

NEW IDEAS

CITY OF CHICAGO



2019 MAYORAL FELLOWS

“No matter who you are or where you live...Chicago is now on a mission to join hands with you. We can all pull in the same direction to make Chicago better together.”

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot

Directors' Note

Fellows,

Congratulations on an exceptional summer. You joined the Mayor's Office at a crucial time, only three weeks into Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot's administration. As a Fellow, you've each had the opportunity to advance important policy initiatives during the Mayor's first 100 days in office, from helping launch the new Office of Equity and Racial Justice, to planning a vibrant Pride Reception and Parade, to supporting urgent reforms around ethics and aldermanic prerogative.

This summer, you've worked to address gentrification in Chicago neighborhoods, monitored the city's first-ever e-scooter pilot, prepared for the 2020 Census, and supported departments in planning for new practices like participatory budgeting and universal pre-kindergarten. Within the Mayor's Office, you've staffed events, built websites, written speeches, conducted research, and crunched numbers.

You also proposed a series of New Ideas, found in this book, that the City of Chicago should consider implementing. Your innovative policy proposals will inform work moving forward within the Mayor's Office and across the city's departments and sister agencies. All of your work has made Chicago a better, more equitable, more livable city. You have helped move us forward and the impact of your work will extend beyond your time as a Fellow.

Thank you for your contributions to this office and to our city. We hope that your time here has been meaningful, enlightening, and an experience that you will never forget. You have been a wonderful group with so much talent and such thoughtful questions and insights. We have all enjoyed having you here and working with you this summer. We know that you will continue to excel in all that you do.

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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

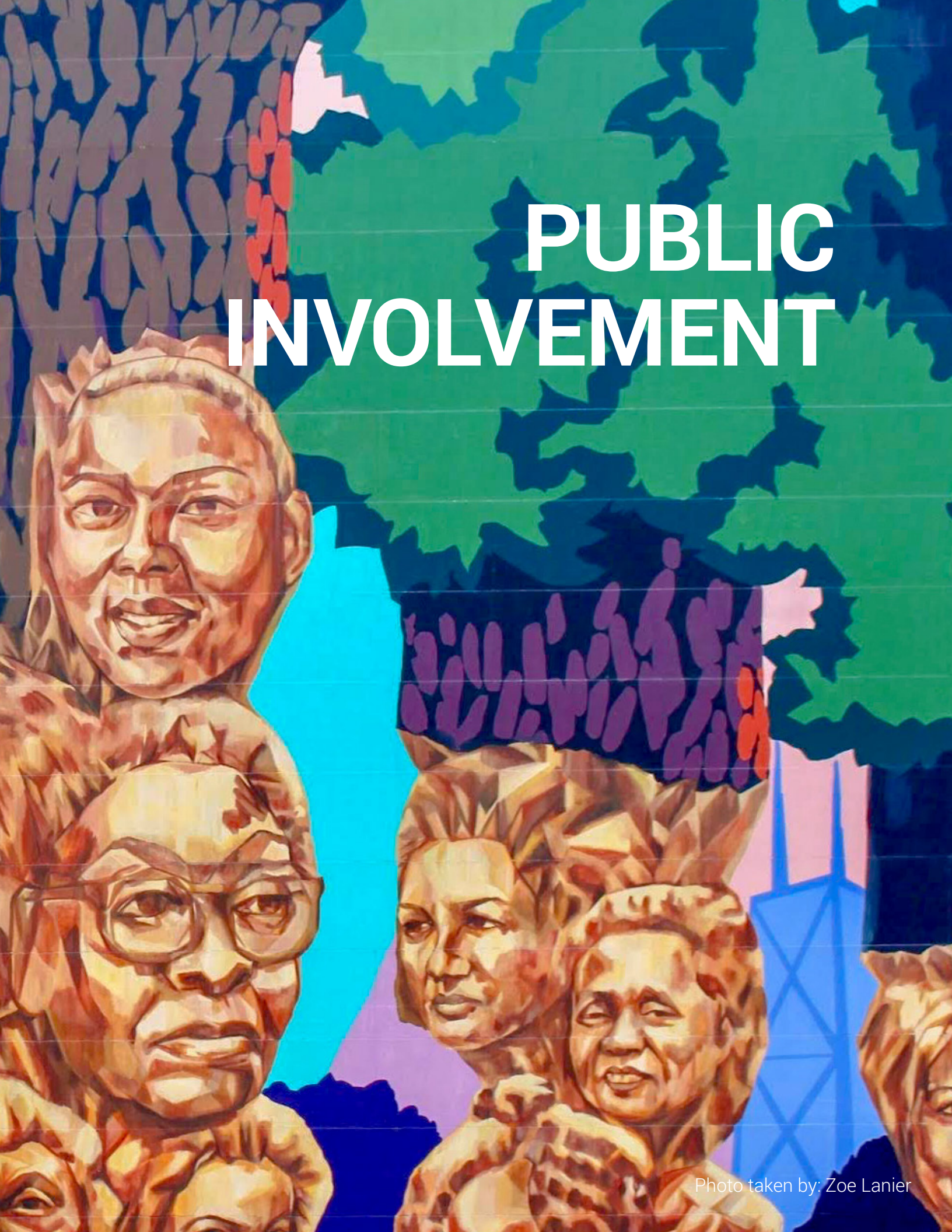


Photo taken by: Zoe Lanier

Chicago Campaign Cash

Empower all residents to participate and be represented in the democratic process

Allie Koolbeck & Ian Snyder

WHY IT MATTERS

Only 35.4% and 33% of registered Chicago voters cast ballots in the February and April 2019 municipal elections, respectively. Furthermore, the demographics of these individuals did not reflect Chicago's makeup. Just 7.3% of voters were ages 18 to 34, compared to 30% citywide. In many wards with primarily black, Latinx, and low-income populations, voter turnout ranged from as low as 23% to 29%. At the same time, diverse candidates often lack access to the funds necessary to run for office. Without intentional campaign spending and contribution limits, large donations dominate the fundraising space and drown out the voices of everyday Chicagoans.

HOW IT WORKS

The goal of a Chicago Campaign Cash program would be to increase and diversify political participation. The program would provide all voting-eligible Chicagoans with vouchers to donate to candidates running for City office. In the first phase, individuals would receive one \$25 voucher to donate to City Council candidates, and then, four years later, would receive two \$25 vouchers, one for City Council candidates and one for mayoral candidates. Candidates interested in funding their campaigns through Chicago Campaign Cash donations would need to collect \$4,000 (160 vouchers) to have voucher funds released to their campaigns. The City would also implement a campaign spending limit to

ensure that privately funded campaigns do not have an advantage over campaigns that run solely using Chicago Campaign Cash.

A similar initiative in Seattle increased political participation among younger and lower-income voters. The program resulted in a more ethnically diverse group of voters and donors in the local election and it encouraged more candidates to run. Based on these promising results, a Chicago Campaign Cash program can drive equitable political participation in Chicago so local government represents and embodies all voices.

WHAT NEXT?

- Study the feasibility of funding the Chicago Campaign Cash program through closing inefficiencies and unnecessary expenditures in city government.
- Develop and disseminate the universal campaign spending limits for any City Council or mayoral candidate.
- Create guidelines and educational materials for campaign finance reporting standards with which campaigns must comply to receive their voucher funds.
- Hold a series of community meetings to inform the public about the program and its potential benefits.

Chicago Connects

Transform government-community partnerships and expand community engagement

Colleen Canniff & James O'Brien

WHY IT MATTERS

Currently, there are limited institutional mechanisms for direct engagement and input between City government and residents. Coupled with low voter turnout and a legacy of corruption, this points to a municipal need for engaging with citizens in every way possible.

