



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT MAYOR LIGHTFOOT'S 2021 BUDGET ADDRESS

"The City of Chicago and its residents continue to face unprecedented challenges due to the health and economic impacts of COVID-19. Given the tough budgetary situation our city is in, we must pull together to ensure we are positioned to respond to the emerging needs and set a path towards an equitable recovery."

- Helene Gayle, President and CEO of The Chicago Community Trust

"As a former Mayor, I know the difficult dilemma Mayor Lightfoot faced in balancing this year's budget. We are eager to join with other community partners and work with her as she moves forward with efforts to reimagine public safety, including implementing reforms to CPD that will make Chicago a safer and more just city for everyone."

- Karen Freeman-Wilson, President and CEO of the Chicago Urban League

"I applaud Mayor Lightfoot for staying the course towards developing long-term solutions for Chicago's financial health and stability despite the historic pressures arising from the COVID-19 crisis. As a CPA, I deeply appreciate not only the strategic structural fixes Mayor Lightfoot put in place last year and is continuing this year, but also for her fervent commitment to doing so in a way that serves to uplift our entire city."

- Dorri McWhorter, CEO of YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

"Mayor Lightfoot has the best chance of any mayor to address the long term structural issues that face the city. She did not create any of these issues, and she is our best hope to fix them. It is my sincere hope that in the months ahead, under Mayor Lightfoot's bold leadership, we address these issues. And when we do, she will have overwhelming support from those that want to live, work and thrive in our great city."

- David Casper, U.S. CEO, BMO Financial Group.



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“In this budget proposal, Mayor Lightfoot made good on her promise to be inclusive and seek input from throughout the city, while also being thoughtful and determined to address long-standing challenges. The Mayor is right to point to the local share of state income taxes, the Local Government Distributive Fund (LGDF), as an area where the General Assembly and statewide leaders need to step-up and support municipalities. More and more mandates and expectations are being placed on local governments, especially cities, villages and towns, but each year less and less is shared with them through dedicated funding. The Illinois Municipal League (IML) stands firmly with Mayor Lightfoot in calling for LGDF to be restored to its full funding ratio. The reforms developed by Mayor Lightfoot in her proposed budget address critical programs and services and keep the City of Chicago on a path toward fiscal responsibility, both for the coming year and for many years ahead.”
– **Brad Cole, Executive Director of the Illinois Municipal League**

"The deficit in the City's budget created by COVID-19 is significant--but it is also temporary. So, it would not make sense for Mayor Lightfoot to have attempted to close Chicago's anticipated \$1.2 billion shortfall primarily through significant, permanent tax increases. However, some of Chicago's deficit is in fact being driven by long-term, structural issues that do require new, permanent revenue enhancements to cover sustainably. In that context, her proposal to increase property taxes by just \$93.9 million – which is a rate increase of just over one-tenth of a percentage point – makes sense. It does not overburden taxpayers during the current recession but does generate some ongoing revenue to help mitigate the structural shortcomings in Chicago's fiscal system."

– **Ralph Martire, Executive Director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability (“CTBA”)**

“The City of Chicago continues to recognize the critical importance of collaborative work with partners to prevent and end homelessness in our city. All Chicago is grateful to work with Mayor Lightfoot, DFSS, DPH and DOH to support the Chicago CoC and homeless service providers throughout Chicago. This proposed budget for 2021 thoughtfully supports our shared goals of efficiently housing more people in need through a combination of new programs and established partnerships.”

– **Carolyn K. Ross, President & CEO of All Chicago**

"We are excited that the Mayor recognizes the need to truly invest in a more healing centered model for crisis intervention through the development of a co-responder model. We know that the police should not be the City's mental health system. A first step is developing a dual effort to promote de-escalation, reduce uses of force and prevent individuals experiencing mental health crises from experiencing additional trauma. We are equally pleased at the commitment of Mayor Lightfoot and



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providers throughout the city to work towards prevention and non-crisis wellness support from a holistic frame."

– **Alexa James, Executive Director of the National Alliance for Mental Illness Chicago (NAMI Chicago)**

"Since her first day in office, Mayor Lightfoot has made clear that ensuring public safety in Chicago's neighborhoods starts by investing in community-based public safety organizations such as street outreach teams. With the 2021 budget, Mayor Lightfoot is building on her down payment to create a stronger street outreach network in Chicago and truly develop an all-hands-on-deck public safety strategy."

– **David Kelly, Executive Director of Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR)**

"Chicago's street outreach teams and trauma-informed victim service organizations have been out day and night throughout this year to not only prevent violence but build stronger relationships with our communities so that our residents can stay safe and protected. Even as the City faces an unprecedented financial crisis, we applaud Mayor Lightfoot for doubling down on not only her investments in street outreach but also her efforts to build a comprehensive violence reduction network to ensure every community has the resources they need to stay safe"

– **Angela Hurlock, Executive Director, Claretian Associates**

"With the City's investment, the Legal Protection Fund partners have played a critical role during the COVID-19 pandemic in supporting Chicago immigrant communities as they fight to protect themselves and their families during a global health crisis and in the face of harmful immigration laws and continuing attacks on their rights by the federal government. For our city to recover, we all must step up to support programs and policies that protect the rights of immigrant Chicagoans, including access to immigration legal services."

– **Mary Meg McCarthy, Executive Director of Heartland Alliance's National Immigrant Justice Center**

"The Chicago Legal Protection Fund provides opportunities for immigrant Community Navigators to engage and share Know Your Rights education throughout the city and provides free legal services to thousands of Immigrant Chicagoans. The Trump administration and COVID-19 have had a devastating impact on our immigrant communities, but today, the city reaffirmed its commitment to the immigrant community by continuing funding for these services. As one of only a handful of cities that provides these funds, Chicago continues to say to immigrants that we matter, we are essential and we are Chicago."

– **Eréndira Rendón, Vice-President, Immigrant Advocacy and Defense, The Resurrection Project**



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"Between COVID-19 and the ongoing movements for social justice, our city is grappling with deep, complex challenges. We need to balance immediate needs with our long-term future, and invest in our neighborhoods – the families and small businesses that are the backbone of our city – if we are going to come out the other side of this stronger and more equitable. Today's budget address is a step toward trying to make sure that goal is a reality."

– Luis Gutierrez, Chief Executive Officer of Latinos Progresando and Carlos Nelson, Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation

"While we understand no Chicagoan wants more taxes, today's budget address represents a fair and equitable attempt to fill a gaping hole brought on by unprecedented current events not seen before in our lifetime. We look forward to partnering with Mayor Lightfoot to build on our collaborative efforts that will ensure this year's investments flow into Chicago's communities and help small businesses in every neighborhood truly grow and thrive."

– Malcolm Crawford, Executive Director of the Austin African American Business Network Association (AAABNA)

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