Los Angeles (7 million), San Diego (6 million), San Francisco (3 million), Houston (2.5 million) or Boston (2.5 million). From 2012 to 2017, the number of international visitors who came to Chicago grew by only 1%, while in Houston that number grew 22%, in Orlando 17%, in Miami 15%, and in Los Angeles 11%. In Chicago, the few international tourists who visit the city spend, on average, more than twice as much as domestic visitors (\$2,716, compared to \$1,084). If Chicago received \$3 million international visitors, as many as San Francisco, this would add approximately 1 billion dollars into the City's economy annually.

### HOW IT WORKS

Chicago is implementing Smart technology in several areas of government; they help achieve resource optimization, effective governance, sustainability, and quality of life. It is now time to implement Smart technology for tourism to attract international visitors to the city.

Traditional television and print advertising is expensive and doesn't achieve an increase in the number of international tourists that visit Chicago. Many cities around the country and the globe are now implementing new analytical tools that allow knowing which potential travelers are most likely to choose a city as a destination. That allows targeting specific potential visitors in a more effective way. Smart marketing can be used to display ads, online text, visual ads, or Google search rankings. The use of social networks and digital platforms is very effective for promoting the city to specific travelers.

Tourism apps that track visitors through hotels, buses, trains, restaurants, museums, and other attractions can be also very useful. The data collected can be analyzed to improve visitor's experiences. Developing crowd-sourced applications by using tourist input could give valuable insight to destinations in capturing tourists' demand and tourists' complaints in timely manner.

### NEXT STEPS

- Create a Smart Tourism plan within Choose Chicago to boost the number of international visitors in the city. Incorporate current projects, such as the O'Hare Expansion plan and the O'Hare Express transportation service project, into the Smart Tourism plan.
- Update the city's image internationally, with a new clear and consistent communication campaign
- Implement smart technologies as apps, online displays ads, visual ads, Google search rankings, social networks, and crowd-sourced applications



# **NEW IDEAS 2018**

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A FELLOW



Special thanks to the Design Team: Jessica Jones, Fatema Chamak, and Matteo Vanella.

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