HOW IT WORKS

Chicago Connects would do exactly as the name says: connect Chicagoans with each other, civic leaders, municipal resources, and more. Modeled after the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' Community Resource Hub, the web-based service would provide a centralized framework for accessing community engagement information, tools, and platforms. Chicago Connects will consist of:

Information: The website would inform Chicagoans about citywide programs and initiatives in an accessible and transparent manner. A community calendar would provide centralized organization for all City events, whether citywide or neighborhood-centric. Additional components hosted on the website would include a monthly publication featuring news from municipal government, citywide events and initiatives, as well as neighborhood specific highlights, volunteer opportunities, and upcoming round tables. A civics hub would feature information on new policies and ordinances as well as a "get informed" toolbox with educational resources on Chicago government. This section would also link to "Chi 311."

Engagement: Chicagoans could engage with municipal government via a petition system whereby any member of the public could offer submissions. If the petition reached a certain signature threshold, it would warrant a public response from the Mayor's Office. Other features for engagement would include surveys, a comment system for city council agendas, databases for contacting community organizations and City agencies, and a community engagement toolbox.

Organization: To help constituents translate ideas into action, a space-finder section would connect aspiring organizers to event spaces. This would be complemented by community asset maps, which highlight available tools and resources in communities. The site would also provide information regarding grants, promotion of equity and language accessibility, starting non-profits, and available resources for youth programming and development.

WHAT NEXT?

- Engage with community stakeholders to ensure the effectiveness of Chicago Connects.
- Partner with Department of Innovation & Technology and Office of Community Engagement to build and promote the website.
- Designate a Digital Engagement Coordinator to operate the website.

Chicago Neighborhood Councils

Bringing legitimacy and confidence back to City Hall

Jesús A. Del Toro

WHY IT MATTERS

Disillusionment, frustration, and mistrust run rampant in the hearts of many Chicagoans. There is a clear lack of trust in City Hall, the Mayor's Office, and the Aldermanic system. Many of our communities feel that public officials have not had their best interests in mind. Ultimately, this culminated in the recent mayoral election rivaling the lowest voter turnout in the city's history. However, with a new administration and a mayor who has made it her mission to repair that trust, Chicago has a real opportunity for transformation. The creation of Chicago Neighborhood Councils (CNCs) will bring legitimacy and confidence back to local government by inviting our communities to weigh in on decisions affecting their neighborhoods.

HOW IT WORKS

The CNC system will challenge the City to bring together two forms of democracy: representative and participatory. CNC membership will consist of residents, business owners, and property owners who can be elected or appointed by the neighborhoods themselves. CNC members will have the opportunity to meet with the mayor to provide input on the development of the City budget, prior to its submission and approval by the City Council.

Additionally, CNCs will have the opportunity to submit Neighborhood Impact Statements in which they can outline their concerns regarding any project or policy pending before

City Council or a City agency. Under this proposal, CNCs will receive advance notice of projects or policy decisions that pertain to their neighborhoods so they can discuss them and voice the opinions of the neighborhood to the City before final decisions are made. The CNCs will play an advisory role by putting forth recommendations to the mayor, City Council, and other City departments on matters pertaining to their communities. Although the CNCs will act as advisory councils, they will offer an opportunity for the Mayor's Office to take a bold step towards guaranteeing that government is more responsive to local needs.

WHAT NEXT?

- Reach out to City officials from Los Angeles and New York City who have had success plugging the neighborhood council system into their city governments.
- Establish a steering committee led by the Chief Engagement Officer, the Chief Equity Officer, the Director of the Office of New Americans, and City Clerk for best-practice implementation of CNCs, as these entities are best equipped to support the operations of the CNCs.
- Contact key community organizations to propose the idea and gather their input.

City Hall Customer Service Center

A Customer Service Center to assist visitors seeking City services

Jana Cruz

WHY IT MATTERS

For many first-time visitors, City Hall can be a daunting place to navigate. Currently, there are Chicago Police Officers and Sheriff's Deputies staffing counters on either side of the building, but many visitors are not too eager to ask a uniformed official for help. A Customer Service Center in City Hall would lessen the stress of being in a city government building and eliminate some of the language barriers facing many non-English speakers.

The Customer Service Center would address the City of Chicago's priorities of promoting good governance and strengthening diversity and inclusion efforts.

HOW IT WORKS

The City Hall Customer Service Center would be located in the center of City Hall where the four hallways meet. This will allow visitors using any of the entrances on LaSalle, Randolph, Clark, or Washington Streets to quickly locate the Customer Service Center upon arrival. As a pilot program, the center would be set up as a counter equipped with two laptop computers and staffed by a minimum of two Customer Service Liaisons. The Liaisons will each need to be proficient in a language other than English to match the demographics of the city's population. Additionally, the Customer Service Center would be supported by an extended version of the current ChiTEXT auto response system. Once the Customer Service Center has identified the services a visitor is seeking, a

text message will be sent to the individual that contains information relevant to their City service of interest. The text message will include items such as departmental contact information, acceptable documents, fees, and any other relevant details that will facilitate the process of obtaining services. This will allow visitors to have instant reference to useful information rather than waiting for a URL link to load on their phone, which is how the current ChiTEXT system works.

The City Hall Customer Service Center will prevent visitors from wandering aimlessly into the building and ensure that they have a positive experience with City government.

WHAT NEXT?

- Meet with all City departments located in City Hall to collect input.
- Work with Department of Innovation & Technology to enhance the capabilities of the current ChiTEXT auto response system.
- Develop a plan to recruit multilingual staff to serve as Customer Service Liaisons.
- Establish the physical space of the pilot version of the Customer Service Center (install a counter and procure basic office equipment).

School-Library Partnerships

Formalize relationships between public schools and public libraries

Emily Kelin

WHY IT MATTERS

Public libraries are vital community institutions that provide access to information and learning opportunities. While many public schools have their own on-site libraries, not all schools have staff librarians or adequate resources to meet the needs of their students. Children from low-income families are less likely to have books in their homes and therefore have less choice about their out-of-school reading. Public libraries can provide access to books and resources for all students and enhance their reading development.

The Chicago Public Library (CPL) is the fifth largest public library system in the country, both in terms of total collection and per capita collection expenditures. CPL already offers a number of innovative programs that support Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students, but does not currently have a formal partnership with CPS. If CPS and CPL work together and share programming, the two institutions can leverage their roles within communities to increase access to resources and maximize student learning. The City should create a formal partnership between each CPL neighborhood branch and the nearest group of CPS elementary schools.

HOW IT WORKS

Several cities and counties have already created successful school-library partnerships that facilitate collaboration between libraries and schools. In Chicago, each of the City's 81 library locations would be assigned a group

of schools within a nearby radius. A children's librarian (or other librarian) at each location would act as a liaison between the CPL and school librarians or kindergarten through third grade teachers. The program would help register students for library cards, encourage field trips to local libraries, and bring librarians to schools for activities and visits. Students would be able to conduct regular book checkouts even if their guardians were not able to take them to the library during library hours. Programming would include text support for assignments, check-out of book sets for classroom use, art shows and book fairs, authors' celebrations held at the library, and programming for families and parents.

WHAT NEXT?

- Define the area around each CPL location and identify the schools near each library.
- Meet with school administrators, librarians, and teachers to collect ideas for the partnership.
- Train librarians to collaborate with teachers and establish guidelines for programming.
- Plan check-ins to evaluate and ensure program progress.

Youth Participatory Budgeting

Empowering Chicago's youth through a youth-led civic decision-making process

Syed Imaad

WHY IT MATTERS

Only 15% of voters aged 18-24 turned out for the 2019 Chicago mayoral election – a huge drop compared to 40% for the congressional midterm election a few months earlier. How can Chicago encourage civic participation amongst its youth? Mayor Lori Lightfoot's "Report of the Transition Committees" prominently features youth perspectives in each of 10 key policy areas identified by the administration. Incorporating youth feedback through a consultative model is a significant step towards youth participation in civic governance. However, to truly empower youth, we should allow them to drive the decision-making process. This project aims to enable youth empowerment by a youth-led participatory budgeting process making Chicago only the 3rd city in the U.S. to do so, after Boston and Bloomington.

