



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**RECOVERY TASK FORCE RELEASES ADVISORY REPORT TO GUIDE CITY'S PLANNING EFFORTS TO RECOVER FROM COVID-19**

**CHICAGO** — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today released the advisory report compiled by the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force, which was established in April to advise city government as recovery planning efforts were underway amidst COVID-19. The Task Force was co-chaired by Mayor Lightfoot and former White House Chief of Staff Samuel Skinner and involved a group of more than 200 industry experts, regional government leaders, community-based partners, and policymakers. Over the past ten weeks, the Task Force members assembled a change study and an [advisory report](#) to provide critical insights to help Mayor Lightfoot as her administration works to balance a robust health response with a strategic economic and social response that addresses the unique challenges presented by COVID-19 – many of which underscore the challenges the city faces in the form of structural inequities.

"I am deeply grateful for the hard work of the Recovery Task Force, and their commitment to doubling down on our mission of building a better Chicago that ends economic hardship, confronts racial inequities and unites all of the City's residents," said Mayor Lightfoot. "With their invaluable contributions we will transform the COVID-19 crisis into the once-in-a-generation opportunity that it presents to eliminate the deep, glaring chasms of inequity it has brought to the surface. While we don't know when this crisis will end, we do know that our recovery from it will not be reached with any short cuts or half measures."

The Task Force developed a set of 17 recommendations and four existing initiatives to advance a targeted set of outcomes for Chicago.

**Outcome #1: Address new and old traumas**

- Create the most advanced healing-centered region in the country
- Increase access to mental and emotional health resources and services in communities
- Create a culturally sensitive, diverse mental health workforce

**Outcome #2: Expand economic opportunity, quality employment, and financial security**

- Reimagine the region's workforce infrastructure and create a plan to invest in displaced and young workers
- Increase ownership and employment for Black and brown residents in the regions' contracting and construction industries



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- Create the most vibrant small and medium-sized business and Black- and brown-owned business community in America
- Expand relief programs and pilot innovative approaches to improve and strengthen the social safety net

**Outcome #3: Build on our region's strengths**

- Expand the region's transportation, distribution and logistics sector by leveraging new trends in the localization of supply chains
- Strengthen Chicago's healthcare and life-sciences ecosystem
- Build on the region's assets in food and agriculture

**Outcome #4: Capture opportunities created by COVID-19**

- Build on the region's historic strength in manufacturing
- Prepare the region to capture HQ2s and corporate development and specialty centers
- Capture film and TV production opportunities given the lack of studio space in California

**Outcome #5: Reignite activity throughout Chicago by sharing our story**

- Introduce Chicago's master brand
- Lead the re-imagining of regional tourism, travel, and hospitality
- Develop new and existing community hubs to encourage tourism in neighborhoods
- Show the world Chicago is open for business

While the implementation of several of the recommendations is already underway – and many others will be implemented in a phased approach over the next few years – the City's COVID-19 recovery efforts will be grounded in the crucial work the Lightfoot administration has started to address the structural economic forces that put millions of Chicago residents in economic hardship prior to the pandemic.

**Outcome #6: Accelerate investments to eliminate inequities**

- INVEST South/West
- Solutions Toward Ending Poverty (STEP)
- We Will Chicago / Citywide Plan
- Chicago Connected

“Thanks to the efforts of many people within many units of local and state government, non-profit organizations, organized labor and small and large business organizations we have an outstanding plan of action for the recovery and growth of Chicago and the greater Chicagoland region,” said Samuel Skinner. “It is now time for all of us to work together to implement this plan of action with upmost speed. Chicago, the city of big shoulders, has successfully faced great challenges before, and we will do so again.”

The Task Force, which was comprised of five working groups, developed policy recommendations and specific plans for the Lightfoot administration. In recognition of the



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fact that Chicago's economy is interconnected with that of the region as well as the state, these subgroups also included participants representing the Chicagoland regional economy. The working group co-chairs are below, and a list of all Task Force members can be found [here](#).

**Policy & Economic Stimulus**

- Roberto Herencia, Chairman, Byline Bank
- Melody Hobson, Co-CEO, Ariel Investments
- Bob Reiter, President, Chicago Federation of Labor
- Jenny Scanlon, CEO, UL

**Mental & Emotional Health**

- Evelyn Diaz, President, Heartland Alliance
- Karen Freeman Wilson, President & CEO, Urban League of Chicago
- Alexa James, Executive Director, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Chicago

**Marketing & Business Development**

- Sandra Cordova Micek, CEO, WTTW | WFMT
- Richard Edelman, CEO, Edelman
- Anton Seals, Executive Director, Grow Greater Englewood

**Regional Coordination**

- Daniel Cronin, Board Chairman, DuPage County
- Toni Preckwinkle, Board President, Cook County
- Joseph T. Tamburino, Mayor, Village of Hillside
- Gilbert Villegas, Alderman, 36<sup>th</sup> Ward

**Economic & Social Change Study**

- Ben Harris, Executive Director, Kellogg Public-Private Initiative at Northwestern University
- Ai-Jen Poo, Co-Founder, National Domestic Worker's Alliance

"The partnership across the public and private sectors has resulted in innovative ideas that leverage the city's natural resources, world-class institutions and existing infrastructure to drive economic recovery for all Chicago residents. As a lifelong Chicagoan, it was a privilege to work alongside Mayor Lightfoot and the Recovery Task Force members in support of our city," said Jenny Scanlon, CEO, UL.

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