

Recovery Task Force Advisory Report

# Forward Together

## Building a Stronger Chicago

July 9, 2020



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# Letter from Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and Samuel K. Skinner

In April, we started a mission that began at the foot of Chicago's Water Tower, a landmark representing our city's boundless ingenuity, artistry, and resilience. We did so because, as one of the few structures that survived the Great Chicago Fire, it was the point from which previous Chicagoans embarked on a new beginning, and around which we as a city grew into the magnificent, global metropolis we have today.

One hundred and fifty years later, we are encountering a new crisis which is like nothing we have ever experienced, and shocking us in ways even the past recessions, depressions, and two world wars never did. While the strengths of our city have shown through in ways large and small, our vulnerabilities borne of generational inequality and systemic racism have also flashed like a neon sign—and flashed even brighter following the murder of George Floyd.

In response to this unprecedented crisis, we convened the COVID-19 Recovery Task Force to keep our city moving forward despite the far-ranging impacts of this disease. Our objective was as bold as it was simple: Nothing less than the most breathtaking recovery effort Chicago has ever seen. To succeed, we knew there could be no half measures and no cutting corners. It would require bold, visionary action that would build on the efforts already taken to expand equity and opportunity over the previous nine months. As Pastor Otis Moss of Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ eloquently put: "Our fight isn't just against COVID-19, but COVID-1619."

The women and men we brought together for the Recovery Task Force were as diverse and dynamic as Chicago itself – drawn across industries, community organizations, and policy experts to give voice to all facets of our city, and provide the critical guidance needed to chart our path forward. We also created opportunities for public input, which we have seen time and again as not just valuable, but *vital* to the success of any action we have taken.

For all the challenges we face, this crisis also affords us a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make this city work even better by creating a new economic model based on inclusive growth that takes a holistic approach to development across both downtown and our neighborhoods.

There is no denying we will continue to navigate significant challenges related to COVID-19, but thanks to your work, we are already doubling-down on our mission of building a new Chicago that is inclusive and accessible, and serves as the standard of how cities can not only recover from this event, but use their recovery as a driver for growth that leverages power and potential for generations to come.

We want to thank you for your transformative contribution to this moment, and we look forward to continuing in this journey together in the months and years ahead.



Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot



Samuel K. Skinner

# Letter from the Recovery Task Force Committee Co-Chairs

We are honored to have served alongside such a distinguished group of concerned Chicagoans through this Recovery Task Force effort for the last eight weeks. The dedicated representation of non-profits, academia, and business members across the Task Force integrated feedback from stakeholders representing our communities and various business sectors. We believe this talented group, after an intensive and well-supported process, has brought forth a set of solid recommendations for the City of Chicago and surrounding region. We are committed to standing together and working together to deliver comprehensive solutions during this turbulent time. Through our collaboration and commitment to addressing issues on a regional level, we will create a stronger economic future for our residents.

We would first like to share that we have been impressed with Mayor Lightfoot's leadership and poise during this challenging journey – dealing not only with COVID-19, but also the demonstrations and events around the tragic killing of George Floyd. The Mayor and her team have always been guided by the passion and commitment to address the unacceptable but pre-existing inequities in our city.

The Mayor established this Task Force to listen, learn, and ultimately recommend. We started by analyzing and reviewing data and context on the COVID-19 crisis, as well as the current structural inequities faced by our communities, which provided a baseline for understanding the situation faced by residents of the city and region. Our members took that data and insight, turned conversations and debates into a handful of inclusive, actionable initiatives, and built recommendations that are vital not only to building economic and social recovery over the next few years, but also vital to providing employment and wealth-creating opportunities for our residents. Post-COVID-19 recovery involves correcting structural deficiencies that already existed in our economy, providing access to safety net resources, and creating a healthy return to tourism and to work. This group of thought leaders was well-suited to recognize the moment we are in both socially and economically, and to elevate important issues and provide for more equity in our City.

Half-way through the process, civil unrest brought to light challenges that the recovery efforts would need to factor in even more prominently. The ongoing effects of systemic racism and inequity in our society, coupled with the disproportionate effects of COVID-19 on Black and Brown communities, make the timing of this work even more critical.

In order for Chicago to recover, our perspective is that we need to focus on addressing the gaping holes created by both public and private decisions, deliberately market the rich, cultural communities and talent of our city, and make working with the City easier in order to advance goals and accelerate bold, equity-driven ideas.

The more direct connections we can make with residents, the more impactful this work will be. Collective impact and engagement of the public is crucial, as our goals are not just goals of the Task Force, but collective goals of our city and region. We know that just like COVID-19, we have zip code-level challenges in Chicago and disproportionate impacts throughout the city. We should look to be as targeted as possible in our interventions. Lastly, for true economic recovery, we must look at every recommendation through the lenses of job creation, job quality, and increased equity. Our strength resides with our collective assets, including one of the most diverse economies in the world.

We are hopeful about the future of every neighborhood in our city and of our region because of the leadership exhibited by Mayor Lightfoot and her team throughout this pandemic, as well as the plethora of community strengths – from community banks, to non-profit organizations, to community health clinics, to individual community leaders – that will be leveraged proactively and creatively as part of the next phase of this effort. We are also hopeful about the great assets of our city – from the Lakefront and greenspace, to O’Hare and Midway as major travel hubs, to the quality and size of our universities and regional colleges and strength of our business sector.

Chicago must be a city that truly works for *all* – where all are welcome, where innovation lives, and where its people and businesses are thriving across *all* neighborhoods. Even without the multiple crises we have faced and continue to face in 2020, this Task Force would have been relevant to help the Mayor accelerate her strategic plans in a thoughtful way. We used the crises as the catalyst for important work that would have otherwise been necessary to ensure Chicago preserves its rightful place as a vibrant, growing, leading global city and region.

Having a voice in this process has been a wonderful experience, and we remain committed to continuing to support this work.

Sincerely,

Chicago Recovery Task Force Committee Co-Chairs

# Acknowledgements

This report reflects the contributions of many individuals, organizations, and communities. The City of Chicago is grateful for the time, effort, and support that each provided during this collaborative endeavor. The City of Chicago would like to specifically thank:

## Recovery Task Force

100+ leaders from diverse backgrounds across the public, private, and social sectors volunteered their time and expertise to serve across the Recovery Task Force's five committees: Policy and Economic Stimulus, Mental and Emotional Health, Marketing and Business Development, Change Study, and Regional Coordination.

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- \* City of Chicago-certified MBEs/WBEs (minority and women-owned business enterprises)
- \* Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council
- \* Healthy Chicago 2025
- \* City of Chicago Racial Equity Rapid Response Team

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## Organizational Support

The Recovery Task Force's work was made possible by staff and resources provided by the City of Chicago and its sister agencies. Additional support was provided by the Civic Consulting Alliance together with its pro-bono partners.

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## Community Participation

The composition of the Recovery Task Force was crafted to represent a broad range of perspectives and communities across the Chicagoland region. To ensure additional voices informed the Task Force's work, several channels of outreach were activated to gather different perspectives from the community and to further engage our region's residents.

- \* Chicago Youth Summit
- \* Community focus groups
- \* Reopening public survey
- \* Recovery public survey
- \* Roundtables with economists from Northwestern and University of Chicago
- \* 1CHI4All and Racial Equity Rapid Response neighborhood town halls



# Executive summary

The existing economic and social divide, the threat of COVID-19, and most recently, potent examples of racial injustice have combined to create a uniquely painful moment for the Chicago region. Transformative change is necessary for the region to move forward through these challenges. The recommendations put forward by the Recovery Task Force (RTF) in the following document cannot and will not solve all the challenges currently facing Chicago, but this report will outline bold, actionable ideas to tackle them head-on.

As part of our efforts, the Recovery Task Force drafted a Change Study to highlight the impact of COVID-19 on Chicago's economic and social fabric, and to aid Recovery Task Force recommendations across committees. The findings of the Change Study place a sharp focus on the existing inequities in Chicago and the role those inequities play in deepening the impact of the current crisis for many Chicagoans. COVID-19's impact on lives and livelihoods was rapid and deeply felt across our region, but this impact has not been experienced equally across communities.

Informed by the findings of the Change Study, community engagement, and collective experience, the Recovery Task Force's committees identified 17 recommendations across 5 core priorities for the City of Chicago and its region:

## 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

## 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 region's contracting and construction industry
- \* Create the most vibrant SMB and Black- and Brown-owned business community in America
- \* Expand relief programs and pilot innovative approaches to improve and strengthen the social safety net

**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

**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

**Reignite activity throughout Chicago by sharing our story**

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

In addition to the above recommendations, the Recovery Task Force would like to highlight crucial work the Lightfoot administration is already doing to address the structural inequities affecting millions of Chicago residents. While the unique shock of COVID-19 demands new action, much of this Task Force's work builds upon Mayor Lightfoot's vision for Chicago's equitable transformation. In particular, the Recovery Task Force proposes that the above recommendations inform ongoing efforts around the following four initiatives:

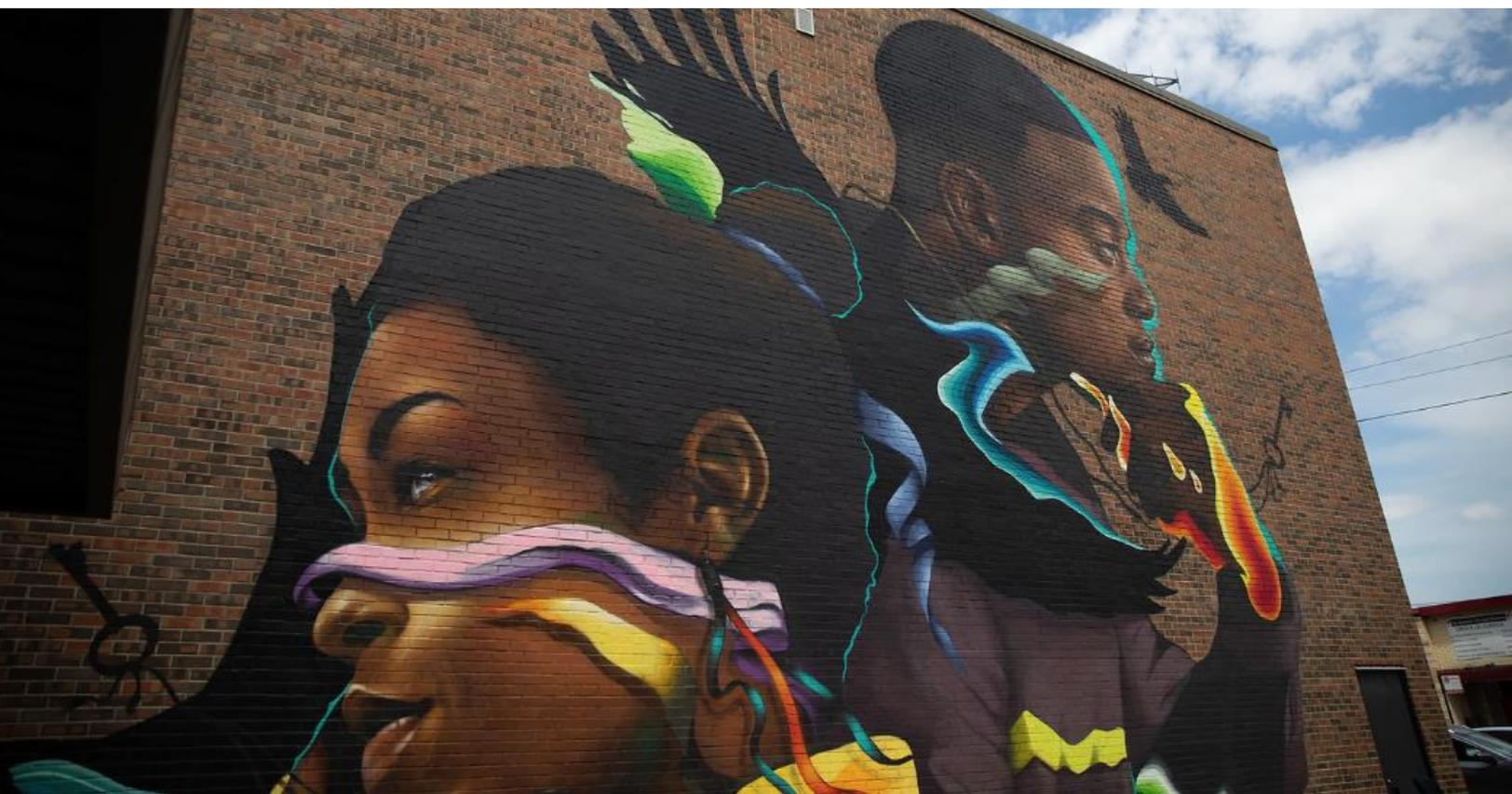
<b>INVEST South/West</b>	<b>Solutions Toward Ending Poverty (STEP)</b>
<b>We Will Chicago – Citywide Plan</b>	<b>Chicago Connected</b>

Going forward, we recognize that additional perspectives beyond those included in the formulation of this report must be considered as we mobilize to create transformative change for our region. The Recovery Task Force's recommendations incorporate community feedback, but

it will be critical to continually engage communities, particularly those most directly impacted by these recommendations. Representatives from communities should have an active role in the implementation process.

This document represents only the first step of many toward recovery for the city and region. With these recommendations as a guide, we must move forward together to repair not only the economic and social devastation stemming from COVID-19, but also to root out structural inequities that have persisted for too long.

**For recovery and transformation, we must  
move forward together.**





# A task force to drive recovery

The Chicago Recovery Task Force is an advisory body to the City of Chicago, co-chaired by Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and former White House Chief of Staff Samuel K. Skinner. The mandate of the Task Force is to provide recommendations for how Chicago and the surrounding region can ensure an inclusive and equitable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

While other initiatives have been fully dedicated to managing emergency responses and preparing the gradual reopening of the economy, the request to Recovery Task Force members was to focus on mid- to long-term, bold ideas that help both start the recovery and accelerate structural transformation on the path toward a more equitable and inclusive Chicago. From the outset of this endeavor, the Task Force maintained a clear understanding that the region's recovery is not only an economic recovery, but an emotional recovery from the stress and grief caused by this pandemic. As a result, the Task Force was organized around four areas of focus: Policy and Economic Stimulus, Mental and Emotional Health, Marketing and Business Development, and Regional Coordination. Furthermore, to inform the work of the Recovery Task Force a Change Study was prepared to capture the economic and social impact resulting from the COVID-19 crisis.

Throughout this process, the Task Force engaged a wide array of voices through discussions, surveys, focus groups, and roundtables. During the course of the work of the Task Force, the gravity of systemic racism has become inescapably clear throughout the nation and in Chicago, reminding us that racial equity is a cornerstone of any path to inclusive growth for our region.

As such, the work of the Recovery Task Force has been explicitly driven by three principles:

End economic hardship, and enable economic security and mobility

Chicago must tackle intergenerational poverty and widespread economic hardship that holds our city back by growing our economy inclusively rather than expecting the benefits of growth to trickle down. To that end, Chicago must:

- \* **Prioritize** changes that make a meaningful impact on the economic well-being of the individuals and businesses that have been most disenfranchised
- \* **Reduce** the expenses and costs of being poor, using a racial equity lens to assess how those costs manifest
- \* **Dismantle** systems of development that have traditionally had politically-motivated decision-making or outright corruption
- \* **Ensure** workers have access to quality jobs with the benefits they need and a safety net in times of hardship

## Address racial inequities

To be effective, this work must account for structural inequities — including racism and gender discrimination that drive everything from one’s income to one’s safety to life expectancy — that diminish our city. Policies that succeed must work to:

- \* **Reverse** historic disinvestment in Chicago’s Black neighborhoods
- \* **Eliminate** racial health disparities that mirror racial housing segregation patterns and are resulting in unequal life outcomes and barriers to access for Black and Brown communities, including immigrants
- \* **Raise** the standard quality of life in underserved Black and Brown neighborhoods by ensuring access to basic resources, increasing real and perceived safety, and ensuring new residents do not displace existing families
- \* **Create** more opportunities for Black and Brown small business owners to start and grow businesses

## Build together

All recommendations must be grounded in the vision and needs of communities and the work already taking place. Collectively, we must:

- \* **Include** multiple, diverse community-based organizations in citywide planning
- \* **Collaborate** with existing community organizations and leverage their expertise to plan and execute recovery efforts and increase equitable access to services
- \* **Implement** solutions that are derived from the input of the people most impacted
- \* **Consider** who the beneficiaries of the policies will be and work to mitigate unintended consequences identified through engagement

In this report, the Recovery Task Force offers a set of recommendations – a mix of pragmatic and bold ideas that can support the City of Chicago’s recovery efforts while putting Chicago and our surrounding region on a path toward true healing and transformation. We urge the City of

Chicago to consider these recommendations as guidelines for future work. Further, we encourage the City to continue the conversations the Task Force started with broad and authentic discussions with residents, communities, businesses, and tourists to strengthen our recommendations and support their implementation.