HOW IT WORKS

The proposed project involves a three-step process in which youth propose, develop, and decide on projects to be implemented within a given budget. This process is described below:

Propose: Proposals for city improvement projects are collected from youth across the city. Participation from underrepresented youth populations is especially encouraged. Idea generation sessions are conducted in schools by working with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) to engage youth and encourage collaboration. Proposal submission is facilitated through an online portal.

Develop: A select group of youth volunteers work on selecting and refining proposals. These final proposals are then put on a ballot for vote by eligible youth. Input on operational and financial feasibility from relevant City departments is solicited to develop final project proposals. Youth volunteers are provided continuous training and support during the proposal development process to craft strong proposals.

Decide: Youth vote on projects they believe should be implemented. Voting is facilitated through schools and conducted online to encourage greater youth turnout.

Projects that receive a majority of the vote are approved for implementation under a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure project completion.

WHAT NEXT?

- Include Youth Participatory Budgeting in the agenda of the proposed Youth Commission to review existing models and recommend modifications.
- Constitute a steering committee comprised of the Mayor's Office (Finance, Youth Commission), sister agencies (CPS), and technical partners (University of Illinois at Chicago's Great Cities Institute, Participatory Budgeting Project).
- Develop an implementation plan that includes timelines, process flow, and guidelines for youth.



NEW MOBILITY



Photo taken by: Patrick L.Pyszka

Coding the Curb

Using new technologies to support coexisting mobility options

Catalina Prada & Matthew Santagata

WHY IT MATTERS

The ebb and flow of people and vehicles within cities is becoming increasingly multimodal and complex. Streetscapes and sidewalks are changing to reflect this. Today, dockless bikes and e-scooters are the latest hype; what will tomorrow's trend be? No matter what the answer is, cities need better data to understand their evolving rhythms and needs. Traditionally, Chicago has relied on simple counting technology to accomplish this. Looking ahead, we must utilize new technologies that allow for different mobility options to coexist.

HOW IT WORKS

In 2016 Chicago began rolling out the Array of Things (AoT), a collaborative initiative amongst scientists, universities, local government, and communities that collects real-time data on urban infrastructure and activity. The sensors of each module in the array measure temperature, sounds, air quality, light & infrared levels, and traffic. Most of the data recorded is environmental. However, these nodes have the potential to provide more value to the City and its residents.

By retrofitting existing infrastructure, we can dramatically increase the type and amount of data available to us. Increasing granularity will allow us to distinguish between different modes of transportation and their relation to the streetscape. As life and movement shift from the street to the sidewalk, expanding our scope will allow us to capture multimodal data. Free public Wi-Fi could be provided through each node and a network of information could be made accessible to smart devices. Whether

altering traffic signals in real-time to improve pedestrian safety, reporting vehicles illegally parked in the bike lane, or warning those with mobility issues about patches of ice on the sidewalk, there are countless ways to utilize multimodal data for the public good.

These changes could allow planning agencies to make better-informed decisions while immediately improving the day-to-day realities of life in the city. As Chicago continues to grow and evolve, an investment in AoT means an investment in livable streets.

WHAT NEXT?

- Partner with local universities to develop backend code.
- Increase the number of Array of Things nodes along transportation corridors.
- Make street data available to the public through the Department of Innovation & Technology.

Comprehensive Wayfinding

Reimagining the pedestrian streetscape

Matthew Santagata

WHY IT MATTERS

Wayfinding is, in essence, the spatial coherence of a city. Comprised of maps and signage, wayfinding systems help users navigate the built environment while reinforcing a unique sense of place. Comprising a small and relatively simple component of the streetscape, wayfinding systems nevertheless have a large impact on the day to day experiences of users. By highlighting the defining spatial characteristics of an area and aiding orientation, wayfinding systems are vital for walkability and establishing the human scale of the city.

Chicago's pedestrian wayfinding and signage system is fragmented, in disrepair, and severely outdated, especially when compared to cities of similar size. As the city continues to orientate itself towards walkable development and branding as a national and international tourist destination, an update is needed. A standardized mapping and signage system with intentional design would impart a stronger sense of identity for each neighborhood, increase safety and walkability, and be a boon for tourists, businesses, and locals alike.

HOW IT WORKS

A network of various devices will be strategically placed along public transit and pedestrian corridors, providing relevant information pertinent to the area while also contextualizing the space within the city. Place identifiers will aid the transition from CTA stations to the street. Blades and stands will provide maps, area guides, and directional information. Larger kiosks, used sparingly

at major attractions and key locations, will showcase larger regions between sites.

All devices will follow coherent design principles while allowing for subtle variation between neighborhoods, showcasing their unique characteristics while emphasizing their relationship to the city as a whole. Standardized elements, intuitive layout, and visual cues will ensure quick familiarity and readability.

Just as the physical environment is becoming more complex, technological changes necessitate a system that maintains pace. Mobile and RFID integration will add a new but necessary dimension to the wayfinding systems, allowing users to digitally access information and take it with them. The City of Chicago's tourism website will include an interactive map incorporating the new devices and providing another method of communicating information. Long overdue changes- the use of braille, lower signage height, and easily readable fonts will increase accessibility.

WHAT NEXT?

- Pilot: an initial pilot program focused on listening to public input and gathering research
- Implementation: production and installation of devices along major tourist areas and transportation centers
- Expansion: gradual inclusion of neighborhoods outside of Chicago's core

CTA Fair Fares

Reduced fares for low-income transit riders to increase transit accessibility in Chicago

Catalina Prada & Sahrish Saleem

WHY IT MATTERS

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) is falling behind in the way it serves the city's low-income population. In the last decade, the price of a monthly pass has increased by 40% and individual rides by 50%, while the median income has decreased by 12% when adjusted for inflation. This reality disproportionately impacts low-income residents who depend on CTA to access schools, jobs, and other city services. Although CTA currently offers reduced or free fares for students, senior citizens, and residents with disabilities, it has yet to accommodate transit for the low-income residents who account for almost 29% of customers.

HOW IT WORKS

This program would function similar to currently existing CTA reduced fare programs. Eligible residents would pay the current reduced fare price of \$1.10 + 15¢ for transfers on bus rides and \$1.25 + 15¢ for transfers on train rides, or \$50 for an unlimited monthly pass. This is about a 50% reduction on the regular fare. It will be targeted to residents who are currently eligible for the following government assistance programs:

- Government Issued Unemployment Compensation
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Public Housing/Section 8
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- Medicaid or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- Workers' Compensation Income Benefits

The reduced fare card will be incorporated into the current Ventra Card system. Eligible residents will apply through CTA, who will then verify eligibility and grant them a reduced fare Ventra Card. Long term, this can be incorporated into Chicago's CityKey as an additional benefit. Eligibility will be reassessed annually, to prevent abuse of the program.

Reduced fares will initially result in a loss of revenue for CTA; however, some funds will be recovered in increased ridership. The remaining can be recouped creatively, including using the newly signed state bill (Rebuild Illinois) or by slightly increasing the cost of the three day pass, which is primarily purchased by tourists.

WHAT NEXT?

- Organize a working group with the Mayor's Office of Community Engagement and CTA to determine specific next steps including implementation, funding, and evaluation
- Organize town halls to consult with community members on the program and ease of enrollment and renewal processes
- Determine opportunities in CTA's budget to recoup lost revenue.

Microtransit in Chicago

Explore microtransit to solve last-mile connectivity issues in Chicago

Nupur Ghuliani

WHY IT MATTERS

Close to 400,000 people commute to the suburbs from the city of Chicago every day. For many of these “reverse commuters,” public transit is out of reach simply because there is no option to help them cover the last part of their journey. This problem, called the First Mile/Last Mile (FM/LM) connectivity problem, is not unique to reverse commuters. This concern is also profound among residents of the South and West Sides of the city, many of whom live in areas that have been historically underserved by public transit. Residents in these areas are forced to spend hours on average commuting to their places of work; Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) buses are infrequent and L-train lines are largely absent from their regions. It is difficult to quantify the number of people in the South and West Sides who are affected by FM/LM issues, though one study found that if the CTA Red Line were extended to 130th Street, it would serve more than 42,000 additional people per day.

HOW IT WORKS

Microtransit provides fixed- and flexible-route transit services over a small geographical area. Shuttle services and feeder buses are variations of microtransit that already exist on institutional campuses across the country. Today, these have been modernized to work according to algorithms such as those used by ridehail companies (e.g. Uber, Lyft) to enable demand-driven route planning. In recent years, several American cities such as Los Angeles and Detroit have experimented with microtransit to supplement existing public transit services. For suburban commuters,

this would mean shuttle services that run from Metra stations to various office complexes. For communities on the South and West Sides, this would mean a shuttle that is integrated with other CTA services. Bannockburn, a village on the northwestern edge of Chicagoland, has collaborated with ridehail companies to provide free shuttle services to suburban commuters. This could be used as a model for areas where the CTA cannot operate due to low geographical density or lack of transit infrastructure.

WHAT NEXT?

- Conduct a detailed needs assessment of public transit in the South and West Sides of the city.
- Implement a pilot project of flexible, on-demand shuttle services that are integrated with the CTA in these communities.
- Explore collaborative opportunities with ridehail companies in suburbs through public private partnerships.

Reviving CTA Ridership

Increase the uptake of the Chicago Transit Authority's monthly pass

Prabhat Singh

WHY IT MATTERS

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) is Chicago's lifeline, especially for many low-income residents and students who can ill afford other means of transportation. To run efficiently, it must generate healthy revenues, which rely heavily on high ridership. However, the numbers tell a different story.

The combined ridership of CTA buses and trains dropped 9.3% between 2015 and 2018. The reasons for this decline include low gas prices and competition from rideshare companies.

Given that the City cannot continue to subsidize the CTA, urgent measures are needed to revive ridership on public transportation. This would also improve traffic congestion and air quality.

HOW IT WORKS

The CTA monthly pass could be a simple yet effective tool for boosting ridership. Once purchased, it's likely to dissuade people from using other means of transportation, because they would essentially be giving up free CTA rides. Though there's no available data on monthly passes, anecdotal evidence suggests there's substantial room to increase its sales.

Interviews with several CTA riders have shed light on two major reasons why the monthly pass is unattractive to most Chicagoans: (1) the upfront cost of \$105 is too high, especially for students and low-income residents; and (2) those who can afford the pass find little value unless they're extremely frequent riders.

The following steps could increase sales of the monthly pass:

1. Allow payment in two installments:

Riders should be allowed to purchase a pass by paying half the price upfront, which should activate the pass for 15 days. If by the end of this period the rider doesn't pay the remaining cost, the pass should be deactivated.

2. Offer variety based on ride frequency:

For riders who don't travel frequently, the CTA should provide lower-priced passes that allow a certain number of rides per month. For example, passes allowing 50 rides and 40 rides should be sold at progressively lower prices.

3. Offer discounted passes to students:

Offer passes that are 20-25% cheaper than the current pass to students from within and outside Chicago (with the above two provisions applicable). Student IDs can be verified either through online submission or in person at every train station.

WHAT NEXT?

- Make the necessary software changes on ticket-vending machines.
- For verification, allow student IDs to be submitted online and in person at every station.
- Advertise the changes online and at CTA stations, trains, and buses.



VULNERABLE POPULATIONS



Photo taken by: Zoe Lanier

Catchall Cannabis Initiative

Spur opportunity and promote equity as Illinois legalizes recreational cannabis

Zoe Lanier & James O'Brien

WHY IT MATTERS

Illinois will legalize recreational cannabis sale and use beginning January 1, 2020. There are several unaddressed issues in state law that should be tackled to ensure all Chicagoans benefit from the new marketplace.

HOW IT WORKS

Legalization presents a unique opportunity for Chicago to expand business and redress historical wrongs. The City should leverage state law to address inequities created by cannabis prohibition.

The City should identify best-practice programs for the expenditure of state and local revenue derived from recreational cannabis sales. These programs should focus on historically underserved communities to provide job opportunities, violence prevention programs, and substance abuse and trauma counseling.

State law requires local zoning compliance for recreational sales and permits municipalities to regulate on-site consumption at cannabis businesses. The City should leverage this to prioritize on-site consumption locations within underserved communities to attract tourism, provide safe consumption options, and create business opportunities in the areas most in need. Additionally, the City should consider public transportation options when determining zoning regulations to promote safety and accessibility.

Cannabis use often prohibits otherwise qualified individuals from obtaining employment. The City should prohibit

pre-employment discrimination for cannabis use. Similarly to how nicotine is currently treated, employers would be prohibited from disqualifying potential employees solely because of their use of a legal substance. Exemptions for sensitive professions must be determined and this would be unrelated to performance-based hiring decisions. It should be noted that there are unresolved legal questions concerning home rule authority on this issue, but at a minimum the City should implement this for its own employees.

Other related areas the City could address include making cannabis-related crimes the lowest level law enforcement priority (with exceptions for driving, large-scale distribution, etc.), collecting data to build an equitable cannabis industry, and launching an informational campaign and updating signage to help dispel public confusion.

WHAT NEXT?

The City should implement the ordinances and departmental policies necessary to enact the aforementioned proposals. Additionally, the City should create a task force with industry and community stakeholders to research best-practice cannabis regulations with an eye on the future of the industry. The task force can examine best practices concerning the reduction of barriers to entry, homegrown cannabis, delivery, use at non-cannabis facilities, and how to handle increased capacity as the number of dispensaries increases. This will prepare Chicago to take best advantage of an emerging industry and ever-evolving regulatory landscape.

Don't Bully My Bully (Breed)

Improving diversity, equity, and inclusion for pit bull-breed dogs in Chicago

Alyssa Broxton & Zoe Lanier

WHY IT MATTERS

Pit bull breed restrictions inhibit Chicago residents from renting in many parts of the city and from utilizing certain public spaces such as parks and beaches. Pit bull breed restrictions are detrimental to the City of Chicago and its citizens from both an economic and diversity/inclusion perspective. Breed restrictions force dogs out of loving families and into shelters, taking up valuable kennel space and resources for animals in critical need. These restrictions add to an already overburdened and under-resourced animal services system and cost communities resources that could be spent on myriad other services.

Allowing this type of discrimination to exist among household pets perpetuates biases and ungrounded fears that parallel problematic attitudes towards the communities of color that tend to welcome these types of dogs. Additionally, these communities face disproportionate levels of displacement due to gentrification; breed restrictions only widen this equity gap. The transformation of pit bull breed restrictions can help start the conversation needed to increase equity and diversity/inclusion in Chicago as a whole.

HOW IT WORKS

A multifaceted approach is necessary to address the ingrained biases and stereotypes many hold in regard to breed type. To combat the formation of stereotypes early in life, it is imperative to work with schools to implement educational programming that teaches children best practices in dog handling and helps build

holistic empathy skills, all while affording the opportunity to interact with pit bull-breed dogs. Long-term citywide informational campaigns and Chicago-based breed ambassadors that illustrate pit bulls' true loving nature are also critical to shifting attitudes. Lastly, because policy has the power to sustain change, creating a lease that transfers legal liability from landlord to dog owner is one of the greatest opportunities for transformation.

WHAT NEXT?