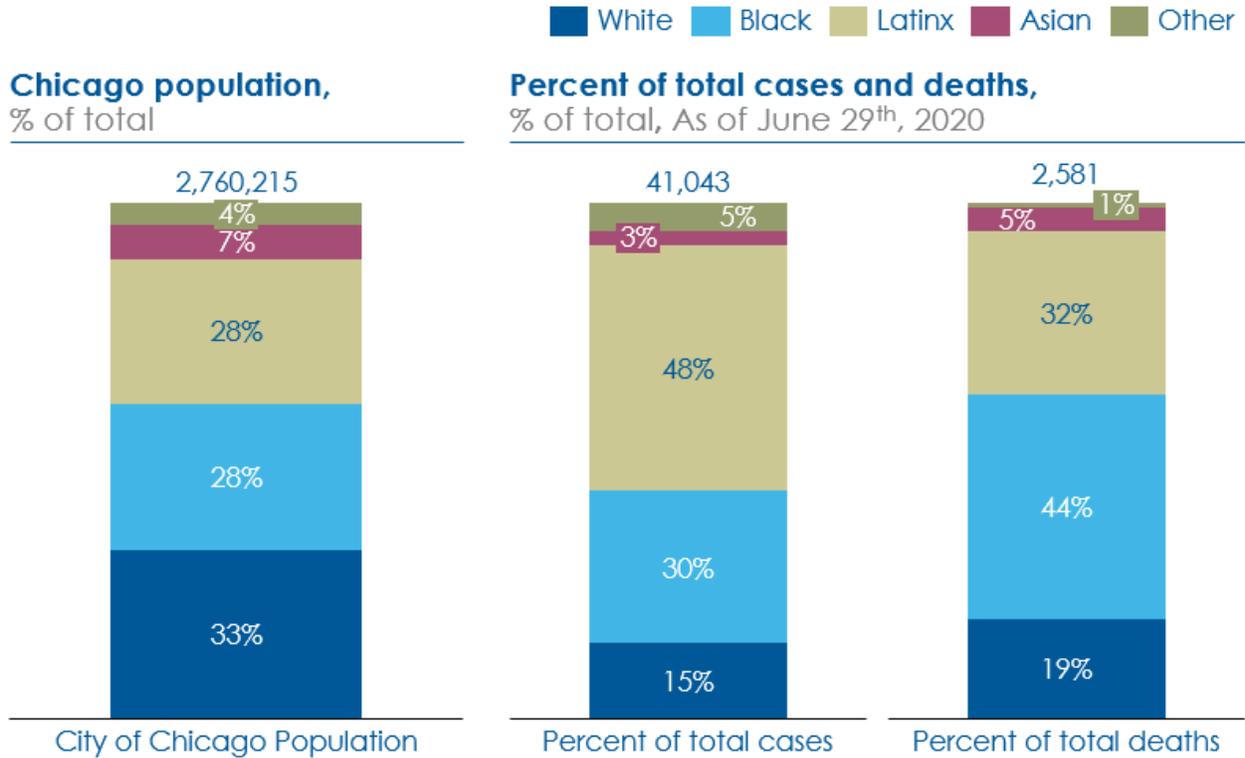
# A tale of two viruses

## An unprecedented health crisis

COVID-19 has created a health crisis on a scale our region has never seen. As of June 29, more than 50,000 people have been infected in Chicago alone, and more than 2,500 have died.<sup>1</sup> Further complicating this tragic crisis, COVID-19 has not affected all communities equally. The pandemic has disproportionately affected Black and Latinx communities and laid bare structural disparities in health outcomes, underlying health conditions, access to basic necessities, and safety net support.

As of June 29, Black and Latinx residents accounted for 30% and 48% of all cases, respectively, with a case rate per 100,000 residents 2.3x and 3.8x higher than White and Asian populations.<sup>1</sup> Of those who have died from COVID-19 in Chicago, 44% were Black and 32% were Latinx.<sup>1</sup>

### Exhibit<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> CDPH Office of Epidemiology, published June 29, 2020 at 3:00 PM; Race-ethnicity percentage is calculated among those with known race-ethnicity as reported by the medical provider

To respond to the health emergency posed by COVID-19, the City formed an Emergency Operations Center led by the Office of Emergency Management and Communications to coordinate essential city services and marshal resources to all residents, with a particular focus on vulnerable communities and residents. Additionally, the City of Chicago identified and put into action an array of key short-term solutions to mitigate the immediate impacts of COVID-19.

- ★ The City launched its **Racial Equity Rapid Response Team (RERRT)**, in partnership with West Side United, to address the disproportionate rates of cases and deaths in Black and Brown communities. The RERRT applied a hyper-local, data-driven lens to COVID-19 mitigation efforts by partnering with community leaders to design grassroots approaches to education and communication, prevention, testing and access to healthcare, and the provision of basic support services
- ★ To quickly infuse capital into small businesses, the City launched the **Small Business Resiliency Fund** offering a total of \$100M in low-interest loans to local small businesses
- ★ The City's **Microbusiness Recovery Grant Program** distributed \$5,000 grants to 1,000 microenterprises with four employees or less and under \$250K in annual revenue, and is continuing with its **Together Now Fund** to provide additional grants to small businesses for both operational expenses and physical infrastructure repair
- ★ By creating the **COVID-19 Housing Assistance Grant Program**, the City assisted 2,000 Chicagoans who lost their jobs or were otherwise impacted by the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic by funding one-time grants to support rent and mortgage payments
- ★ The City responded quickly to provide emergency and quarantine housing assistance utilizing hotels, community centers and other City facilities
- ★ As cases were rising, the City led the rapid transformation of McCormick Place to an alternate center facility to ensure Chicago had sufficient hospital capacity
- ★ To ease the financial strain COVID created, the City took immediate steps to temporarily suspend fees and payments for select ticketed violations

The City of Chicago also developed the **Protecting Chicago** framework – a detailed, data-driven reopening strategy to ensure necessary precautions are taken to safely reopen the City. This strategy was created through a fact and data-based approach driven by the Chicago Department of Public Health and aligned with the State of Illinois and Cook County.



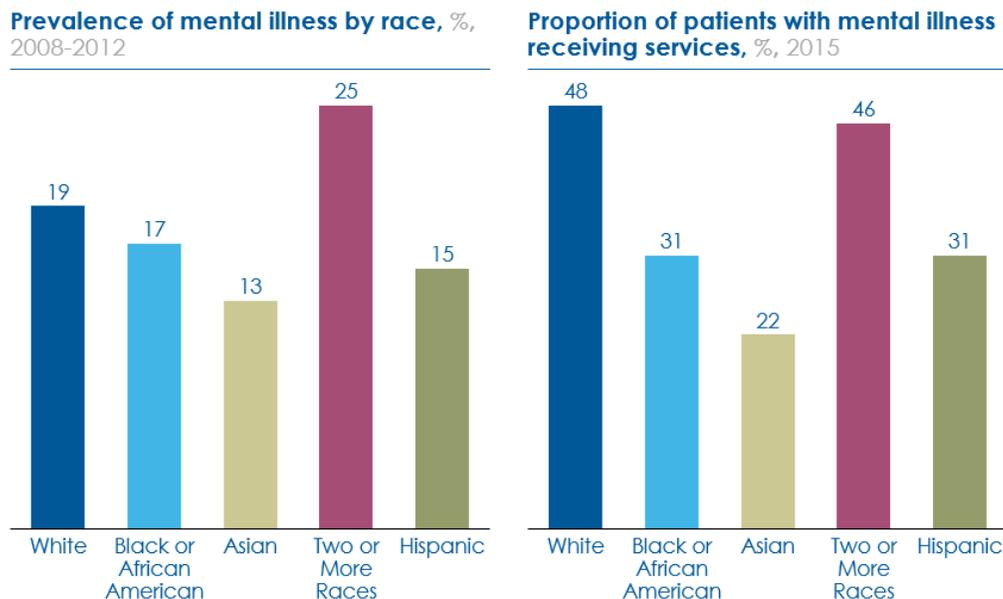
## A history of structural inequity

At the root of the unequal impact of COVID-19 in our region is a history of racial inequity and injustice. COVID-19 has served as a catalyst for the consequences of the pervasive inequity that exists across Chicago's communities and extends far beyond access to healthcare. The virus laid bare and exacerbated existing racial inequities present in Chicago in wealth, education, housing, overall access to opportunities, and more.

To understand the pervasive inequity that exists across the Chicagoland region, the Recovery Task Force developed a Change Study to highlight the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis to the local economic and social fabric. The findings from the Change Study underlined the depth and breadth of existing inequities and emphasized the rapid and deep impact of COVID-19 on the lives and livelihoods across our region. However, this impact has not been experienced equally across communities.

Below is a subset of facts that were critical in shaping the recommendations.

- ★ **Chicago neighborhoods face differences in life expectancy of up to 30 years<sup>2</sup>**
- ★ **~10% of the City of Chicago's population lacks health insurance<sup>3</sup>**
  - ★ Latinx populations have the highest rate of uninsured at 17.5%
- ★ **On average, 1 in 5 US adults experience mental illness<sup>4</sup>**
  - ★ White populations with mental illness receive services 48% of the time, while Black and Latinx populations only receive services 31% of the time<sup>5</sup>



<sup>2</sup> New York University Medical School for City of Chicago (2019)

<sup>3</sup> Chicago Health Atlas, for City of Chicago (2017)

<sup>4</sup> NAMI National data (2018)

<sup>5</sup> American Psychiatric Association national data (2017)

- ★ **Chicago had ~47K behavioral health hospitalizations in 2017<sup>6</sup>**
  - ★ >50% were Black residents, significantly higher than any other racial ethnic group
  - ★ >50% were individuals facing high economic hardship
- ★ **In Chicago, about 1 in 5 children under the age of 18 lack access to broadband, and are primarily Black or Latinx<sup>7</sup>**
  - ★ 46% of West Englewood children under 18 and 33% of Humboldt Park children under 18 are without broadband internet
- ★ **Inequality in the City of Chicago has grown for decades; incomes declined for most residents while incomes for residents in high-income areas rose<sup>8</sup>**
  - ★ The proportion of Census tracts in the City of Chicago considered very-low income increased from 17% in 1970 to 46% of the City in 2010, primarily concentrated on the West and South Sides
  - ★ The proportion of Census tracts in the City of Chicago considered very-high income tracts grew from 3% to 15% of the City in the same time period, primarily concentrated on the North Side
- ★ **Unemployment among Chicago's Black population is greater than twice that of the White and Latinx populations, roughly 50% more than in peer cities<sup>9</sup>**
- ★ **Approximately 1 in 3 jobs in the Chicago MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area; Chicago and its suburbs, covering 14 counties in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin) is considered vulnerable<sup>10</sup>**
  - ★ Of those considered vulnerable, an estimated 73% are jobs that are earning under \$40K a year
  - ★ Of those considered vulnerable, an estimated 77% are jobs that require an education that is less than a bachelor's degree
  - ★ Of those considered vulnerable, an estimated 38% are jobs in small firms with fewer than 100 employees

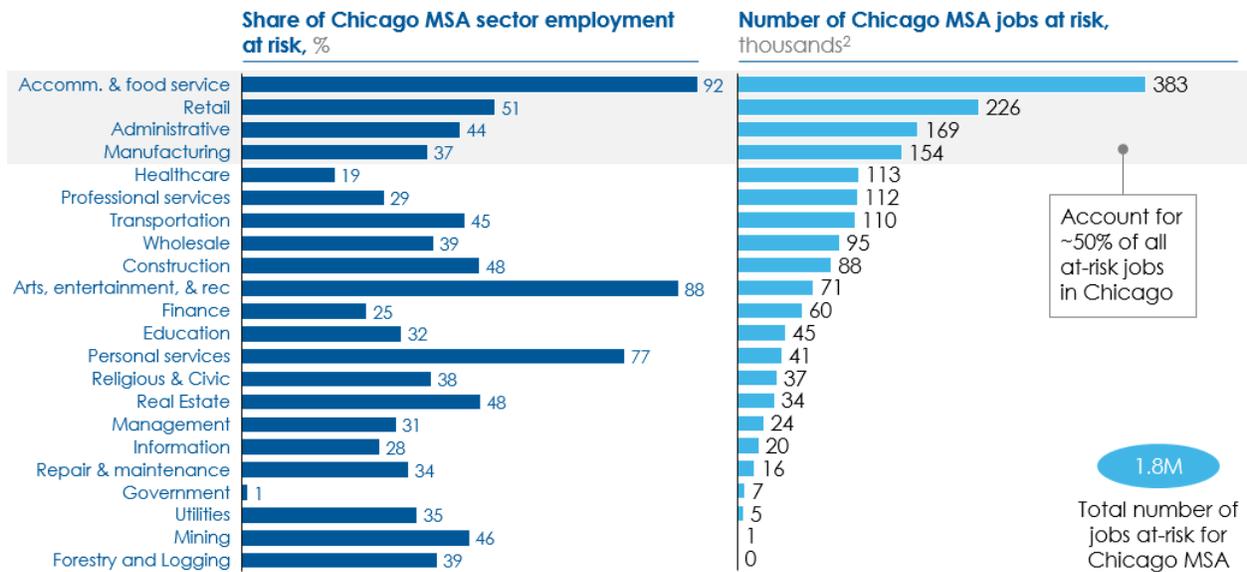
<sup>6</sup> Chicago Health Atlas, for City of Chicago (2017)

<sup>7</sup> Kids First Chicago for City of Chicago (April 2020)

<sup>8</sup> 1970-2000 Decennial Census, 2008-2012 Five-Year American Community Survey, Voorhees Center UIC, Cities Centre University of Toronto

<sup>9</sup> US Census Bureau, MSA-level, Unemployment rate by race/ethnicity (2017)

<sup>10</sup> LaborCUBE, BLS OES, Moody's, IDES Where Workers Work 2019; Note: Estimated based on total City of Chicago employment from IDES Where Workers Work 2019; Note: Analysis determines jobs at risk as related to social distancing policies and their immediate knock-on economic consequences – assumes level of social distancing (defined by shelter-in-place policy) based on state policies



- ★ **On average, children growing up on the South and West Sides of the City of Chicago earn less than \$34,000 annually as adults<sup>11</sup>**
- ★ **35% of Chicago households are severely housing burdened, spending more than 30% of total income on housing costs, especially on the West and South Sides<sup>12</sup>**
- ★ **1 in 6 Chicago residents require food security assistance, primarily on Chicago’s South and West Sides, with more than 15 community areas facing a 35-58% rate of food insecurity<sup>13</sup>**
- ★ **CTA rail ridership and O’Hare air traffic were down ~87% and ~90% at their peaks, respectively, showing a notable marker of decline in economic activity<sup>14</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> Opportunity Atlas using Census Data for City of Chicago (2010)

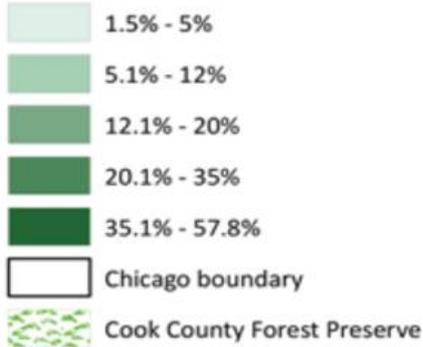
<sup>12</sup> Chicago Health Atlas for City of Chicago (2017)

<sup>13</sup> Greater Chicago Food Depository for City of Chicago (2016)

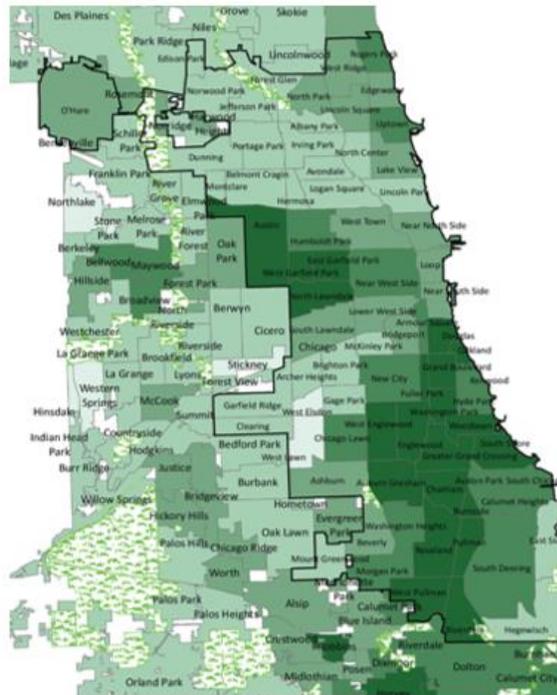
<sup>14</sup> MTA, The New York Times, LAist, WTTW, MassLive, Reuters, The Philadelphia Tribune, KALW, King County Metro, Curbed, CPR News

## Chicago food insecurity<sup>1</sup> by neighborhood, % of families that are food insecure

### Food insecurity rate by community area



**1 in 6 Chicago residents require food security assistance**



★ **Chicago’s population has been stagnant, growing at 0.03% compound annual growth rate (CAGR), or 0.27% in total, from 2010 to 2018<sup>15</sup>**

- ★ Peer cities Denver and Washington, D.C. saw total growth increase by 18% and 16%, respectively, from 2010 to 2018
- ★ The Chicago MSA’s population is expected to decrease by 1.75% over the next decade – the only MSA among peer cities expected to decline<sup>16</sup>
- ★ Peer MSAs Dallas, Houston and Denver are expected to increase their total populations by 16-21% by 2030

During this unprecedented time of crisis, we are presented with a rare opportunity to rebuild our social and economic institutions to drive inclusive growth. The City of Chicago must make purposeful change to elevate residents out of the immediate health crisis, while ensuring their response actively addresses the underlying causes and symptoms associated with a history of segregation and disinvestment.