- Identify and partner with local schools willing to implement an onsite education program that teaches empathy-building skills.
- Identify and partner with organizations committed to ending dog breed discrimination that will help fund education initiatives.
- Promote positive breed ambassadors in local media.
- Elevate the work Animal Care and Control is already doing by creating incentives for landlords to add a liability-shifting addendum in rental leases.
- Create a task force to explore what enforcement power the City has on this issue with the Department of Buildings.

Equity Checklist for New Policies

Implement department-specific checklists to evaluate policy through an equity lens

Katie Dorpinghaus

WHY IT MATTERS

Chicago's new Office of Equity and Racial Justice is tasked with creating and advancing new policies and practices that ensure equitable outcomes for all Chicagoans. This is a massive task, and establishing a comprehensive racial equity decision framework will take time and thought. In the meantime, City officials will make thousands of decisions that will impact the distribution of services and resources to Chicagoans.

A racial equity impact checklist is a short-term intervention that will inform the long-term work of establishing equity of outcomes across Chicago. The checklist will serve three main purposes: it will begin the process of training City employees to view their decisions through a racial equity lens; it will afford the Office of Equity and Racial Justice insight into how departments currently make decisions; and it will inform how to structure future trainings and recommendations.

HOW IT WORKS

The equity checklist is based on the Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE) Racial Equity Toolkit; similar tools are used in cities throughout the country. To design the checklists, each department will work with the Office of Equity and Racial Justice to identify three to five questions that evaluate their work from an equity lens. These department-specific questions can be based on hiring practices, service delivery, communications, or other key functions. The responses will be examined individually and aggregated to identify current trends in decision-making.

The checklist format emerges from the assumption that City decision-makers know how to conduct thoughtful policy, but that competing priorities, incomplete information, and limited time inhibit them from consistently evaluating their policy proposals through a racial equity lens. A checklist is designed to be short, easy to use, and able to prompt employees to think about every policy proposal they write from an equity-focused lens.

WHAT NEXT?

- Pilot an equity checklist as part of TIF Taskforce project reviews starting in Fall 2019.
- Analyze responses to TIF-based equity to identify trends and gaps in response. Inform training based on the data.
- Work with the Office of Equity and Racial Justice to identify priority equity-focused questions citywide and for each department.

Healthy Food Around Your Corner

Supporting small food retailers and communities to nourish healthy food businesses

Zhuojun Wang

WHY IT MATTERS

You are what you eat. Healthy diets create healthy communities and healthy economies. In practice, though, you are *where* you eat. As of 2018, Chicago has 13 Limited Supermarket Areas (LSAs) where 15.8% of Chicagoans live, nearly three times the national average of 5.6%. Racial disparity also stands out as 80% of African Americans live in low or volatile food access areas while 64.7% of high-food-access census tracts are predominantly white.

Despite efforts to open supermarkets in food deserts, Chicago did not receive as much reward as expected: During the last decade, the growing number of supermarkets did not increase healthy food access for socioeconomically disadvantaged families. What else can we do to get healthy food in food deserts?

HOW IT WORKS

Small food businesses can be the last-mile solution. Flexible and economical, food trucks/carts, corner stores, convenience stores, community gardens, and farmers' markets, among other options, can all be substituted for large chain retailers. When serving a large area, a big supermarket unintentionally crowds out people with limited transportation access. However, small food businesses are usually walkable for communities.

To fulfill the potential of small food businesses, we can:

Encourage small businesses and existing stores. Enable food trucks and carts to expand their service areas and reach profitable opportunities. For existing stores like drug marts and pharmacies, an expanded inventory for fresh foods could be a community asset.

Cooperate with external funds, NGOs, and philanthropists. Financing small food businesses in food deserts creates job opportunities at community level. In addition, following up business development efforts with management advice can ensure long-term service for local residents.

Educate people about healthy diets. No one is born a nutritionist and teaching children at schools and adults in their communities are both vital steps to build healthy diets at home.

WHAT NEXT?

- Conduct community-based surveys to determine whether to modify existing stores or introduce new businesses.
- Work with leading NGOs and funds to tailor the initiating and supporting strategies for small food business owners in Chicago.
- Facilitate inter-departmental cooperation to maximize outcomes. For example, CPS can help design nutrition curricula.
- Use creative methods. For instance, license educational food trucks to teach cooking skills while selling healthy foods.

Homelessness Navigator App

Essential resource lists in the palm of Chicago's hand

Anne O'Brien

WHY IT MATTERS

Though All Chicago's One List estimates that over 9,000 households are experiencing homelessness as you read this page, the city as yet has no centralized resource list – a guide to what's available in Chicago when it comes to shelter, food, health clinics, legal aid, workforce centers, internet connectivity, or other important footholds for resolving homelessness.

A study conducted in Los Angeles found that 95% of homeless adults had a cell phone and that 85% used one every day. Of their phones, 58% were smartphones, mostly on the Android operating system. These numbers may be even more substantial for homeless youth and indicate that cell phone-based outreach could be an effective way of delivering information and services to Chicagoans experiencing homelessness.

HOW IT WORKS

LA-HOP, Los Angeles' web- and app-based platform, allows residents to make geo-tagged requests for emergency outreach services. San Francisco's new web-based chatbot, AskDarcel, acts as a citywide guide for services ranging from free haircuts to eviction prevention. The New York advocacy organization Coalition for the Homeless hosts a searchable web-based resource guide. Chicago can lead its peers with a new approach: three-pronged coverage incorporating the advantages of a web-based resource guide, smartphone app, and autotext response system.

The app: Provides custom navigation for users identifying as families, single adults, or youth. Contains resource lists, downloadable maps, a real-time tracker of 311 intake shuttles, and worksheets or checklists to help users reach housing goals. Inclusive language and accessibility settings. An Android OS option upon rollout may optimize access among smartphone users.

The site: A searchable resource guide maintained by the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS), explaining how to find, e.g.: shelter; food; Wi-Fi access; DFSS offices; warming and cooling centers; legal aid; health clinics and screening; workforce training; supports for youth, seniors, veterans, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, immigrants, and residents returning from incarceration.

The autotext service: Using pre-existing arrival time location codes on Chicago Transit Authority bus stop signage, responds to SMS queries with a list of resources available within a two-mile radius.

WHAT NEXT?

- Draft essential resource lists based on input from service providers and people with lived experience of homelessness.
- Conduct a survey to identify Chicago-specific usage trends.
- Commence website, app, and autotext development through the Department of Innovation & Technology or, if necessary, through a Request for Proposal process.

In-School Diversion

Mitigate the trauma and lifelong consequences of arrest in Chicago Public Schools

Colleen Canniff & Anne O'Brien

WHY IT MATTERS

Handcuffed and detained, children arrested in Chicago schools either stand for charges before a judge or are diverted through the Juvenile Intervention Support Center. Whether charged or diverted post-arrest, youth acquire a booking number, fingerprint record, and history of police involvement that can damage future prospects and compound traumatic experiences of powerlessness at an age when the brain has not yet fully developed. Of children with just one arrest, 55% will be arrested again compared to 9% of their peers who engage in similar behaviors but have no record; police contact itself fast-tracks kids into future justice involvement. The presence of School Resource Officers (SROs) in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) makes this a daily possibility.

With the widespread rollback of zero-tolerance discipline policies over the last decade, Chicago has followed a national trend of decline in school arrests. Nevertheless, among the 3,041 referrals to law enforcement and 1,030 arrests CPS saw in 2015, disparities persist: Black students and students with disabilities are disproportionately referred and arrested. In line with Mayor Lightfoot's commitment to equity and youth development, the City should transition to a model of strengths-based, pre-arrest diversion in CPS.

HOW IT WORKS

The School District of Philadelphia utilizes an in-school diversion model that ends youth justice involvement before it creates a

permanent record. The program focuses on the root causes of school disruptions, connecting students and families to services that meet their underlying needs.