<sup>15</sup> US Census American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2018)

<sup>16</sup> Moody’s Analytics (2019)



# Recommendations for a stronger, more inclusive Chicago

As our City, County, and State governments tackled pressing health and economic emergencies created by COVID-19, the Recovery Task Force was charged with thinking beyond immediate needs and developing recommendations for how Chicago and the surrounding region can ensure an inclusive and equitable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. To meet this charge, the Recovery Task Force identified advancing four existing City of Chicago initiatives and developed a set of 17 recommendations outlined in the following sections:

- ★ Accelerate investments to eliminate inequities
- ★ Address new and old traumas
- ★ Expand economic opportunity, quality employment, and financial security
- ★ Build on our region's strengths
- ★ Capture opportunities created by COVID-19
- ★ Reignite activity throughout Chicago by sharing our story

Our recommendations are ambitious, but actionable. Though the Task Force's focus is mid- to long-term recovery, there are key steps the City, the region, and community stakeholders can take now to prepare for our region's long journey toward recovery.

Our recommendations aim not only to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19, but also to help transform our region. From the start, Task Force members centered the recovery recommendations on issues of structural inequity that plague our city and have been further revealed by COVID-19. After the killing of George Floyd and the evolving national conversation on race and justice, the Task Force reinforced and enhanced how these recommendations can tackle deep-rooted inequities in Chicago.

The road ahead to recovery and transformation for our region is long, but our recommendations outline key steps we can take to move forward together.





## Accelerate investments to eliminate inequities

As a foundation for the Task Force’s recommendations, we want to first highlight key initiatives the Lightfoot administration has already undertaken. Our discussions throughout this process have underscored the importance of these initiatives and we recommend investing in them with renewed urgency as part of our region’s recovery.

Accelerated investments are necessary because COVID-19 has exacerbated inequities facing our city. This pandemic has affected all residents, but it has disproportionately impacted communities of color. As stated, despite making up only a third of Chicago’s population, Chicago’s Black residents have made up 44% of COVID-19-related deaths.<sup>17</sup>

The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 echoes the underlying inequity our city faced pre-COVID-19. Dramatic life expectancy gaps exist across communities. These decades-wide gaps are a result of a continued legacy of systemic racism and disinvestment in Chicago’s communities of color. In virtually every measure – from economic and food security to access to broadband and mental health services – Chicago’s communities of color are faring the worst, a wrong that must be righted with meaningful transformation and change. The Task Force recommends the City’s existing strategies be accelerated and scaled:

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

<sup>17</sup> CDPH Office of Epidemiology, published Jun 29, 2020 at 3:00 PM; Race-ethnicity percentage is calculated among those with known race-ethnicity as reported by the medical provider

INVEST South/West is an unprecedented community improvement initiative to marshal the resources of multiple City departments, community organizations, and corporate partners toward 10 initial neighborhoods and 12 targeted commercial corridors on Chicago's South and West Sides to re-activate neighborhood cores that have historically served as focal points for pedestrian activity, shopping, services, transportation, public spaces and quality-of life amenities for local residents and drive inclusive growth.

Through this groundbreaking, collaborative effort between government, businesses, philanthropies, and community leaders, the City will align more than \$750 million in funding through 2022. The initiative will seek to maximize those public investments in order to attract private capital, respond to changing commercial trends, and enrich local culture.

There are three distinct, but connected components of INVEST South/West:

- ★ The creation of Neighborhood Roundtables to convene key community organizations, aldermen, Department of Planning and Development planning staff, and local residents and business owners with the objectives of providing input on public investments and creating visibility on neighborhood plans and priorities and ongoing development and investable opportunities
- ★ Aligning City resources across departments and sister agencies to target public dollars toward meaningful investments in the 10 neighborhoods and to create better collaboration and a more efficient use of resources across departments
- ★ Proactive engagement of the private and nonprofit sectors, including corporations, investors, and philanthropy, on investable opportunities in the 10 neighborhoods and 12 commercial corridors

INVEST South/West officially kicked off in October 2019. To date, efforts have been made across all three core components, with a focus on aligning public resources and creating Neighborhood Roundtables.

Private sector investment opportunities are proactively being explored, including opportunities to create job opportunities, better housing, and more necessary amenities on and near the 12 commercial corridors.

## Solutions Toward Ending Poverty (STEP)



Announced in February 2020, STEP brings together hundreds of people from around Chicago to launch a years-long, movement-based effort to address perhaps the single greatest challenge our city faces: entrenched poverty and economic hardship – both its causes and symptoms. Participants include community economic mobility practitioners, academics and researchers, artists and storytellers, grassroots community activists, employers and business leaders, and government officials.

This bold initiative will implement evidence-based policies to alleviate poverty in Chicago by adopting several key strategies. The STEP coalition will:

- ★ Identify a set of metrics that can be grouped into three key pillars that will guide its work and facilitate communication with other agencies and the public
- ★ Partner with communities to define how poverty and economic hardship manifest for them, and develop community-centered metrics to measure the work on an ongoing basis
- ★ Build a roadmap with communities that will show how the City can end economic hardship and poverty
- ★ Create new opportunities to share, scale and replicate work -- including from other cities -- that is or can be lifting people out of poverty and on an upward path of economic mobility
- ★ Tell new narratives about how economic hardship impact Chicagoans, and how Chicagoans are surviving and thriving amidst those struggles
- ★ Generate the collective will to address the full-scale of the economic and social challenges associated with entrenched poverty and economic hardship, including at the state and federal levels
- ★ Showcase partner commitments, at all scales, that are advancing STEP goals



## We Will Chicago – Citywide Plan

We Will Chicago, Chicago’s new Citywide Plan, will address systemic, social, and economic inequities that diminish Chicago’s viability as a global city, while also serving as a framework to justify and guide future budgeting, policy, and development decisions citywide. It will encompass all elements of citywide planning – everything from additional green space to regional transit priorities such as western access to O’Hare Airport.

The Citywide Plan will be driven by a comprehensive public process that includes virtual and in-person engagement activities led in part by artists and cultural organizations over the next three years. City departments and sister agencies are currently meeting weekly to discuss engagement concepts and citywide planning goals. Sessions will continue into the summer with assistance from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and Bloomberg Associates. Advisory committees including civic, community, and philanthropic organizations will be formed by fall 2020 to review, comment and enhance ongoing planning efforts.

The City of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, Kids First Chicago, and the civic philanthropic community have recognized a historic opportunity to eliminate Internet accessibility as a barrier to digital learning. According to US Census data, one in five children in Chicago lack quality Internet access – which equates to roughly 110,000 kids across 60 thousand households. This barrier disproportionately hurts Chicago’s low-income families and students of color. In fact, in some South and West Side Chicago neighborhoods, over one in two children under the age of eighteen lacks access to Internet. With COVID-19 forcing schools to adopt remote learning for the summer, and with the permissibility of in-person instruction at-risk in advance of the 2020-2021 school year, the students who were already the most vulnerable to falling behind will now face even more challenges relative to their peers. Without swift action to close the “Digital Divide,” we will witness a widening of the achievement gap.

The future vitality of Chicago’s economy depends on the education of our young people. It is in the best interest of the public and private sectors, as well as the City’s philanthropic community, to help ensure digital educational equity. This is a problem that can only be solved through generosity, ingenuity, and resilience — strengths that are built into the fabric of our great City, and strengths that can compel us to confront digital inequities head-on. Chicago Connected will be one of the largest and longest City-run Internet accessibility programs in the country aimed at closing the digital divide for students. The program will primarily focus on high-speed, fixed-line, household Internet access, at CPS-recommended speeds, ensuring access to the CPS remote learning platform. Chicago Connected will not impose any additional fees on families and will deliver Wi-Fi “hotspots” to support homeless students and other vulnerable student groups.



## Address new and old traumas

COVID-19 has taken a toll on everyone in our region, but it has disproportionately impacted communities of color, compounding long-term traumas inflicted by violence, structural inequality, and poverty. A true recovery cannot be achieved without deliberate steps to meet residents' mental and emotional health needs.

Residents have made their mental health needs clear. Over half (52%) of respondents to the City's reopening survey expressed they felt anxiety, higher than any other reported emotion.<sup>18</sup> During the Rise and Recover Chicago Virtual Teen Summit, mental health was highlighted as a top issue by young people.

At the root of many of our residents' mental wellness challenges are basic, fundamental needs: safety, housing, food security, and economic opportunity. Addressing those basic needs is at the core of Mayor's Lightfoot's agenda. In concert with the advancement of the STEP (Solutions Toward Ending Poverty) agenda, a consistent and adequately resourced effort is needed to support the mental and emotional health for our residents.

Importantly, at the foundation of our recommendation is the explicit recognition that law enforcement agencies cannot and should not continue to be the primary source of mental health support for residents. Resources and policies need to be directed to equip and expand the capacity of providers of mental and emotional health support services. In doing so, the City should prioritize scaling effective, community-based programs, and organizations, aligned with its recently announced mental health framework. This framework and the City's historic investments focus on strengthening the mental health system through direct investment in community health centers and community mental health centers and City clinics, providing services to individuals where they are instead of solely in brick and mortar clinics, expanding victim services, supporting stronger connectivity of care across the system, increasing services for persons living with serious mental illness, and destigmatizing mental health through intentional messaging.

<sup>18</sup> City of Chicago Reopening Survey, (May 2020)

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Recommendations in this section include:

- \* 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



## Create the most advanced healing-centered region in the country

Our region should strive not only to recognize trauma but to set a national example in enacting policies and programs to advance healing. Following the example of leading cities like San Francisco<sup>19</sup> and Philadelphia,<sup>20</sup> Chicago should continue developing trauma-informed systems in its Department of Public Health. But to achieve this ambitious goal, the broad engagement and activation of local assets and stakeholders will be pivotal.

### Promote awareness

- \* Similar to the COVID-19 hand washing campaigns, create creative and compelling campaigns around important mental health practices (e.g., seeking help, gratitude, breathing exercises) in partnership with athletes, celebrities, Chicago artists and storytellers, and City's marketing initiatives
- \* Develop city-wide awareness campaign on key challenges (e.g., domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking) modeled on the example of Thrive NYC or Thrive London
- \* Ensure the City models healing policies and practices internally with City employees

### Engage and equip

#### Employers

- \* Equip employers with the specific healing tools (training, best practice guides, protocols) they need to support themselves and their staff
- \* Highlight and publicize Chicago companies leading the nation in offering healing best practices

#### Schools

- \* Prepare schools with proper resources and support staff (e.g., SEL specialists, outside experts in mental health)
- \* Continue efforts toward ending youth involvement in gun violence through positive and alternative programming, such as the multi-year commitment to expand the groundbreaking Choose to Change (C2C) program - providing individualized mentoring, group-based trauma-informed therapy, and enrichment / recreational activities
- \* Offer universal adverse childhood experience (ACE) screening through Chicago Public Schools
- \* Train students and adults in schools to provide counseling and healing services online or on the phone
- \* Build healing-centered tools into youth programming, such as sports and arts
- \* Equip families by providing online access to healing-centered tools to support their children outside of school

<sup>19</sup> San Francisco's Trauma-informed System

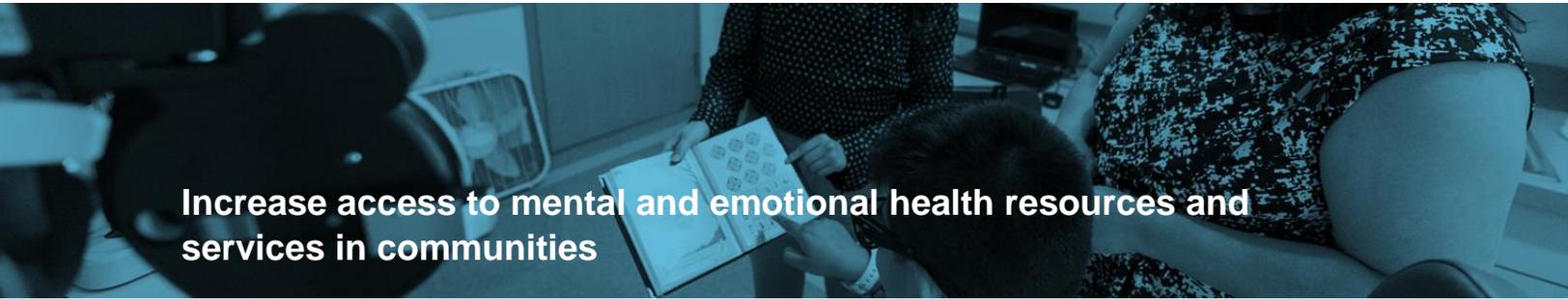
<sup>20</sup> Philadelphia Acute Trauma Responder Program

### *Faith-based organizations*

- \* Respect the trusted relationships built by faith-based institutions and give faith leaders clear guides on mental wellness resources to share with their communities
- \* Offer training to faith leaders and their staff, enabling them to directly provide essential wellness services aligned to the City's mental health framework

### **Push for systemic change**

- \* Establish platform of mental, emotional, and physical health initiatives tied to state and federal advocacy agenda (e.g., Medicaid reform, funding for brick-and-mortar and digital health clinics)
- \* Pilot innovative approaches (policy, programmatic and infrastructure) to improving mental health outcomes through national partnerships (e.g., with a mental-health focused national foundation and / or the Creating Healthy Communities: Arts + Public Health in America initiative)
- \* Expand restorative justice programs by partnering with community organizations to promote community-level healing



## Increase access to mental and emotional health resources and services in communities

Additional mental and emotional health support is needed throughout the city, but Black and Brown communities face more barriers to access high-quality resources. Our region needs to face this challenge and adopt a strategic effort to expand channels and remove barriers to mental health resources and services. We must enhance access specifically for communities with the greatest needs and for our most vulnerable population segments: seniors, people experiencing homelessness, domestic violence survivors, people with disabilities, undocumented residents, and returning citizens.

### Dedicated 211 Line

- \* Create a single, multilingual phone line where residents can easily access a broad range of social services
- \* Develop a cooperative model of mental health service providers and community organizations to build and operate 211 with trained staff
- \* Establish necessary back-end infrastructure and staffing requirements to quickly guide users to the services and support they need
- \* Leverage expertise from City's 311, existing non-profit partners' hotlines, and best practices from leading cities

### One-stop-shop – digital and in-person

- \* Enact Mayor Lightfoot's pledge to create a website dedicated to wellness and self-care open to all Chicagoans by developing an online one-stop-shop for mental and emotional health resources
- \* Embed new resources within hospital & neighborhood health administrative procedures to promote online one-stop-shop to those who could benefit most
- \* Support expansion of mental health services in Black and Brown communities while leveraging network of universities and their expertise and resources

- \* In the short-term, provide physical one-stop-shop kiosks and mobile service vans in underserved neighborhoods

### Telehealth platform

- \* Leverage the City's investment in a telehealth platform to give increased access to mental health and emotional wellness services
- \* Ensure telehealth platform offers specialized, culturally sensitive resources for mental and emotional wellness that are free or easily accessible to all Chicago residents
- \* While the digital divide remains unclosed, bring telehealth tools (e.g., mobile hotspots, tablets that can be loaned) directly to residents without broadband access



## Create a culturally sensitive, diverse mental health workforce

In addition to increasing access channels for mental and emotional resources, our City needs a culturally sensitive, diverse workforce to staff these channels. We have developed ideas on how to bring in and thoughtfully train new talent to build out this workforce. We offer initiatives that will leverage and support existing community health professionals who are crucial assets already. Finally, we want to help coordinate and build on the existing work of community-based organizations who have established trusted relationships in their communities and provide vital services.

### Create a layered network of community health support workers

- \* Establish paid opportunities for non-clinical workers, including appropriately skilled workers from sectors most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis (e.g., artists, educators, and customer service workers) to provide an array of services (e.g., resource referral and linkage to community-based supports, emotional and mental health education, mental health awareness training, community building and social support interventions)
- \* Build a Chicago Service Corps, creating paid opportunities for underemployed people, furloughed workers, and young people

### Provide best-in-class tools

- \* Develop and disseminate best-in-class trainings – centered on cultural sensitivity, anti-racism and inclusive of needs of people with disabilities – by partnering with higher education institutions and leading advocacy organizations (e.g., CROAR – Chicagoland Regional Organizing for AntiRacism)
- \* Equip community health workers with telehealth tools for both diagnostic and therapeutic services

### Build pathways for clinical community health professionals

- \* Promote stackable certifications offered by City Colleges and higher education institutions to advance the professionalization of community health workers
- \* Create a community health program modeled after Metropolitan Peace Academy's street outreach workers certification
- \* Fast track students currently in mental health programs to bring them into the workforce
- \* Pair mental health professionals and students with community organizations to gain hours to update their license

### Scale existing Community-based organizations' (CBOs') impact

- \* Provide resources (e.g., CARES Act funding, as appropriate) to sustain and scale existing, effective community-based organizations
- \* Build a grassroots network of existing community health providers by organizing and publishing a searchable online inventory of resources
- \* Leverage Chicago Continuum of Care's model to ensure full spectrum of mental and emotional health services are provided through CBO collaboration



## Expand economic opportunity, quality employment, and financial security

COVID-19 has inflicted devastating health consequences on our region, but it has also imposed an abrupt economic strain on working families, making it clear that too many of our region's workers lack basic protections and a sense of financial security.