When an incident obliging police involvement occurs, a school official contacts an off-site officer who responds to assess eligibility for diversion (generally covering offenses involving fighting, drugs, or possession of non-firearm weapons). A diversion liaison arranges for the city's Department of Human Services to make a follow-up visit to the student's home within 72 hours. After four years of operation, the Philadelphia Police Department reported a 71% decline in student arrests.

CPS should implement a school diversion program drawing from the Philadelphia experience but with eligibility determinations made by caseworkers from CPS or the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS). A transformative and truly restorative approach to conflict and trauma in Chicago schools would also extend diversion beyond low-level, first-time offenses.

WHAT NEXT?

- Involve CPS, CPD, the Public Defender's Office, State's Attorney's Office, DFSS, and Youth Commission in discussions about a Chicago-specific in-school diversion program.
- Replace CPS SROs with Opportunity Staff trained in developmentally specific, asset-focused, and trauma-competent intervention practices.

Sobering Centers

Create an alternative to hospitals and jails where intoxicated adults can safely sober up

Rachel Cretcher

WHY IT MATTERS

Chicago's emergency responders currently have limited options when encountering an intoxicated person. These encounters often result in costly emergency room visits or even jail time. This reality contributes to a heavy burden on the nation's emergency departments, which have seen a 50% increase in alcohol-related visits in the past decade; over the same time, opioid-related visits in Chicago have spiked 70%. Police encounters and jail stays for those who may be struggling with substance abuse are ineffective at addressing underlying issues. Sobering centers are an alternative to emergency departments and jails where an intoxicated adult can sober up and be connected to supportive resources. A center would contribute to Chicago's efforts to enhance public health and safety by providing a cost-efficient, trauma-informed environment that more effectively intervenes with the root causes of public inebriation.

HOW IT WORKS

Any adult resident could become a client at the sobering center, but anticipated utilizers include those experiencing substance abuse and homelessness, college students, and potentially intoxicated low-level offenders (in lieu of overnight jail stays). Clients might be referred by emergency departments, police and fire departments, ambulance services, mobile response vans, or be walk-ins. Individuals could be assessed for intake by sobering center staff or mobile response teams in minutes, saving valuable time for emergency responders in the field or during drop-offs. Services can include

basic medical care, peer support, assessments and referrals for supportive services. Staff can include nurses, social workers, and other support staff. A sobering center can exist on its own or be co-located with medical respite centers, hospital campuses, or other identified human services programs in the community. Chicago could also utilize surge sobering services in anticipation of emergency room traffic during large events.

WHAT NEXT?

- Identify key stakeholders to form a Sobering Center collaborative task force that assembles community partners and funding sources.
- Connect to peer cities with sobering centers to inform policies and trainings best suited for Chicago, including attendance at the annual Sobering Summit hosted by the National Sobering Center Collaborative.
- In partnership with the corresponding police district, implement a pilot sobering center program in a community area experiencing high levels of intoxication-related emergency room visits.

Transforming “We Serve & Protect”

Reorienting police training to develop a culture of trauma- and cultural competency

Alyssa Broxton, Colleen Canniff & Sahrish Saleem

WHY IT MATTERS

The Chicago Police Department (CPD) has long been looked to as a model for police-community engagement, but has been scrutinized in recent years for problems of broken trust. Additionally, the rates at which Chicago residents and officers are impacted by trauma are staggering. The federal consent decree was put in place to redress these issues, among others. Nevertheless, additional clarity and specific guidance are needed to implement its requirements successfully and to support officers and community members sustainably over time. Failure to lay out a strategic plan encompassing trauma-competency and culturally sensitive practices puts the wellbeing of police officers, the Department, and Chicago communities at long-term risk.

HOW IT WORKS

Trauma-Competency: A move towards trauma-competency would entail psychoeducation on how trauma impacts both officer and resident actions, including a propensity towards aggression and/or non-compliance. This training should address how both officers and citizens are impacted by trauma exposure on a reflexive level. It should explore an emphasis on evidence-driven alternatives to control-based policing.

Cultural Sensitivity: As it relates to hiring practices, an initial screening for cultural sensitivity would permit insight into which officers require more support and give the Department an opportunity to proactively address growth-needs through individualized

training and targeted peer support. A similar screening or evaluation would be performed to assess the readiness of provisional officers to serve in the field as they move toward academy completion.

Timing and Evaluation: The initial trauma-competency and cultural sensitivity trainings would occur prior to cadets’ participation in any form of weapons-based or hands-on training. For those already in the field, a systematic reorientation to these two skill areas will occur with frequent and regular evaluation. This allows for performance evaluators to identify needs and provide proper support throughout an officer’s tenure.

WHAT NEXT?

- Work with social workers and other mental health professionals to develop, implement, and evaluate trauma-competency practices.
- Structure robust and specific de-escalation objectives in CPD virtual reality trainings with debriefings that address acquired stress responses.
- Collaborate with City departments and community organizations to develop a standard list of questions for screening and evaluating officers on their levels of cultural sensitivity through an equity lens.
- Require key leadership positions to participate in intersectionality and racial equity and justice trainings.
- Implement a trauma-competency and cultural sensitivity evaluation into the current performance review process.



6.25

CHIPS

NEW!
Brownies
\$3.75

Tips

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES



Photo taken by: Patrick L. Pyszka & Samuel Sotelo-Avila

City-Based Earned Income Tax Credit

Bolster the economic security of Chicagoans

Allie Koolbeck & Eleanor Pratt

WHY IT MATTERS

Many Chicago families experience financial insecurity: More than 40% of children on the South and West Sides currently live in poverty, 24% of households have zero or negative net worth, and over 30% of households have debt in collections.

Like San Francisco and New York City, Chicago should establish a local Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to help families advance out of poverty and build wealth. An EITC exists at the federal and state levels and research shows it to be one of the most successful and least expensive anti-poverty policies. It increases wages and employment and improves the educational attainment and future earnings of children whose families have received it. A local EITC would further support eligible families, who live primarily on the South and West Sides, by offsetting low wages and helping them meet basic needs, pay off debt, and invest in their futures. It would also assist local neighborhoods, as research shows every \$1 in credits generates \$1.50 to \$2 in economic activity.

HOW IT WORKS

As a refundable tax credit for working families with low- to moderate-income, the EITC goes toward taxes due and filers receive the rest as a refund. The credit amount depends on a filer's income, marital status, and number of children, and it increases with earned income up to a maximum limit. At present, the Illinois EITC is set at 18% of the federal EITC. Chicago could provide a similar or smaller level of funding.

Max. EITC	Fed. EITC (2019)	5%	10%	18%
1 Child	\$3,526	\$176	\$352	\$634
2 Children	\$5,828	\$291	\$582	\$1,049
3+ Children	\$6,557	\$327	\$655	\$1,180

Assuming 80% of eligible households file (240,000 families) and the average family receives \$2,517 in credits (the Illinois average in 2018), costs to the City could range from \$30 million to \$100 million. The program would involve minimal administrative costs because the City could administer the program through the state's income tax process.

WHAT NEXT?

- Secure private funding to pilot and evaluate a time-limited EITC.
- Work with state legislators to amend the Illinois Income Tax Act and establish administrative partnership with the State.
- Promote local EITC with community partners and sister agencies.
- If the pilot is successful, pass ordinance to establish local EITC.

Environmental Impact Bonds

Leverage private partnerships to meet Chicago's infrastructure goals

Jena Manilla

WHY IT MATTERS

In 2011, the Department of Justice and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sued Chicago over claims that untreated sewage was being released into rivers and waterways during periods of heavy precipitation. The resulting settlement requires an estimated \$3B in upgrades to the stormwater system by 2029.

In the interim, however, sewer overflows continue to contaminate Chicago's waterways. This disproportionately impacts residents of color: A 2018 study by the Center for Neighborhood Technology found that 87% of flood damage insurance claims were paid in communities of color and that the communities most prone to floods are on the South and West Sides of the city.