COVID-19 has created mass unemployment and underemployment in our region, especially for low- and middle-skill workers. Unemployment claims skyrocketed in late March and the hours worked by hourly employees in Chicago declined 60-80% in March, compared to pre-COVID-19 levels.<sup>21</sup>

Prior to COVID-19, there was already a staggering disparity in how vulnerable Chicagoans were to economic downturns, most notably along geographic and racial lines. Further, children who grow up on the South and West Sides of Chicago earn less than \$34K on average as adults.<sup>22</sup> And the Black unemployment rate in the Chicago region is 2x larger than any other group.<sup>23</sup>

To drive a sustainable and equitable recovery for all residents, the following recommendations are founded on providing more economic opportunities and a more robust safety net for people in our region.

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Recommendations in this section include:

- ★ 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 region's contracting and construction industries
- ★ Create the most vibrant SMB (small and medium businesses) and Black- and Brown-owned business community in America
- ★ Expand relief programs and pilot innovative approaches to improve and strengthen the social safety net

<sup>21</sup> University of Chicago Rustandy Center, Homebase data (January 2020)

<sup>22</sup> Opportunity Atlas using US Census Data for City of Chicago (2010)

<sup>23</sup> US Census Bureau (2017); Economy 2030 (2019)



## Reimagine the region's workforce infrastructure and create a plan to invest in displaced and young workers

COVID-19 has put roughly 1 in 3 jobs in the Chicago region at risk, across a variety of sectors and skill-levels.<sup>24</sup> The region's jobs with the lowest wages and skill requirements, which are disproportionately held by Black and Brown workers, are being hit the hardest. This crisis only exacerbates existing issues and inequities in the workforce including higher rates of un- and underemployment among Black and Brown workers and a skills mismatch between many employers and workers.

In order to emerge from this crisis and build a stronger economy, it will be critical to create a regional skill development and training plan that targets un- and underemployed workers, especially in communities of color. This equity-focused plan should also create lasting infrastructure to connect workers with educational opportunities, training programs, and, ultimately, jobs that will provide a good, sustainable standard-of-living to support working families.

### Create a regional workforce strategy for the future

- \* Partner with stakeholders, including educational institutions (e.g., junior / community colleges, four-year colleges / universities, CPS), industries, unions, and CBOs to develop a comprehensive and coordinated regional workforce strategy and system
- \* Identify "sure bet" growth sectors (e.g., information technology, healthcare and life-sciences, green infrastructure, manufacturing, and transportation, distribution, and logistics) to build a workforce strategy and system around
- \* Also consider professional fields with low barriers to entry (e.g., real estate, insurance) that could be made more inclusive
- \* Push all programs to offer a minimum and standard level of computer / technology skills to prepare workers for future occupations

- \* Leverage partnerships to create clear diversity and hiring goals and connect workforce pipelines, especially those mostly serving Black and Brown residents, with employers (e.g., CCC / Accenture partnership) and opportunities for further education

### Expand access to career opportunities and diversify the workforce

- \* Dramatically increase engagement with and inclusivity of workforce training programs and pipelines
- \* Build, expand, or replicate programs at regional educational institutions and skilled trade pipelines for targeted opportunities and jobs
- \* Leverage training programs at CBOs, industry associations, etc. and expand their capacity and reach by providing more funding and resources (e.g., information on training in new skill sets)

<sup>24</sup> LaborCUBE, BLS OES, Moody's, IDES Where Workers Work (2019)

- \* Locate more training facilities and programs (e.g., unions, CBOs) in neighborhoods to increase people's awareness and accessibility
- \* Create apprenticeship programs in additional sectors to increase opportunities for employment and exposure to career opportunities
- \* Widely market training programs (e.g., Citywide-marketing campaign, targeted outreach in schools and neighborhoods)
- \* Explore innovative solutions for making training programs more accessible (e.g., scaling up online & remote learning platforms, expanding flexible learning options, providing free-or-reduced tuition, expanding wraparound supports)
- \* Conduct targeted upstream support for individuals with barriers to employment (e.g., formerly incarcerated people) including outreach and awareness-building at key transition points
- \* Challenge program providers to offer more programs or develop innovative training pathways

- \* Retrain medium- and highly-skilled workers from sectors most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis (e.g., arts and culture, hospitality, and educational sectors)

### **Develop and improve integrated workforce and education data systems**

- \* Expand integrated data systems and provide better data by building on lessons learned from development of the Illinois Longitudinal Data System and Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership's Career Connect
- \* Provide data program providers need to connect their programs to business performance and participant outcomes; integrated data systems should support metrics like time to job placement, speed to job promotion, length of continued employment, cost of recruitment and training, or employer productivity and quality outcome

## Increase ownership and employment for Black and Brown residents in the region's contracting and construction industry

In Chicago, 139,000 people work in the trades with a third of them currently at retirement age and more in at-risk pools.<sup>25</sup> Many of these workers are unlikely to return to work after this crisis, yielding potentially 40,000 open job opportunities. Further, there is \$14 billion of construction work in Chicago every year, with a \$6 billion payroll.<sup>25</sup> Estimates suggest that less than 2% of that payroll goes to Black residents and less than 20% goes to Latinx residents.<sup>25</sup> To address this disparity, while promoting quality job opportunities for Black and Brown residents, we must take clear steps to make the workforce in these industries more inclusive.

### Expand access to career opportunities and diversify the workforce

- \* Increase awareness of, engagement with, and inclusivity of training and apprenticeship programs in the industry for Black and Brown residents:
  - \* Build, expand, or replicate effective programs (e.g., Hire360, the Construction Career Development Initiative in St. Louis)
  - \* Locate union buildings and other training facilities and programs in neighborhoods and communities of color
  - \* Explore solutions for making training and apprenticeship programs more accessible (e.g., free transit passes, wraparound supports)
  - \* Ensure end-to-end support so future opportunities are also accessible – individuals may need support reaching job sites and with childcare.

- \* Conduct targeted upstream support for individuals with barriers to employment
- \* Market training and apprenticeship programs to targeted audiences
- \* Create City, County, and State incentives and disincentives for contracting and construction companies to hire more Black and Brown employees as retirements spike in the current workforce
- \* Replicate the CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion program, in which the City calls for companies to make their workforce's more inclusive, companies sign a pledge, and companies provide additional HR resources to help transform their organizations

### Increase contracting with MBE and WBE

- \* Revise the City's MBE and WBE procurement requirements, as some relevant laws sunset this year, to encourage more engagement and contracting with local and minority-owned businesses for project

<sup>25</sup> Clayco Research (2019)



## Create the most vibrant SMB and Black- and Brown-owned business community in America

Now more than ever, SMB and Black- and Brown-owned businesses are sources for local job creation and catalysts of neighborhood development and revitalization. SMBs already face challenges in navigating City processes and accessing capital, but this crisis has added tremendous stress on Chicago's SMB community. A comprehensive approach to supporting SMBs is needed to complement the emergency short-term relief programs that have already been rolled out.

### Increase coordination across stakeholders

- \* Convene stakeholders (e.g., City departments and sister agencies, delegate agencies and capacity-building organizations, SMB owners and entrepreneurs, large companies) to increase collaboration and inform best practices
- \* Value stream map the SMB-owner's journey, and look for points to improve processes, break down silos, connect resources, or create partnerships
- \* Seize the moment and connect large companies and anchor institutions with SMB and Black-, Brown-, and woman-owned businesses to localize and diversify procurement and supply chains

### Provide targeted financial relief

- \* Expand flexibility around taxes, fees, permitting, licensing, regulations, and ordinance violations until there is an effective COVID-19 treatment or vaccine
- \* Support businesses going through COVID-19-related bankruptcies to help them avoid severe damage to credit (e.g., connect with financial planners and legal professionals)

### Reform City processes

- \* Create a one-stop-shop for SMBs to access services and resources for COVID recovery (e.g., financial assistance, PPE, permits, damage repair, information on liability)
- \* Reform relevant City processes to be faster, easier to navigate, and more tailored toward SMBs; create fast-track process for projects in certain neighborhoods
- \* Increase engagement with SMB and Black-, Brown-, and woman-owned businesses by leveraging established processes:
  - \* Executive or legislative action to define special criteria in RFP processes for contracts under a certain size (e.g., \$2 million) to connect SMB with more contracts
  - \* Review requirements outlined in City's 30% minority set-aside to make more inclusive
  - \* Increase stringency of minority / local hiring and procurement for public incentives (e.g., consider history and breadth of MBE, WBE, etc. procurement)
- \* Streamline and ease MBE, WBE, etc. certification processes; explore ways to be inclusive outside of official certification (e.g., in RFP processes)

### **Build capacity, especially in neighborhoods**

- \* Increase support for delegate agencies and capacity-building organizations in neighborhoods including CBOs and not-for-profits (e.g., reallocate funding to support most effective organizations, reform City reimbursement funding model)
- \* Accelerate effort to locate Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) satellite offices and resources centers, with private partners, in neighborhoods
- \* Offer or connect small businesses to a tailored, comprehensive set of resources and services (e.g., support navigating the SMB-owner's journey and City processes, financing, providers of specialized technical expertise, support with digital adoption to build an online presence, affordable and accessible shared / test kitchen space, mentorship and networking, portal for connecting SMBs with large businesses, highlighting Black, Brown, and women business owners in publications like Crain's)
- \* Create a "Buy Chicago" campaign to encourage residents and companies to support local businesses

### **Expand access to capital**

- \* Expand access to capital for local SMBs by linking businesses to financial institutions (e.g., Chicago's community banks, leveraging the Federal Home Loan Bank program) or locating financial institutions in neighborhoods, and engage financial institutions around this shared effort

- \* Prioritize funding SMB and Black-, Brown-, and woman-owned businesses and projects in certain neighborhoods with City financing tools (e.g., tax increment financing, or TIF)
- \* Expand access to capital for creative entrepreneurs, strengthening Chicago's international brand and preventing the loss of talent
- \* Develop new financing vehicles to support SMBs:
  - \* Develop solutions responsive to the capital profile businesses need to grow and scale (e.g., faster payment cycles from government institutions)
  - \* Create public-private venture fund supported by City and partner resources to make venture capital impact investments in support of local entrepreneurs
  - \* Establish new opportunities for public and philanthropic entities to invest in small businesses (e.g., philanthropic capital for equity investments, outcome-based funding models)
  - \* Develop additional debt product offerings with greater flexibility in their credit underwriting criteria across public (e.g., City relief funds) and private institutions
  - \* Create a revolving loan fund for small businesses and startups (e.g., Central New York Quasi Equity Fund) that collateralizes debt with an equity stake in the business



## Expand relief programs and pilot innovative approaches to improve and strengthen the social safety net

This crisis has further exposed the holes in our social safety net both for workers in traditional roles as well as gig and temporary workers. More than 200,000 Chicagoans work in the gig economy as rideshare drivers, delivery workers, and freelance professionals like independent writers, designers, and professional service providers.<sup>26</sup> Gig work often lacks benefits like health insurance and eligibility for safety net programs has been limited in the past.<sup>27</sup> To provide security for traditional as well as gig workers, the City can implement innovative approaches to make protections stronger in the absence of State or Federal action.

### Double-down on short-term relief programs

- \* For the duration of the COVID-19 crisis, continue and expand relief programs for residents and workers, e.g.:
  - \* Direct public and philanthropic resources to and leverage CBOs administering relief programs in communities
  - \* Housing relief programs (e.g., strict rent moratoriums, housing assistance); ticketing and collections relief and racial parity in ticketing and collections; eliminate debt checks for employment, license suspensions, and state income tax garnishment; prescription services
  - \* Add provisions for youth (ages 16 to 24) and expand existing programs (e.g., City Colleges of Chicago emergency fund, CRED)

### Coordinate and leverage the existing safety net

- \* Improve accessibility of and engagement with existing safety net programs:
  - \* Develop auto-registration initiative for benefits programs (e.g., Chicago Housing Authority automatically enrolls individuals in SNAP)
  - \* Accelerate rollout of easy-to-use digital tools, and create central hotline to connect people without broadband access to appropriate resources; build workforce of community outreach workers
  - \* Leverage tools for enrollment and to reduce lapses in benefits / coverage due to paperwork / administration
  - \* Reduce cadence of or eliminate recertification for essential programs (e.g., SNAP)

<sup>26</sup> Chicago Business Journal (5/9/2018)

<sup>27</sup> New York Times (4/4/2020)

### **Create a vision for Chicago's safety net of the future**

- \* Create bold vision for Chicago's future safety net and link to City / State advocacy agenda for path to permanence
  - \* Pilot strategies to directly increase income to Chicagoans
  - \* Pilot bold worker benefit programs, e.g.:
  - \* Portable benefits program for gig workers to strengthen safety net for those without traditional employer relationships
  - \* Work share programs, so employees can work reduced hours and still access unemployment benefits
  - \* New tax breaks and benefits for gig workers
  - \* Subsidized childcare programs

### **Strengthen short- and long-term workers' protections and benefits**

- \* Create a wages and standards board to establish a workers' Bill of Rights (like NY<sup>28</sup>, CA<sup>29</sup>, and WA<sup>30</sup> have) on comprehensive standards and protections:
  - \* Focus on the recovery of at-risk workers first (e.g., effective equipment for gig workers, hazard pay, free testing, whistleblower protections)
  - \* Focus on all workers and the long-term next (e.g., minimum wage, PTO, workplace safety, anti-retaliation protections, fair workweek ordinances, live-in worker protections, requiring written contracts)

<sup>28</sup> New York State, Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights (2020)

<sup>29</sup> State of California, The Domestic Worker Bill of Rights (2014)

<sup>30</sup> City of Seattle, Domestic Worker Bill of Rights (2020)



## Build on our region's strengths

Our region has one of the most diverse economies in the country. Its historic strengths – abundant talent, strong infrastructure assets, and central location – will be vital in the region's recovery.

The region's particular strengths in three high-growth sectors position our economy well for recovery: 1) transportation, distribution and logistics, 2) healthcare and life sciences, and 3) food and agriculture. Each of these sectors offer significant opportunities for inclusive growth, especially due to alignment with focus areas of the Chicago City Colleges system.

Our region's leaders should emphasize these sectors and build an integrated strategy ranging from targeted business attraction to specific workforce investments. These efforts should be bolstered by the creation of a regional economic development entity, backed by stakeholders from City, Cook County, regional mayors, and the private sector. This unified approach to leveraging our strengths will help drive Chicago's recovery.

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Recommendations in this section include:

- ★ 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



## Expand the region's transportation, distribution, and logistics sector by leveraging new trends in the localization of supply chains

The Chicago region is one of the most important transportation and intermodal hubs in the nation. Pre-COVID-19, Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL) employed over 152,000 people, contributing \$25.2B to the region's GDP. Average wages in the industry are \$57K and, unlike for other industries, Chicago's top ten TDL employment clusters are widely distributed across the North, West, and South Sides of Chicago.<sup>31</sup>

COVID-19 has accelerated ecommerce trends, making TDL and especially last-mile delivery, more critical. There has been 129% year-over-year growth in U.S. and Canadian e-commerce orders as of April 21, 2020 and 146% growth in all online retail orders.<sup>32</sup> Relocating supply chains may also increase domestic manufacturing volume and demand for regional TDL services. As these trends evolve, our region can take decisive action to leverage our TDL strength to promote inclusive economic growth.

### Invest in catalytic opportunities

- \* Develop hub-specific master development plans for major multi-modal hubs that align with existing regional and community development plans to maximize mobility, sustainability, and job growth
- \* Establish research and development (R&D) and real-world testing centers for advanced TDL technologies near major transportation assets (e.g., Midway Airport) in targeted areas of the South and West Sides
- \* Offer industry advancement services to supply-chain companies with growth potential in manufacturing, TDL, or other B2B services (e.g., scale offerings of Illinois Manufacturing Extension Partnership's Genesis program)
- \* Research the future of TDL, especially in the wake of COVID-19, and consider initiatives Chicago can take to remain the leader in TDL (e.g., networks of neighborhood-level distribution centers)
  - \* Establish a data sharing agreement or City commitment to share additional transportation-related data to increase access to relevant data and encourage the development of new technologies
- \* Explore innovative solutions for correcting negative externalities in partnership with communities (e.g., support fleet / facility electrification)
- \* Ensure hubs are connected to neighborhoods either through proximity or transportation infrastructure (e.g., rail, bus, bike-ped)
- \* Continue to support installation of 5G infrastructure and renovation of cell phone towers across the South and West Sides to move technology infrastructure forward and allow for innovation

<sup>31</sup> Economic Modeling Specialists Intl. (EMSI), Brookings, Moody's or Economy 2030 (2019)

<sup>32</sup> Forbes (April 2020)

### Conduct targeted outreach to attract companies

- \* Aggressively recruit or foster the development of local innovative, research-based firms in advanced logistics and the future of TDL
- \* Determine specific industry sub-segments (e.g., last-mile distribution, freight); and companies within each sub-segment to target or support and outreach strategy to engage corporate leadership
  - \* Create a pitch around Chicago's assets and incentives, and conduct outreach through existing channels including World Business Chicago (WBC), industry associations, commercial real estate brokers, etc.
  - \* Create a dedicated City-led support team with regional liaisons to engage the corporate leadership of companies relocating to Chicago region
- \* Create partnerships and synergies with related industries, e.g., by connecting regional governments, manufacturing industry associations and TDL industry associations to facilitate relocation of manufacturing and increased TDL demand

### Expand access to career opportunities and diversify the workforce

- \* Build a larger, more diverse TDL workforce across a variety of positions
  - \* Expand or create more accessible pathways into manufacturing careers that are expected to grow long-term
  - \* Expand early outreach and HS-level training programs and connect to higher education and certification opportunities (e.g., Daley College)
  - \* Mitigate barriers to diversifying the workforce (e.g., locating training facilities in neighborhoods, busing to training centers in region, developing bridge programs between education and employment for individuals with barriers to employment)
  - \* Expand TDL career exposure across all stages of the talent pipeline to increase awareness of the field; expand the THINK Chicago Roadshow, which brings technology and business leaders to visit top programs at colleges locally and across the country, to include the TDL industry with a focus on recruiting underrepresented populations to middle and high-skilled positions



## Strengthen Chicago's healthcare and life sciences ecosystem

Healthcare and life sciences are promising strengths for our region. Chicago is home to one of the largest urban medical districts in the U.S.<sup>33</sup> and has a deep bench of healthcare and life science institutions across the city, making our city one of the leading life sciences markets nationwide.<sup>34</sup> Combined, the cluster encompassing these sectors represents nearly \$48B in GDP for the Chicago region, with healthcare jobs distributed throughout the city. Pre-COVID-19 healthcare maintained a regional headcount of 464,000 employees, at an average wage of \$49,000.<sup>35</sup> In addition, Chicago boasts an extensive academic and research ecosystem with some of the leading universities and hospitals in the country, paired with a strong technology and innovation community.

These numerous assets, combined with projected employment growth in healthcare and life sciences, present a crucial opportunity for our region. We should nurture this ecosystem to foster inclusive economic growth while also strengthening our region's ability to care for its residents.

### Expand access to career opportunities and diversify the workforce

- \* Build a larger, more diverse healthcare workforce across a variety of positions (e.g., doctors, nurses, community health workers)
  - \* Expand or create more accessible pathways into healthcare careers that are expected to grow long-term (e.g., nursing)
  - \* Expand early outreach and high school-level training programs and connect to higher education and certification opportunities (e.g., Crane High School and Malcolm X partnership, Instituto Health Sciences)
  - \* Build rapid-response workforce (i.e., contact tracers, community health workers and educators) and then connect them to higher education and certification opportunities for permanent careers in healthcare
- \* Create public and private pledge (e.g., hospitals, pharmaceutical companies) to recruit more from majority non-white pipelines (e.g., historically black colleges and universities) and diversify recruiting staffs
- \* Break down barriers to training and career opportunities (e.g., locate training programs in neighborhoods, open RN hiring at most regional hospitals to nurses with only associate level degrees)
- \* Leverage large-scale public-private partnerships to facilitate collaboration on workforce across institutions (e.g., Chicagoland Healthcare Workforce Collaborative)

<sup>33</sup> Illinois Medical District Master Plan (2019)

<sup>34</sup> CBRE (2019)

<sup>35</sup> Economic Modeling Specialists Intl. (EMSI), Brookings, Moody's or Economy 2030 (2019)

### **Connect and leverage our assets effectively**

- \* Convene region's universities, hospitals, companies, neighborhood-level institutions, VCs, etc. to increase collaboration and form partnerships to convert a greater share of research to business, invest in new infrastructure (e.g., wet-lab space) to strengthen ecosystem and become a life-sciences research capital, and problem-solve (e.g., more federal relief funds for hospitals); invest in and leverage organizations already doing work in this area (e.g., P33, Discovery Partners Institute, Chicago Biomedical Consortium)
- \* Consider leveraging existing or developing new public transportation options to connect healthcare-focused developments / hubs, like dedicated bus circulators

### **Make targeted investments to support R&D**

- \* Invest in shared wet-lab space and other healthcare-focused infrastructure (e.g., incubators) that the ecosystem can leverage
- \* Encourage creation of spaces that allow the co-location of public-private research teams, including community hospitals, established research institutions, corporate research and development (R&D), and/or entrepreneurs

- \* Support community hospitals in increasing research activity (e.g., by facilitating partnerships with large hospitals to develop research approval boards)

### **Invest in neighborhoods**

- \* Continue to support initiatives like West Side United, which support neighborhood health and vitality; expand to South Side
- \* Encourage companies / institutions to locate satellite and accessory location nears existing hubs or corporate developments (e.g., call centers) in neighborhoods on the South and West Sides, increasing access to resources

### **Conduct targeted outreach to attract companies**

Market specific segments within healthcare and life-sciences to expand, attract, and retain companies, especially in healthcare diagnostics, data analytics, therapeutics, ag tech, and biotech

- \* Determine if assets (e.g., infrastructure, talent) and incentives are compelling, inclusive, and targeted
- \* If not, work with the City and State to develop compelling case or incentive packages (e.g., tax breaks, incentive zones)



## Build on the region's assets in food and agriculture

Our position as a national leader in food and agriculture is increasingly valuable as international trade has been disrupted by COVID-19 – falling by between 13% and 32% globally according to the WTO.<sup>36</sup> The increased interest in shorter, more local supply chains for food presents an opportunity for our region and state. Our central location gives us a natural strength in food production and distribution nationwide. Our region is home to a variety of food and agriculture industry headquarters and Illinois is #1 in food and related companies.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, the Chicago region leads the nation in food processing employment.<sup>38</sup>

Our region is also positioned for innovation in food and agriculture sectors. Agriculture and ag tech are key sectors identified by the State while the Chicago region is home to preeminent university and research institutions to build on these priority industries. Chicago has been ranked sixth globally as an ag tech ecosystem<sup>39</sup> and Chicago has 25% greater density in food and ag startups versus the national average.<sup>40</sup> Our region provides space for urban farming as an opportunity for job creation, entrepreneurship and neighborhood revitalization.

### Solidify Chicago as the capital and innovation center for food manufacturing, agribusiness, and ag tech

- \* Align with existing City, State, and County work in food and agriculture, including, but not limited to, work of the Chicago Food Policy Action Council and the Good Food Purchasing Initiative of Metro Chicago
- \* Develop the region's food and agriculture cluster by determining growth opportunities in food manufacturing, agribusiness, and ag tech, and developing a strategy to capture growth opportunities
  - \* Create working group to support existing businesses to gain bigger reach, a stronger workforce, and new opportunities
  - \* Connect companies, educational institutions, and new ventures to seed and develop startups
- \* Convene an ag tech summit in Chicago to connect technology companies working on solutions for agribusiness with small and mid-sized farmers
- \* Provide eligible businesses, including university-based start-ups, with matching grants when they win federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grants

<sup>36</sup> World Trade Organization (2020)

<sup>37</sup> Fortune, P33 (2020)

<sup>38</sup> World Business Chicago using Moody's Analytics (2019)

<sup>39</sup> Startup Genome report (2018)

<sup>40</sup> Crunchbase, P33 (2020)

### **Explore new business models in food and agriculture**

- \* Break down barriers in the food and agriculture sector by leveraging, expanding, and developing programs and partnerships (e.g., The Hatchery and Accion, Chicago Community Trust regional food systems fund, a new corporate / philanthropy partner fund to seed food co-ops in Chicago food deserts, corporate VC funds; federal funds)
- \* Become a national leader in local food systems and food justice (e.g., urban farming) to revitalize Chicago neighborhoods, create jobs, and increase food security; align with community-level work
- \* Create a digital marketplace platform to connect local food buyers (grocers, restaurants, researchers, markets) to local farmers

- \* Evaluate best way to support existing food justice organizations in Chicago neighborhood
- \* Increase access for local entrepreneurs looking to enter the food and beverage industry and / or form partnerships with large companies
- \* Support the growth of a cannabis research and development hub to conduct scientific research as well as to create jobs and infrastructure on the South and West Sides (e.g., indoor farms)

### **Expand access to career opportunities and diversify the workforce**

- \* Create a multi-pronged talent pipeline to connect high school and college graduates to the array of job opportunities with ranging skill requirements in the food and agriculture industry; include provisions for equity and diversity



## Capture opportunities created by COVID-19

COVID-19 has demonstrated the fragility and risks of business operations and global supply chains. In the face of this unprecedented disruption, virtually all organizations have been forced to rethink strategies to increase their agility and resilience to current and future crises.

As our region's economy rebounds, we need to think creatively about capitalizing on the new opportunities created out of this global disruption. We must consider how our assets enable us to capture new economic activity which create high-quality jobs and inclusive growth. As regions across the globe compete for these new opportunities, our region must act strategically but aggressively.

This section highlights three distinct opportunities to focus our region's efforts.

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Recommendations in this section include:

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



## Build on the region's historic strength in manufacturing

After decades of expansion across the globe to lower-cost countries, manufacturers have confronted the risks of reliance on overseas production during this crisis. In March, the number of US manufacturing companies that said they were considering relocating operations grew from 10% to 64% due to supply chain disruptions caused by COVID-19.<sup>41</sup>

Our region has a history of excellence in manufacturing and is home to major manufacturing companies, such as Deer, Caterpillar, and ITW. Manufacturing accounts for 12% of GDP within Chicago's diverse economy<sup>42</sup> and our region boasts major related assets (i.e., educational institutions, companies, R&D activity, and number of startups, educated workforce, brownfield sites, existing clusters). As the interest in relocating grows, our region can leverage our assets to capitalize on emerging manufacturing opportunities.

### Strengthen the manufacturing ecosystem

- \* Strengthen partnerships with industry associations
  - \* Connect interested companies with networks of manufacturers, suppliers, TDL companies, knowledge-share (e.g., share interested companies with WBC and vice versa), and inform strategies and best practices for growing the manufacturing industry in the region
  - \* Encourage a greater number of local, small- and medium-sized, and/or minority-owned companies to join industry associations
- \* Launch large-scale public-private partnership to facilitate collaboration on workforce across institutions
- \* Assess if existing assets (e.g., real estate, infrastructure, workforce) and incentives are compelling, inclusive, and targeted
  - \* If not, work with the City and State to develop compelling case or incentive packages (e.g., zones with expedited regulatory processes, tax breaks, incentive zones)
- \* Make incentives conditional on companies meeting standards in localized and minority hiring and procurement and quality of employment
- \* Leverage WBC research and new partnerships to identify key sub-segments to expand in the region (e.g., light manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, food packaging, medical devices, plastics)

<sup>41</sup> Bisnow (2020)

<sup>42</sup> World Business Chicago using Moody's Analytics (2020)

### **Encourage locating supply chains and facilities in the Chicago region**

- \* Conduct outreach to determine companies interested in bringing parts of their supply chains to the region (e.g., pharmaceutical and food companies, or those companies facing tariffs) and connect with local manufacturers and networks of companies
- \* Conduct outreach to understand companies interested in moving facilities into the region, and attempt to capture those opportunities

### **Conduct targeted outreach to attract companies**

- \* Create a pitch around Chicago's assets and incentives, and conduct outreach through existing channels (e.g., WBC, commercial real estate brokers, industry associations, developers)
- \* Create a dedicated City-led support team with regional liaisons to reduce bureaucracy and engage and assist incoming companies considering relocation, coordinate incentives between the City, County, and State, and leverage relationships to connect companies with real estate, workforce pipelines, and networks of other companies

- \* Market INVEST South/West corridors and Planned Manufacturing Districts (PMDs) – tie outreach to zoning/planning in those areas

### **Expand access to career opportunities and diversify the workforce**

- \* Build a larger, more diverse manufacturing workforce across a variety of positions
  - \* Expand or create more accessible pathways into manufacturing careers that are expected to grow long-term
  - \* Expand early outreach and high school-level training programs and connect to higher education and certification opportunities
  - \* Mitigate barriers to diversifying the workforce (e.g., locating training facilities in neighborhoods, busing to training centers in region, developing bridge programs between education and employment for individuals with barriers to employment)
  - \* Focus on business management as current company ownership and management ages out of the workforce

## Prepare the region to capture HQ2s and corporate development and specialty centers

The COVID-19 crisis is forcing institutions to rethink their Business Continuity Plans and the resilience of their organizations when faced by major disruptive events. One emerging consideration for CEOs is the opportunity to distribute their headquarters functions to more than one location to ensure continuity in the event that one headquarter site becomes inoperable. This new concern builds on long-term strategic planning factors corporations must consider as they prepare for the impact of climate change.

Our region is well-positioned to capture new headquarters, corporate development, and specialty centers. Chicago has been the top U.S. city for corporate relocations and expansions for the past seven years.<sup>43</sup> We offer “traditional” assets – available land, reasonable cost of living, transportation and transit infrastructure, international connectivity, and a central geographic location. But we also offer “new” assets that may become increasingly important over time – distance from the coasts, with less exposure to extreme weather and climate change impacts, and access to natural resources, such as Lake Michigan.

The new urgency to plan for the future presents an opportunity to reactivate our region’s aggressive and targeted efforts to recruit corporations from the East and West Coasts.

### Conduct targeted outreach to attract companies

- \* Determine specific industry sub-segments (e.g., financial services, technology) and companies to target and outreach strategy (e.g., individuals and materials) based on Chicago’s assets (e.g., labor, real estate) and incentives
  - \* Leverage site selection data and requests to World Business Chicago to help determine target sub-segments and companies
- \* Conduct targeted outreach through existing channels (e.g., WBC, commercial real estate brokers, developers)
  - \* Create a pitch team of prominent local leaders and advocates to promote Chicago
  - \* Build a dedicated City-led support team with regional liaisons to engage and assist incoming companies considering relocation – coordinate incentives between the City, County, and State
  - \* Leverage relationships with developers and commercial real estate brokers to develop and market space in targeted investment zones (e.g., South and West Sides) and large-scale developments (e.g., Lincoln Yards, The 78, Michael Reese site)

<sup>43</sup> World Business Chicago (2020)

## Capture film and TV production opportunities given the lack of studio space in places like California

The COVID-19 crisis has brought most industries to a sudden halt, including film and TV production. With filming and production stopped, a backlog of newly written content is growing. As reopening progresses, there will be exceptional demand for studio space with production resuming – even more so given the expectation that international travel will continue to be limited.

Film and TV production can quickly create a variety of jobs that benefit our communities – a mix of high-paying and low-skill jobs including catering, security, construction, and more. Illinois currently has close to 14,000 jobs in film production, with 53% going to women and minorities.<sup>44, 45</sup> Additionally, 43% of Black film students are enrolled in Chicago schools.<sup>46</sup>

Chicago has relevant assets and an opportunity to take advantage of this moment while positioning itself as a long-term hub for entertainment production. We possess an abundance of available industrial and warehouse buildings in the South and West Sides that can be repurposed as studios. We have diverse, skilled workforce across trades. Plus, Chicago is relatively accessible and affordable versus other world-class cities while still offering leading accommodations.

### Invest in local hub(s)

- \* Build from a foundation of the existing West Side asset, North Lawndale’s Cinespace, and proposed South Side redevelopment projects
- \* Work with the Department of Planning and Development and local real estate developers and brokers to identify sites that can quickly be developed or utilized according to specifications

### Expand access to career opportunities and diversify the workforce

- \* Leverage WBC research on workforce needs (e.g., camera operators, technicians, creatives, set construction) and work with City Colleges of Chicago, other regional educational institutions, and training programs to expand capacity of training programs and increase outreach to prospective students, especially in Black and Brown communities

- \* Evaluate working with state stakeholders to use state film tax incentive funds to support the expansion of targeted workforce development programs in this area

### Conduct targeted outreach to attract companies

- \* Engage major film studios and production companies to understand studio expansion, relocation, or project opportunities
- \* Create a pitch around Chicago’s assets and incentives, and conduct outreach through existing channels (e.g., Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, State working group, WBC, commercial real estate brokers, developers)

<sup>44</sup> WTTW (February 2018)

<sup>45</sup> Illinois FILM Office (2017)

<sup>46</sup> DCASE (2019)

- \* In addition to pitching Chicago for permanent studio locations, Chicago has capacity (e.g., Cinespace, Central City, WWTW, Kennedy King), to meet immediate production opportunities
- \* Partner with Chicago advocates in the film industry, such as Dick Wolf, to promote the city
- \* Create a dedicated City-led support team with regional liaisons to coordinate with the State to support the adoption of compelling, inclusive, and targeted incentives, and assist incoming companies considering opportunities such as relocation
- \* Target a wide range of opportunities, including niches like syndicated talk shows and sports broadcasting



## Reignite activity throughout Chicago by sharing our story

The Chicago region is special – diverse, dynamic, expansive, uniquely American, and global – but our continuing history is complicated and full of painful truths of racial injustice. We can move forward together only after acknowledging these painful truths and taking clear steps toward reconciliation. Crafting our incredible story and re-defining the narrative about our city is more important than ever.

Chicago is competing for residents, businesses, tourists, and future talent with cities across the globe. Our city’s reputation too often does not reflect the cultural significance and incredible assets it offers. This reputation challenge is particularly critical now as the costs and benefits of being in a city are being re-evaluated.

To help unify our region and stimulate inclusive growth, we have outlined four key recommendations.

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Recommendations in this section include:

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



## Introduce Chicago's master brand

Chicago is still a segregated city in far too many ways and has challenges that cannot be glossed over, the root of which is stark racial inequity. COVID-19's disproportionate impacts by race and protests for racial justice following the killing of George Floyd make these challenges as clear as ever. Because these real challenges demand and deserve attention, Chicago's reputation among outsiders and residents obscures the city's array of assets. Though these challenges persist, Chicago is special. A new Chicago master brand can remind residents, and let outsiders realize, what Chicago has to offer. Our proposed new master brand will aim to unify our city while celebrating our diversity with truth and integrity.