Given the time, financial, and equity costs of upgrading traditional stormwater infrastructure—also called gray infrastructure—the City should consider transitioning to green infrastructure. Traditional gray infrastructure uses drainage pipes and water treatment systems to move water away from the built environment, while green infrastructure relies on vegetation, soil, and other natural elements to reduce and treat stormwater at its source. The EPA promotes it as a cost-effective and resilient approach to managing wet-weather impacts. However, green infrastructure is relatively untested in large urban environments. This makes it a difficult investment for risk-averse governments and therefore a prime opportunity for public-private partnerships, specifically through Environmental Impact Bonds (EIB).

HOW IT WORKS

EIBs are an extension of the pay-for-success model in which private funders support a program with the promise that government will repay their investments based on program performance. EIBs apply this model to environmental projects, including green infrastructure.

Washington, D.C. implemented the first EIB in 2016. The \$25M, 30-year, tax-exempt municipal bond supports green infrastructure in the hope that it will prove more effective and cost-efficient than the planned upgrades to the city's gray infrastructure. While evaluation is ongoing, in 2017 the effort was recognized by the federal government for exemplifying outstanding financial management. Atlanta and Baltimore have also since issued green infrastructure EIBs.

WHAT NEXT?

- Review and update the City's existing stormwater/green infrastructure strategy.
- Talk to cities and organizations with experience, including the consulting firm Qualified Ventures, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the aforementioned cities.
- Identify philanthropic partners and appoint City staff to run the project.

Fin-d Your Dream

A financial inclusion initiative for underbanked and unbanked Chicagoans

Mingqi Song

WHY IT MATTERS

Chicago has an alarming unbanked population: 12.7% of households do not have an account at a bank or other financial institution, five percentage points higher than the national figure. Underlying these data are ethnicity disparities: 19% of black households and 18% of Latino households are unbanked compared to 3% of white households. Additionally, 13.9% of households are underbanked; these households have a bank account but also rely on alternative financial services like currency exchanges and informal loans.

For individuals, these scenarios can result in higher fees, the inability to access social services, lack of a credit history, and heightened financial insecurity. Large unbanked and underbanked populations are correlated with historic underinvestment and make future economic development more difficult.

To expand access to banking services, the City should offer financial literacy training, partner with banks to lower barriers, and create an annual social venture competition.

HOW IT WORKS

First, the City should invest in financial literacy. Organizations like Magnetar Academy and Chicago Area Project have already built robust financial education curricula. The delivery of financial education will be a function of newly created Community Financial Centers (CFCs), where financial education courses and workshops will be developed and taught jointly by nonprofits and banking specialists. The

centers will also serve as hubs for banks that don't have a brick-and-mortar location in the community.

The second component is partnering with the major banks in Chicago to create special accounts featuring low transaction fees, zero overdraft fees, and zero balance requirements. These accounts will be offered in communities with the largest unbanked populations.

Finally, the Mayor's Office should create the Fin-d Your Dream Chicago Challenge, an annual social venture competition. The Challenge will engage Chicagoans, especially black and Latino entrepreneurs from the South and West Sides, in solving the most critical problems in the city. Winners will be awarded a cash prize from a newly created fund called The Mayor's Fund for Chicago. The fund will be registered as a 501(c)(3) organization and will rely on regional and national funders for support.

WHAT NEXT?

- Map out all available financial services across Chicago and identify “bank deserts.”
- Start a public campaign in selected communities to open 5,000 special accounts and CFCs.
- Facilitate a task force to raise seed funding and launch the first competition by the end of 2020.

Maximizing Opportunity Zones

New framework for community engagement and neighborhood investment guidebooks

Dan Forbush & Rachel Galowich

WHY IT MATTERS

Opportunity Zones (OZs) were created in the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act passed in 2017 and established tax benefits for investment in underdeveloped census tracts. Notably, this legislation rewards long-term investment through a capital gains basis step-up that is only triggered when the asset is sold after several years.

The City of Chicago designated these zones differently than many other cities, which generally selected census tracts near downtown business districts, by designating zones along the South and West Sides that have high rates of poverty and unemployment. This decision comes with risks that investment won't happen primarily due to a lack of capital access for fledgling businesses.

HOW IT WORKS

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) should expand resources aimed towards engaging communities within OZs to maximize investment success. DPD should specifically focus on expanding the use of OZs for mid-range developments (an example is the Ogden Commons development currently planned along the West Side). Developers managing projects of this size often reach out to DPD to help recruit tenants, giving DPD the opportunity to create thoughtful partnerships between OZ investors and the community. To do so, the Department should establish a guidebook that (1) maintains neighborhood-specific contact information for relevant stakeholders, (2) explains how OZ benefits can be coupled

with other funding incentives offered by the City, (3) maps existing neighborhood assets, and (4) ultimately helps “match” investors to businesses.

In conjunction with these internal efforts, DPD would reach out to external stakeholders, starting with community education about OZ incentives. These endeavors would also engage interested philanthropic and mission-driven organizations that may contribute to community development. Together, these internal and external initiatives would ensure that OZs are part of a multi-year development strategy and that community members and investors together attain the long-term benefits that OZs offer.

WHAT NEXT?

- Audit existing OZ resources available to DPD and create a central OZ guidebook available to all staff. Institute staff training as needed for implementation.
- Develop frameworks for how OZs can be used in conjunction with other existing DPD programs and incentives.
- Leverage existing community contacts to begin public outreach and contact mission-driven and philanthropic organizations.

Propelling Potential in the Pedway

Use the Pedway to promote businesses from the South and West Sides

Ian Snyder

WHY IT MATTERS

Mayor Lightfoot has prioritized policies that expand investment in Chicago's South and West Sides. These neighborhoods and their networks have not received the same historical access to capital or commercial revenue that the Loop and other neighborhoods have. Access to a wider consumer base and revenue for South and West Side businesses and entrepreneurs will allow them to expand sustainable initiatives and attract customers back to their primary neighborhood locations. This will spur greater local investment, as visitors are likely to explore other retail options once they are drawn to a neighborhood. The City's underground pedestrian walkway (Pedway) has found success in its recently redeveloped portions, but there are sections that would thrive with investment and renovation. Bringing South and West Side businesses to the Pedway combines a natural opportunity for lower-rent retail expansion with the Mayor's vision for economic equity.

HOW IT WORKS

Businesses and entrepreneurs from the South and West Sides will have the opportunity to showcase a selection of products or merchandise in a storefront or kiosk within the Pedway. The City will negotiate rent with Pedway operators. Businesses will pay subsidized rent and the City will pay entrepreneurs' rent for their first six months of occupancy. Pedway visitors, who are likely to live in the Chicagoland area, can shop and learn more about these businesses

and their expanded inventory at the stores' neighborhood locations. Entrepreneurs from the South and West Sides would have a low-risk, high-reward path into the Loop's commercial market. Businesses and entrepreneurs will be re-evaluated every six months to determine financial feasibility and the ability for programmatic growth.

WHAT NEXT?

The Office of the Mayor should convene all landlords and property managers within the Pedway for a series of brainstorming sessions and planning meetings to create a strategy for the Pedway that highlights this program. These meetings will also include business owners and entrepreneurs from the South and West Sides to determine their needs in a Pedway location and what capital and resources they currently lack. The Mayor's Office of Community Engagement (OCE) and the Deputy Mayor for Economic and Neighborhood Development (DMEND) would develop and circulate a Request for Qualifications and, later, a Request for Proposal for South and West Side businesses that are interested in operating within the Pedway. OCE and the DMEND, in conjunction with the Pedway owners and managers, will determine and execute the selection process for businesses and entrepreneurs.