### Design a brand to unite Chicagoans

- \* Own Chicago's narrative while not overlooking its painful truths of segregation and racial injustice
- \* Reaffirm Chicago's identity and celebrate our effort to change – moving away from the old school (e.g., Windy City, Second City) and embracing a new identity to unify Chicago (i.e., residents, businesses, and tourists)
- \* Celebrate our diversity in all stripes – people, culture, music, neighborhoods, food, industries – while explicitly recognizing the role and many contributions of Black and Brown communities
- \* Design master brand in partnership with community voices
  - \* Conduct broad-based testing and focus groups with residents who are representative of Chicago's diversity
  - \* Engage youth to gain their perspective on brand concepts and innovative, hyper-local ways to launch master brand (e.g., Mayor's Youth Commissioners, YOUmedia and Chicago Public Libraries)

### Create a coalition

- \* Collaborate with a diverse group of brand ambassadors from neighborhoods throughout the city – reflective of Chicago's diversity – to help launch Chicago's master brand
- \* Leverage the popularity of the "Last Dance" with Michael Jordan to create "The Next Dance" feature of the master brand to showcase the culture of Chicago, famous Chicagoans, and future culture leaders

### Communicate to key audiences

- \* Residents – develop stories of real Chicago families to incorporate into marketing materials, reaffirming the richness coming from our diversity, shared passion for our city, and our collective belonging
- \* Tourists – encourage tourists to get to know the City of Chicago through downtown and its neighborhoods, showcasing key destinations in neighborhood hubs

- \* Businesses – prepare targeted communications to businesses highlighting not only the diversity of Chicago’s talent but also the unparalleled diversity of our economy

- \* Future Talent – attract diverse new talent to the City by promoting our assets and emphasizing the sense of belonging new residents can feel in Chicago



## Lead the reimagination of regional tourism, travel, and hospitality

Tourism and hospitality are key sectors of Chicago's economy. In the coming months and perhaps years, tourism is likely to shift from global visitors to visitors from "drive markets" that are less than 10 hours away. Knowing how important tourism and hospitality are, Chicago needs think creatively and boldly to reimagine these sectors for the near future. As our region recovers, it must ensure tourists and residents feel safe, offer innovative ways to congregate, and think beyond the boundaries of the City to attract tourist activity.

### Regional Tourism

- \* Develop partnerships between Choose Chicago and local tourism agencies in the region to tap into demand for local tourism, travel, and cultural destinations
- \* Build confidence in travel and transportation (e.g., CTA, airports) by creating targeted messaging campaigns detailing our region's leading public health and safety response to COVID-19
- \* Create a health check off (Zagat-like guide) that provides attractions and businesses with a list of standards that can be implemented so people feel safe (visitors and workers) and have a warranty of health
  - \* To develop the Health Check, work with Dr. David Nabarro, a globally recognized expert on COVID-19, as well as one of Chicago's premier hospital systems
  - \* Incorporate learnings from the Singapore "SG Clean" Quality Mark initiative – shortlist of requirements to receive status (e.g., process to check temps, employee testing, increase frequency of are disinfection)
  - \* Identify an on-site manager to ensure programming is followed (self-policing)
- \* Emphasize the strength of our region's public health response (e.g., industry guidelines, protocols, and technology in

place at attractions) as a differentiator in promotions to markets outside of Chicago

### Unconventional Convention

- \* Position Chicago as the best option for businesses to host hybrid conventions – in-person and remote attendees – use tech expertise to help with virtual / augmented reality technology and partner with Chicago production groups (e.g., Google Expedition)
- \* Partner with leading tech companies in Chicago and production resources to offer best in class hybrid conventions
- \* Apply best practices for most-engaging sessions – partnering with businesses looking to adjust from in-person to virtual (e.g., no more than two-hour sessions, set up virtual breakouts for smaller groups)
- \* Lock in upcoming conventions with virtual options for portion of group that are remote; secure multi-year commitments with subsidies (e.g., cost reduction for arts/attractions, cost savings on technology features)
- \* Leverage large gathering spaces at McCormick Place to enable socially-distanced events
- \* Use large events to promote local retailers with programs modeled after Navy Pier's local retail shopping centers



## Develop new and existing neighborhood hubs to encourage tourism in neighborhoods

Chicago attracts millions of visitors from around the world every year, but much of that activity is focused downtown. Even for our region’s residents, downtown accounts for a significant share of our local tourism. Encouraging increased tourism in Chicago’s neighborhoods relieves pressure on downtown, but more importantly, aids the revitalization of underserved neighborhoods, creating jobs and opportunities for small businesses to thrive. Further, increasing neighborhood tourism helps tell tourists and locals a fuller, more detailed story of what our city has to offer.

### Concentrate development on clearly identified hubs

- \* Select neighborhood tourism hubs based on standardized criteria and gap analysis, taking into account formal and informal neighborhood assets such as arts and culture, green space, and places of historical significance, to determine what place-making investments would benefit each location and create cultural destinations
- \* Align with INVEST South/West commercial corridors, the City of Chicago’s equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD) strategy, and the presence of existing assets
- \* Include identified hubs in Citywide Plan to outline investments benefitting residents
- \* Provide capital investments and technical assistance for specific redevelopment needs (e.g., streetscapes, CTA station improvements, investment in local businesses) and connect with activation plans across agencies (e.g., DCASE)
- \* Connect nearby small businesses with technical assistance to assist them as neighborhood hub develops

### Promote activities and programs

- \* Engage communities in partnership with key stakeholders (e.g., City agencies, industry and trade associations, and artists and other creative professionals) to generate initiatives and other community-driven efforts that connect neighborhood assets (e.g., arts and culture, green space, and places of historic significance) to attract tourist activity and drive cultural vitality in neighborhoods benefiting local residents. Possible initiatives include:
  - \* Neighborhood “Tourism” Passport
    - \* Increase neighborhood exposure by creating a challenge to visit all 77 neighborhoods – getting a “stamp” by experiencing individual neighborhoods and arts / cultural institutions
    - \* Engage Folded Map, local Chambers of Commerce, and retail/trade associations as partners

- \* Taste of Chicago Neighborhoods
  - \* Create a traveling Taste of Chicago where people can get a “taste” from local restaurants and experience flavors and cultures by neighborhood
  - \* Encourage downtown businesses to order meals from South and West Side restaurants
  - \* Identify a local NGO or local business partner to offer a giveback component

- \* Mobility Chicago
  - \* Connect and improve green spaces throughout the city that glue us all together
  - \* Leverage Ride the Boulevards to highlight attractions and promote neighborhood tourism along bike route



## Show the world Chicago is open for business

Uncertainty is a major obstacle for businesses – holding up investments, stalling operations, and making workers anxious. To help restore confidence among businesses during these uncertain times, Chicago’s civic and corporate leadership must take measured, but decisive action to reopen our city for business. Further, as Chicago businesses continue to reopen, the goal is not to return to business as usual. A reopened Chicago must be more inclusive and open, in all senses of the word, to drive success for businesses in all neighborhoods.

### Open Chicago business campaign

- \* Launch a targeted campaign to increase awareness of Chicago’s competitive advantages in a world that has changed for business – due to both COVID-19 and a renewed commitment to inclusion
- \* Incorporate positive highlights of Chicago’s successes – safe reopening stats, endorsements from major corporations on their reopening plans, images of Chicagoans working and thriving, comments from Mayor and Governor
- \* Promote Chicago companies driving positive social outcomes to attract young talent
- \* Clearly communicate resources (e.g., small business loans, insurance assistance, Citywide Community College system) to the existing business community to foster a supportive environment for businesses in all neighborhoods
- \* Highlight post-COVID-19 benefits that only Chicago can offer for events, conferences, business meetings (e.g., a central location, cultural destinations, more green space, cost savings compared to other markets)
- \* Use this campaign in partnership with existing efforts (e.g., P33, 1871) to

position Chicago as a place for entrepreneurs, tech talent, and mid-skilled labor while highlighting entrepreneurs and tech workers of color

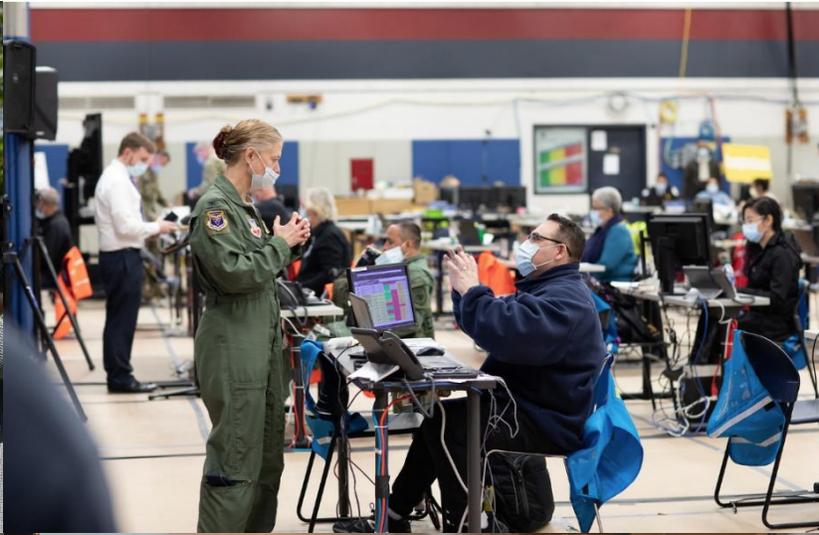
- \* Complement the campaign with an intense outreach effort targeted to national media

### Ambassador program

- \* Create a Chicago ambassador program to pair business leaders from Chicago’s leading companies with top company prospects; peer-to-peer engagement, empowered by the city, to create a drum beat of advocacy that Chicago is open

### Open City tools

- \* Leverage Chicago’s open City data portal to construct an Open Chicago online hub that shows how our businesses are opening safely in real time
- \* Design an Open City index targeted at young adults making decisions on where to live that measures Chicago’s attributes with that of other cities, and highlights Chicago’s advantages post-COVID-19
- \* Provide regular, clear updates on City’s progress in rolling out contact-tracing initiatives

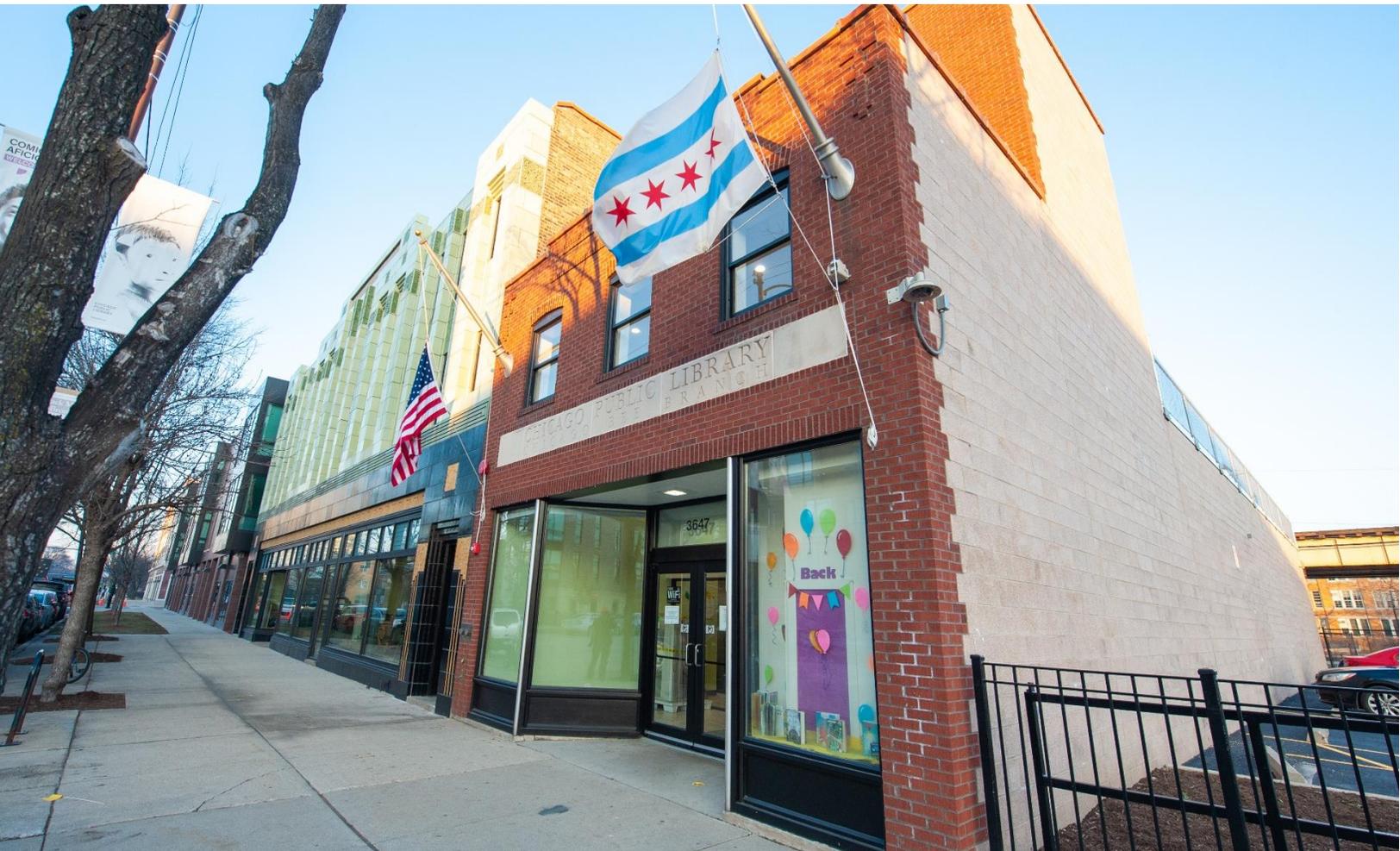


# Conclusion

## Staying engaged

This report represents the end of only the first leg of a long journey for our region's recovery. As we move toward implementing these recommendations, we must continue to acknowledge, engage, and partner with communities and community-based organizations. Many community leaders and organizations are already on the ground championing efforts relevant to the initiatives in this report. We intend to work closely with them to listen to their perspectives, refine our recommendations, and accelerate their efforts.

As we conclude this initial planning phase, the Task Force is willing and eager to assist in the implementation of the bold and pragmatic ideas outlined in this report. To help facilitate continued engagement, the Task Force proposes a quarterly cadence of progress meetings with Co-Chairs to discuss the key milestones and offer insights to help accelerate the implementation of these ideas.

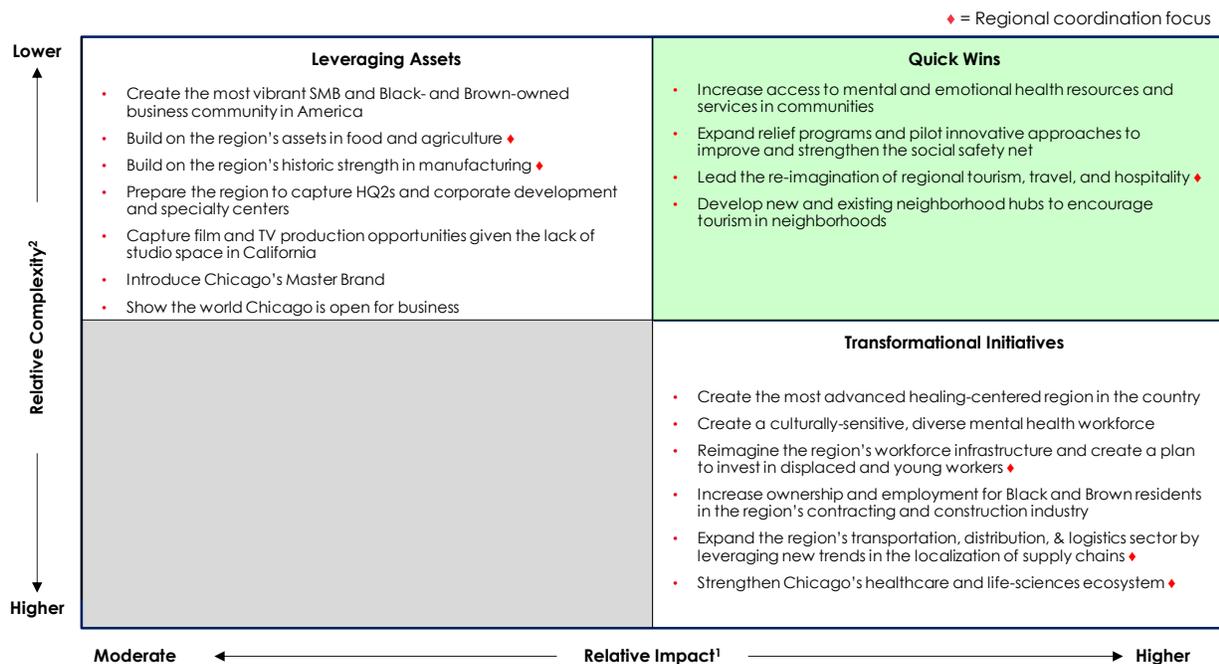


## Our path forward

The steps outlined in this report are the first of many on a multi-year journey on the road to healing and recovery. Addressing the trauma our communities are facing and the ensuing healing process is foundational to the recommendations outlined in this report. Chicago must first acknowledge the unprecedented trauma its communities have historically experienced and are continuing to face prior to moving forward. Only then will Chicagoans heal together as one community and move forward unified in order to spur Chicago's mental, social, and economic recovery.

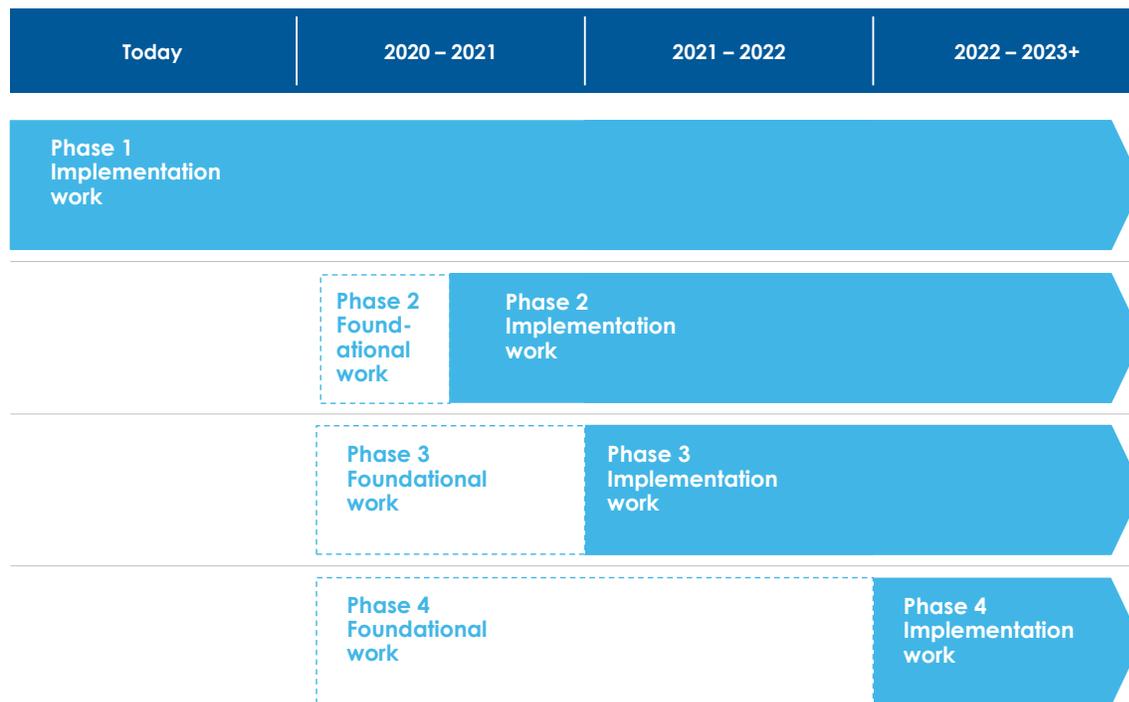
In addition, the transformation of the City and the region will require diligence and commitment to execute. To aid in this process, we prioritized our recommendations by relative complexity and impact in order to inform the proposed phasing of the recommendations.

## Prioritization of Recovery Task Force recommendations



1. The relative magnitude of the initiative's effect on the group that is the expected beneficiary of the initiative; All ideas appearing on this matrix should be high impact interventions - this axis is a rough estimation of relative impact
2. The relative ease or difficulty of implementing a specific initiative at the scale necessary to achieve the desired impact

## Phasing of Recovery Task Force recommendations



Phase	Recommendations
Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ INVEST South/West</li> <li>★ Solutions Toward Ending Poverty (STEP)</li> <li>★ We Will Chicago – Citywide Plan</li> <li>★ Chicago Connected</li> <li>★ Increase access to mental and emotional health resources and services in communities</li> <li>★ Capture film and TV production opportunities given the lack of studio space</li> <li>★ Lead the re-imagination of regional tourism, travel, and hospitality</li> </ul>
Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Expand relief programs and pilot innovative approaches to improve and strengthen the social safety net</li> <li>★ Develop new and existing neighborhood hubs to encourage tourism in neighborhoods</li> <li>★ Show the world Chicago is open for business</li> </ul>

### Phase 3

- ★ Create the most vibrant SMB and Black- and Brown-owned business community in America
- ★ Build on the region's assets in food and agriculture
- ★ Build on the region's historic strength in manufacturing
- ★ Prepare the region to capture HQ2s and corporate development and specialty centers
- ★ Introduce Chicago's master brand

### Phase 4

- ★ Create the most advanced healing-centered region in the country
- ★ Create a culturally sensitive, diverse mental health workforce
- ★ 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 region's contracting and construction industry
- ★ 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



## Staying accountable

To ensure accountability for the proposed recommendations as we move into the next phase of work for the Recovery Task Force, we propose each recommendation should be owned by departments within the City of Chicago’s government and Mayor’s Office. Senior City leaders should work actively with relevant community leaders to advise, implement, and inform the execution of our recommendations.

Section	Recommendation	Proposed Owner
Address new and old traumas	Create the most advanced healing-centered region in the country	Policy, CDPH
	Increase access to mental and emotional health resources and services in communities	Policy, CDPH
	Create a culturally sensitive, diverse mental health workforce	Policy, CDPH
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	BEND
	Increase ownership and employment for Black and Brown residents in the region’s contracting and construction industry	BEND
	Create the most vibrant SMB and Black- and Brown-owned business community in America	BEND, BACP
	Expand relief programs and pilot innovative approaches to improve and strengthen the social safety net	Policy
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	WBC, BEND
	Strengthen Chicago’s healthcare and life-sciences ecosystem	WBC, BEND
	Build on the region’s assets in food and agriculture	WBC, BEND

Capture opportunities created by COVID-19	Build on the region's historic strength in manufacturing	WBC, BEND
	Prepare the region to capture HQ2s and corporate development and specialty centers	WBC, BEND
	Capture film and TV production opportunities given the lack of studio space	WBC, BEND
Reignite activity throughout Chicago by sharing our story	Introduce Chicago's master brand	WBC, Choose Chicago
	Lead the re-imagination of regional tourism, travel, and hospitality	WBC, Choose Chicago
	Develop new and existing neighborhood hubs to encourage tourism in neighborhoods	WBC, Choose Chicago
	Show the world Chicago is open for business	WBC, Choose Chicago

- \* *CDPH = Chicago Department of Public Health*
- \* *BEND = Mayor's Office Economic and Neighborhood Development Team*
- \* *BACP = Business Affairs and Consumer Protection*
- \* *Policy = Mayor's Office Policy Team*
- \* *WBC = World Business Chicago*
- \* *Choose Chicago = Destination marketing organization for Chicago*

## Corporate pledge

The City is committed to the work laid out in this report and creating the transformational change this moment requires will be a team effort across all sectors. In particular, we want to call on the private sector and corporations that call Chicago home to pledge transformational commitments to help our region realize the bold recommendations we have put forward.

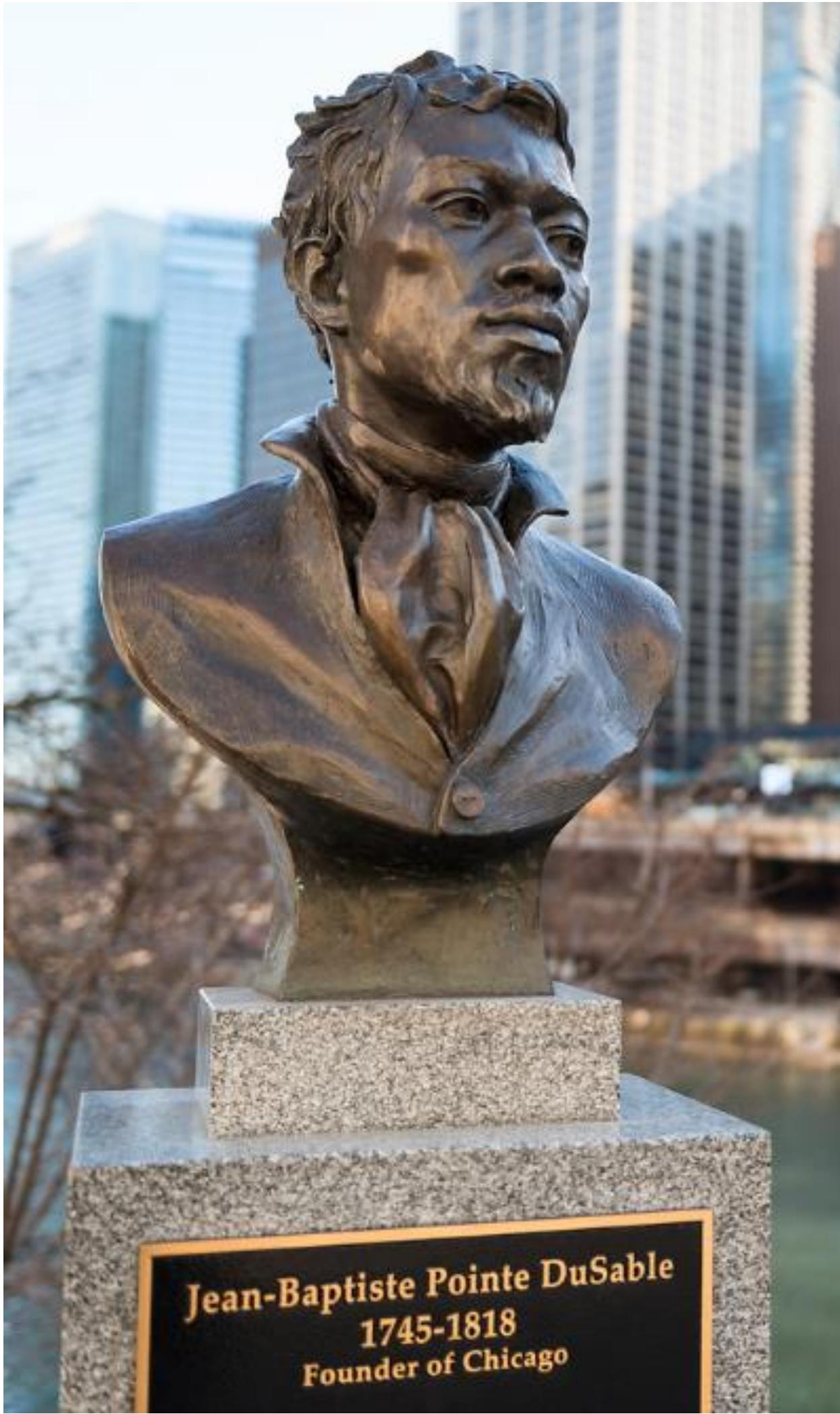
Corporate partners are already stepping up through example leadership from The Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, Corporate Coalition, and The Chicago Community Trust's *Together Now* fund. We urge more corporate partners to pledge transformational commitments for our region. There are countless ways to make a difference – hiring locally from overlooked talent pipelines, expanding investment and operations in neighborhoods, or changing procurement practices to support local small business.

Throughout Chicago's history – from rebuilding after the Great Chicago Fire to building the Museum Campus to creating Millennium Park – corporations and the private sector have proven their ability to help transform our region for the better. We urge you to join us in this fight to help our recovery from COVID-19 and to lay the groundwork for a more equitable and inclusive region for generations to come. There is no better or more important time than now.

# Forward Together

## Building a Stronger Chicago

## Appendix



# Recovery Task Force – Public engagement focus groups

## Overview

The Mayor’s Office Community Engagement and Business, Neighborhood, & Economic Development Teams met with more than 75 community members to discuss the Recovery Task Force’s recommendations across three topic areas:

- 1) Marketing:
  - *Goal: Introduce Chicago’s master brand*
- 2) Mental & Emotional Health:
  - *Goal: Increase access to resources and services that promote positive mental health in communities*
- 3) Policy & Economic Stimulus:
  - *Goal: Drive the most vibrant SMB & minority-owned business community in America*

During each session, the community members were presented a brief overview of the Task Force and initiatives that pertained to their specific topic area. That introduction was followed by an open forum discussion in which participants provided direct feedback on the Task Force’s goals and plans.

Among the three sessions, several repeating themes emerged:

- 1) Participants felt that the COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated and exacerbated existing racial and socioeconomic inequities in Chicago.
- 2) The COVID-19 response is an opportunity to not just include Chicagoans who have historically been marginalized, but also to boldly address those pre-existing inequities.
- 3) Participants overwhelmingly called for a neighborhood-level COVID-19 response that would be tailored to the needs of each specific community and include ongoing community participation.

More detailed information about each specific focus group’s discussion follows.

## Recovery Task Force Focus Group: Marketing

The Marketing focus group included 14 community members representing neighborhood associations, youth development organizations, entrepreneurship, and social justice. Participants were given a short introduction on the goals of the Recovery Task Force, and the history and goals of a unified Chicago brand. They were told the brand is intended to represent some universal truth or experience of the city, and to appeal to four target audiences: Residents, Tourists, Corporations, and Talent.

### **Main Takeaways**

#### **1) Concern about focus on tourists:**

- Concerns that we are continuing to center tourists, not residents, and particularly tourists that visit only the same few parts of the city.
- People of color have been feeling excluded and separated from what goes on in the major tourist areas, and that feeling has been amplified in this time.
- Frustration and concern that this project could contribute to further gentrification.

#### **2) Addressing segregation:**

- Agree with survey results showing that segregation as a barrier is the top concern, and that marketing efforts need to address that concern.
- Believe that our brand should not hide from hard truths about our history and present – especially at a time when people are demanding authenticity and change.

#### **3) Showcasing how we are changing:**

- General support for a strategy that focuses on the kind of city we want to be and what we are doing to make it a reality.
- Especially compelling at a time when people are demanding solutions and authenticity
- Overwhelming belief that this marketing effort must be supported by policy changes and real support for people who have been marginalized.

#### **4) Support for a “hyper-local” marketing approach:**

- Past brands (“City of Broad Shoulders,” “The City That Works”) were “alienating” and did not match the experience of all residents, particularly of Black and Brown residents
- Because there is no universal experience of the city, more emphasis on being a city of neighborhoods and giving neighborhoods ownership of how they want to be marketed
- Would necessitate working closely with a broad range of people in each neighborhood, especially young people, and engaging them in the process.

#### **5) Highlighting hidden assets:**

- General support for embracing our differences and highlighting “hidden assets” in areas outside the main tourist areas; Also need to be conscious that neighborhoods that have not received the same investment may not feel they have as much to be proud of.

#### **6) Quality over quantity:**

- Desire to think about who exactly we are trying to attract and how they align with our values; focusing on tourists who want to explore and engage with our whole city and corporations that want to be participants in our culture, not ‘gentrifiers.’

**7) Including existing businesses:**

- Worry that many local businesses will not recover and return from this time, as well as a belief that there is a lot of mistrust among small businesses towards the city.
- Desire to focus on existing businesses procuring supplies and talent locally.

## Recovery Task Force Focus Group: Mental Health

During the Recovery Task Force Focus Group on Mental Health, the Mayor's liaisons met with around 25 community mental health professionals, youth, and clinical psychologists to discuss the findings of the Task Force. The group walked through the Task Force's initiatives as they relate to mental health and hosted a discussion about the feasibility, equity, and impact of the proposal.

### Main Takeaways

#### 1) Dedicated 211 line:

- The community members were generally optimistic that this facet of the recommendation would be successful, but strongly encouraged the committee to ensure that the **helpline would be multilingual** to be accessible to non-English speakers.

#### 2) Online one-stop-shop:

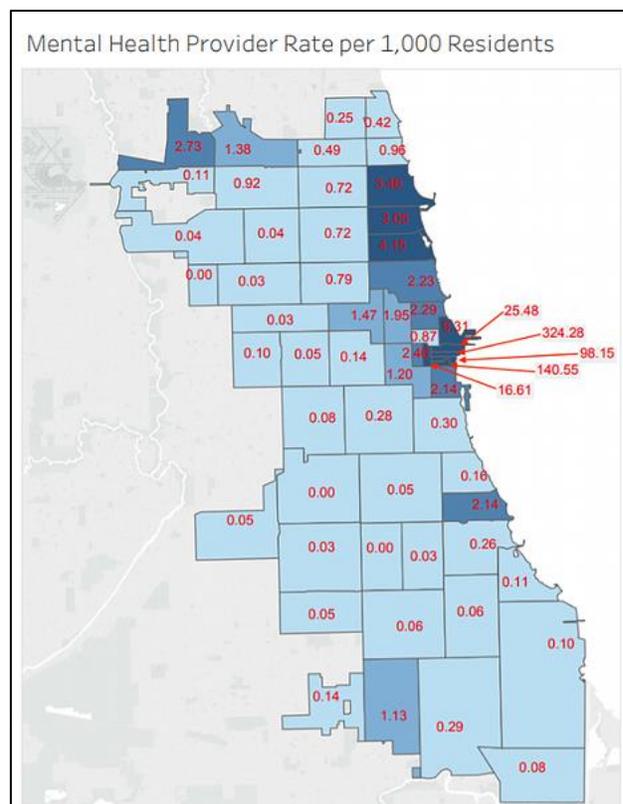
- The community did not regard this option positively mostly due to it being a passive measurement. One community member stated that "when the city wanted to give access to books, they did not make a list of all the bookstores, they opened a library." Many community members were concerned about focusing efforts on creating a centralized location for resources because they thought the resources themselves were inadequate.

#### 3) Equip Faith-based community:

- The community members regarded this initiative positively but stressed that community mental health resources can only go so far and that dedicated, public, city resources are critical.

#### 4) Telehealth platform:

- The community members unanimously advocated for "brick and mortar" mental health clinics. Additionally, they stressed the need for therapists who are people of color serving the neighborhoods that are predominately people of color.
- In more affluent areas in the city, the number of mental health providers per 1,000 residents can be 100-200x greater than the rate in the city's poorest neighborhoods, predicating the need for brick and mortar clinics.