FOOD WASTE



Citywide Composting

Pilot food industry composting licensing requirements

Rachel Galowich & Allie Koolbeck

WHY IT MATTERS

The City of Chicago generates over 2,000 tons of food waste every day, which represents 30% of the total waste generated by city residents. Instead of being sent to the landfill as is current practice, food waste can be composted, a process with significant environmental benefits such as reducing methane emissions, the volume of water diverted to municipal storm water systems, and the chemical concentration of agricultural runoff.

The City last amended its composting ordinance in July 2015 to allow food scrap donations to urban farms and community gardens, but since then, Chicago has fallen behind many of its counterparts. San Francisco, New York, and Seattle offer complete municipal composting services, leading the former two cities to boast 80% and 21% waste diversion rates, respectively, in comparison to Chicago's 10% diversion rate. Los Angeles and Boston facilitate composting for commercial businesses.

HOW IT WORKS

To increase its diversion rate, the City should establish composting requirements for retail food establishments. Similarly to New York, Chicago should phase in the requirement over a number of years, piloting it first with large establishments (as determined by square footage).

The program would require retail food establishments to submit and comply with a plan to have food waste collected by private haulers. New establishments

would submit a composting contract as part of the licensing process, with review by the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) during either the in-person health consultation or license inspection. Existing establishments would submit a contract at their next annual health inspection. The City would provide basic guidelines and informational materials to businesses during the consultation or inspection around posting compost instructions, labeling containers, and separating waste. A simple compliance check would then take place during health inspections and, after the first year of the program, businesses not in compliance would pay a fine.

Retail food establishments could utilize the many small businesses that already facilitate commercial composting throughout the Chicagoland area, thus also supporting their growth.

WHAT NEXT?

- Host business education workshops for retail food establishments impacted by the pilot and for composting services looking to scale their businesses.
- Identify philanthropies willing to fund a City financial incentive program to support small retail food establishments interested in composting.
- Develop a composting training program for CDPH inspectors and Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protections investigators.

Share Tables in Public Schools

Reinventing school cafeterias by addressing food waste to combat food insecurity

Janielle Paez-Hill

WHY IT MATTERS

According to the Greater Chicago Food Depository, an estimated one in six children struggle with access to healthy food and are at risk of experiencing hunger, yet one-third of food produced is wasted every year. Every day, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) throws away thousands of pounds of food. A survey conducted by an environmental nonprofit group found that 14 of 644 CPS sites toss 3,577 pounds of food in one day.

Research shows that children who lack consistent access to food are more likely to experience developmental impairments in areas like language, motor skills, and behavior. When children do not face hunger during school, they are more likely to grow, develop, and focus on learning instead of thinking about their next meal. Addressing food insecurity in children illustrates the City of Chicago's priorities of investing in youth and ensuring children are able to excel in the classroom.

HOW IT WORKS

CPS should provide monitored Share Tables where students put food and drinks that they choose not to eat or drink, giving an opportunity for other students to take additional helpings of food or beverages from the Share Table at no cost to them. To make this program a success, schools must be open to implementing the intervention and informing students about Share Tables in a way that does not pressure students to donate. Share Tables must be monitored by a trained nutrition employee, teacher, school staff member, or volunteer who will monitor and inspect items to

ensure that packaging is intact and that food items are not contaminated. Whole fruit with edible peels will be rewashed before being made available again for students. If students are involved in the monitoring process, supervision must be in place. Lists of appropriate and inappropriate food items for Share Tables must be developed. For safety purposes, foods from home should not be allowed.

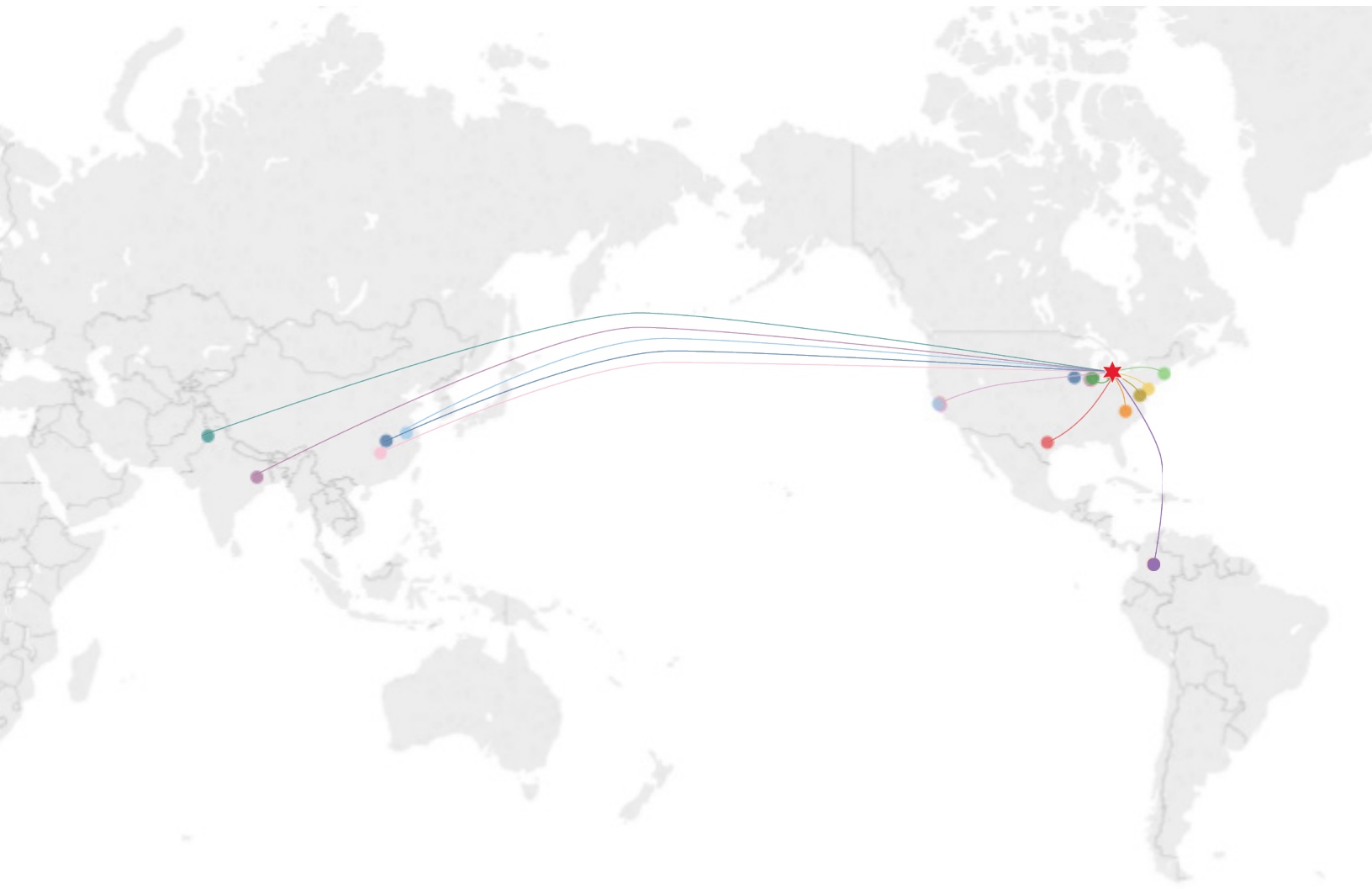
Share Tables also provide an educational opportunity by exposing students to the impact of food insecurity: in particular, how it influences our community's social determinants of health and quality-of-life outcomes.

WHAT NEXT?

- Identify several CPS sites to pilot the program (focusing on areas with high food insecurity).
- Form partnerships between schools and the Greater Chicago Food Depository.
- Analyze results of the first year of the program to make corrections and determine whether it should be expanded beyond the initial pilot schools.







Our Paths to Chicago



Mayoral Fellows 2019
Designed by Catalina Prada & Matthew Santagata