## Recovery Task Force Focus Group: Policy and Economic Stimulus

During the Recovery Task Force Focus Group on Policy and Economic Stimulus, the Mayor's liaisons met with around 25 community business leaders, many of them women and/or minority business owners of small businesses across a variety of fields. The group walked through the Task Force's initiatives as they relate to economic policy. While the challenges posed by the pandemic were top-of-mind, a common theme was the group's conviction that this is the time to think ambitiously, with an eye toward leveraging the recovery process as a unique opportunity to take bold action to address root causes of inequity that existed long before COVID-19.

### **Main Takeaways**

#### **1) Enhance existing mechanisms for supporting MBEs and WBEs:**

- On a mechanical level, the group expressed frustration with the MBE/WBE process, not only in terms of certification paperwork, but also "fine print" that in their view often allows companies to circumvent "set-aside" rules.
- The community members stressed the incompatibility between traditional lending practices with the working capital profile they need to scale and compete, and cited faster payment cycles from customers, namely the government, as an opportunity.
- Treating "small businesses" as a monolith overlooks important differences in the capabilities and needs of "micro" businesses with just a handful of staff vs. larger enterprises.

#### **2) Expand view of inclusivity and how we create it:**

- *Who we support:* much of our existing economic development toolkit is focused exclusively on the *cross-section* of small, minority/women-owned, for-profit businesses, competing for government-contract work. This leaves behind populations (e.g., undocumented citizens) and business types (e.g., 501c3s, certain industry segments).
- *How we support:* many group members felt we need mechanisms that go beyond routing government procurement spending and incentivize *or* require large private sector businesses to take a more inclusive approach to hiring and contracting, and a more expansive view of investing in the city outside of The Loop.

#### **3) Decentralized, tailored solutions:**

- Community members repeatedly stressed the nuanced, unique needs of their individual neighborhoods that are too often not addressed by city government e.g., areas with high proportions of non-English speakers unaware of or unable to pursue MWBE certification.
- Rather than providing *input* to the city's plans, local organizers would like the city to find ways to support their own grassroots initiatives.

#### **4) Cultivate durable small business ecosystems:**

- There was frustration at seeing neighborhood development take place with too many outside companies, such that "the dollars did not stay in the neighborhood". In an alternative model, investment would be deliberately targeted in a way that ignites self-reinforcing networks of local small businesses working with one another.

# Youth Summit report

## Overview

The Rise & Recover Chicago Youth Summit, sponsored by A Better Chicago, gathered young people in a virtual event to ensure that they are represented as the city plans its reopening and COVID-19 recovery efforts in the months and years to come. The City is committed to listening to, elevating, and co-designing with and for the next generation of young leaders. The lessons learned from the Summit will be incorporated into the Mayor and COVID-19 Task Force's strategic plans.

## Goals & Outcomes

### Quantitative Goals

- Broad representation from across the city: *48 of 50 wards*
- Broad representation of ages: *11-19 year olds*  
Number of attendees participating (goal of 200 people for the summit, 1,000+ for the concert): *Summit: 250 registrants, 192 attendees participated, 40,000 social impressions for concert*

### Qualitative Goals

- Youth Commissioner led programming and execution, pride of creation
- Deep, meaningful, and active engagement
- Relevant, high-energy programming and content
- Opportunities for empowerment and leadership, everyone plays a role, low and high touch ways to engage

## Planning Process

The Rise & Recover Chicago Youth Summit was planned by the Mayor's Youth Commissioners (MYC), a group of young leaders from across wards representing the city's youth voice. Over the course of six planning sessions over two weeks, MYCs named both the Summit and Concert, created the hashtag (#RiseandRecoverCHI), provided art direction for the marketing materials, identified the topics for discussion, drafted the code of conduct, and generated thoughtful questions for each breakout group informed by their own lived experience. MYCs also assumed leadership roles as event co-host, facilitators, notetakers, and social media monitors during the event itself. They sourced talent through their own networks for performers through Social Works. Two Youth Commissioners, Charlotte Miner and Josiah Smith, participated in the share back that occurred during the concert.

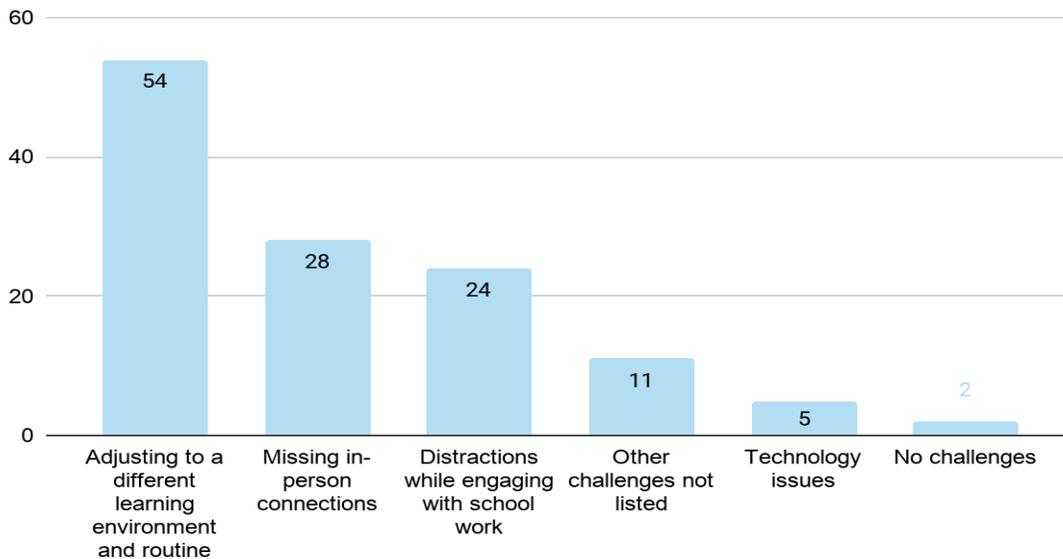
MYCs decided that the Summit would meet their expectations and be a success if, "Everyone has a way of sharing their opinions and seeing that they are being heard," "Speakers are honest and engage in candid conversation, and attendees engage in constructive conversations with



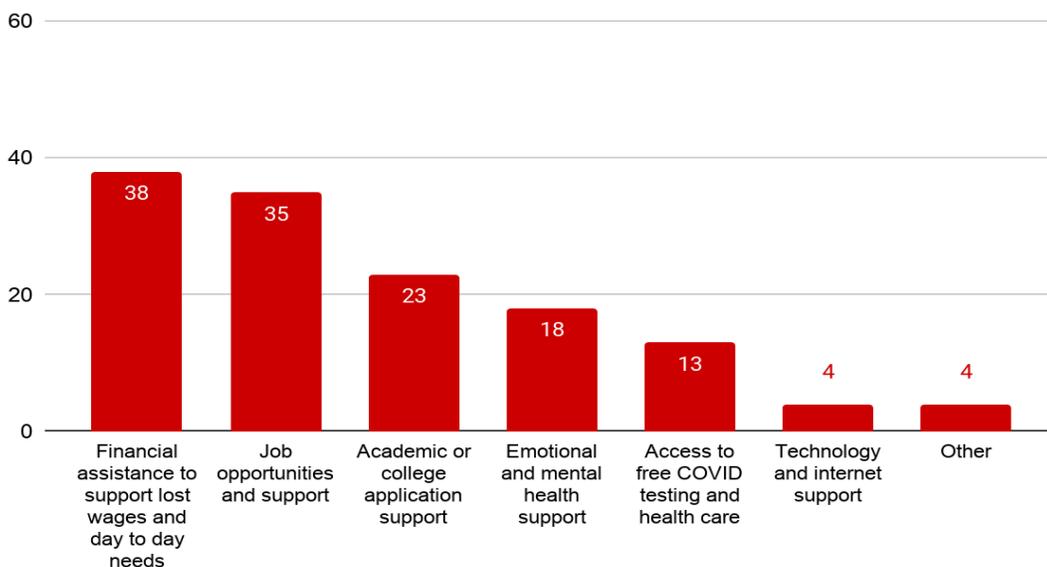
## Poll Responses

During the event, we conducted two polls designed by A Better Chicago to elicit the concerns and sentiment of young people.

### What is the hardest part about virtually attending school?



### What support or opportunity would make the biggest difference for you or your family right now?



## Youth Participant Feedback

"I feel like it was a very nice opportunity because it felt like the teens and I had our voices heard. Knowing that the mayor is going to hear what we talked about and use it to improve the city is pretty awesome!" - **Evenlyn Hernandez**

"The very best part was the breakout groups, it allowed us kids to talk on a personal level where I felt no pressure to hide what I felt; we talked about how free mental health resources should be available heavily in schools, and that teachers should use class time to promote these options so no one misses out, so that everyone knows their health is an option." - **Jackson Dougall**

## Mayor's Youth Commissioners' Feedback

"Having a youth summit was an important first step to incorporating Chicago's youth into local and broader democracy. I was so happy to have the opportunity to encourage other youth to be confident in their voice and use it to reshape government initiatives and more. With a firsthand experience of many of Chicago and the U.S.' shortcomings, youth are the best source of information on what the most dire problems are and how to fix them. Following the summit we should continue to make their voices consequential in decision making." - **Charlotte Mainer**

"It was really meaningful to me. As a Mayor's Youth Commissioner, a major goal is to make sure youth voices are heard. At the end of the Summit I felt like every youth really enjoyed it. They were confident enough to share their experience. It was a huge relief because we weren't sure how it would go. We got feedback that they'd like more Summits. In their small communities, they're not being heard." - **Abigail Camargo**

"I learned that mental health is very well-known and people are well-educated on it, but we don't have the right resources. A lot of the youth who came to the summit knew what resources they need and how they could be helped, and I never realized that youth had their own solutions." - **Asher Musgrove**

"I learned a lot about how when we transferred to online education, how many youth are struggling with supporting their families and maintaining their own job. For youth who still have jobs, it's been very difficult to come home after a long day of working and do their homework, and then have teachers be upset with late work. Online learning hasn't been as flexible as students want it to be, given the many circumstances going on at their home that teachers aren't aware of." - **Molly Maloney**

"I was in a breakout group and people were talking about needing a support group. Maybe it's not a huge group, but even a group of 3-4 youth in the same room and an adult facilitator having a conversation about what they feel about what's going on at this time. Some type of free program that youth can participate in on a regular basis." - **Elijah Warren**

## Engagement Summary

The major topic areas of the Rise & Recover Youth Summit (Economy, Education, Mental Health and The State of Youth) arose from conversations and needs identified from the Mayor's COVID-19 Task Force, My CHI. My Future., Deputy Mayor Sybil Madison, and the Mayor's Youth Commissioners. During registration for the Summit, we asked youth to select which topics they were most interested in discussing at the Summit and matched them into breakout groups accordingly.

### Breakouts breakdown:

- Economy: around 40 youth
- Education: around 80 youth
- Mental Health: around 40 youth
- The State of Youth comprised a variety of topics and was a global breakout session

## ECONOMY

The Summit had three breakout groups dedicated to the subject of the economy with approximately 40 total attendees.

### Challenges identified by youth

- Youth and their families have lost jobs and income
- Some people have chosen to stop working for health and safety reasons
- Some youth are unable to attend school because they are too busy working to support their families financially
- Life can be more stressful for people who are able to work from home, as they have to balance work with caregiving responsibilities
- Government aid is insufficient for some families
- Families have cut spending
- Youth say it is impossible to find summer jobs
- Youth feel anxiety and uncertainty about the future

### Opportunities identified by youth

- Create a unified list of resources for people in need
- Many people suggested drive-in movie showings and church services
- Create more public outdoor space, while maintaining social distancing guidelines
- Create volunteer opportunities for youth (e.g., Youth Corps)
- Create job opportunities, especially summer jobs for youth
- Offer financial literacy education to families
- Create services to have food and other necessities delivered
- Open additional opportunities for youth to guide policy decisions
- Find more ways for youth to support one another
- Provide help for those in undocumented households or mixed status households
- Continue to prioritize public health over reopening quickly
- Invest in green energy
- Ensure everyone can access healthcare

### Economy breakout questions that facilitators asked youth:

1. How have your jobs or your family or friend's jobs changed because of COVID-19?
2. How might these changes create new opportunities for the city?
3. How has your family dealt with the economic strain of COVID-19? And what do you think people could do to help with the economic strain of COVID-19? Do you have any ideas—no matter how big and bold or simple—to share?
4. What do you think Chicago has to offer as a city that could attract new residents and tourists after COVID-19?

## EDUCATION

The Summit had six education breakout groups with approximately 80 total attendees.

### Challenges identified by youth:

- Students feel that new grading policy is confusing, not flexible enough, and does not adequately address the reality youth face.
- Students' circumstances are changing every day, but the expectations of them from their schools are not flexible. Some students are having weekly check-ins with teachers, but that is not the norm.
- Students want to know what the next year might look like, and if the grading policy might change even if remote learning continues
- Students are overcome with stress and struggle with their mental health
- Some students have pre-existing conditions that make it incredibly hard to learn on a device. Their focus and quality of attention suffers
- The pandemic has only added stress to their already stressful lives
- Students feel they have more schoolwork now than they did when attending school in person, and that amount is too much
- Some students lack access to Wi-Fi, or reliable Wi-Fi, and have to "attend" school on cell phones
- Students are suffering from a lack of social connection under quarantine
- They find it hard to focus, stay motivated, and keep themselves accountable and on a schedule
- Students say they do not have as much access to teachers as they did in person and teachers are not always responding to their emails quickly enough
- Students find it more difficult to ask questions over Zoom than they did in the classroom
- Students feel that teachers do not understand their needs and the challenges they face
- Students find it hard to balance schoolwork and obligations, like work and caregiving
- Students complain of a lack coordination among teachers on workloads and late policies
- Some students are falling behind and not completing assignments
- Students miss the extracurricular activities and sports they participated in at school
- Juniors are struggling to get the guidance and financial assistance they need to apply to colleges
- Students who have been accepted to college are not sure if they will be attending college on campus or remotely in the fall
- There are many students who feel they do not have the money to attend college
- Students from undocumented families who may have had a scholarship to cover part of tuition before are facing financial hardships that may prevent them to attend college
- Families are digging into emergency savings and losing jobs
- Students say they are having trouble finding summer jobs and are uncertain about their future after high school
- Students say inequities between zip codes have been magnified by the pandemic
- Seniors do not feel the satisfaction or accomplishment of graduation

### **Opportunities identified by youth:**

- Make the CPS grading policy less confusing and more flexible; many youth complained about the new policy and wondered if it would change even if remote learning is in place through the fall
- Create ways for youth to get counseling face-to-face because some students might not have good internet access or a room they can go to and be safe and alone
- Have teachers and schools be more aware of and responsive to student needs by regularly checking in with them
- Help teachers be more responsive to students' questions about class
- One youth had a teacher that was reporting back every week asking students what they could do to improve their learning ability and what assignments worked for them. It would be helpful for students if teachers were open to feedback around their online teaching methods and changing them.
- Teachers should reach out more—some just have a specific hour they are available
- Teach students organizational skills to help them manage their schoolwork
- Ensure all students have access to the technology necessary to learn and reliable Wi-Fi in or near their homes
- Improve student access to college guidance
- Reduce and rebalance schoolwork
- Resume summer activities to some extent
- Use outdoor spaces as “classrooms”
- Create orientation experiences for freshmen to make friends and connect with their new schools
- Stagger in-person attendance, if necessary, to keep students safe
- Reduce class sizes—both virtual class sizes and in-person if classes resume in the fall
- If resuming in-person instruction, priority should be given to those who need in-person attention. This could be because they either do not have technology or cannot effectively learn remotely. Some students might prefer online learning or could stay as is until it was OK to resume in-person.

### **Education breakout questions that facilitators asked youth:**

1. How has your mental health been affected by being out of school, and having to do schoolwork online? How have you kept yourself focused and accountable?
2. What do you wish Chicago Public Schools or other teachers knew about your education experience during COVID-19?
3. How have your post-high school plans been affected by COVID-19?
4. If Chicago schools cannot bring all students back to school in the Fall, what ideas do you have for making your education experience better and more productive than it is now? For example: could schools bring one group of students in 3 days a week, and another group two days per week? Really feel free to be creative and dream up what would be the best way to keep learning.

## MENTAL HEALTH

The Summit had 4 mental health breakout groups with approximately 40 total attendees.

### Challenges identified by youth

- Some youth feel that the mental health system—i.e., talk therapy available through CPS and other organizations—does not adequately address their mental health needs and that mental health should be addressed holistically
- The coronavirus pandemic is not conducive to good mental health
- Some families are struggling just to put food on the table and pay bills
- Youth do not know when things will go back to normal, and that uncertainty is stressful
- Youth cannot see friends and family, exercise, or pursue other activities that keep them happy
- “Not being able to see our older relatives and knowing visiting them would put them at risk. I miss companionship and time to relax together. “
- “When going for a walk or to the store, you tend to overthink and be paranoid about the environment around you. You don’t know if someone with COVID-19 passed through, touched this area.”
- Some parents do not understand mental health or take it seriously

### Opportunities identified by youth

- Create a list of mental health resources already available to youth
- Destigmatize talking about mental health
- Educate parents about the importance of mental health and how to support the mental health of their children
- Create virtual mental health support systems
- Create opportunities for youth to connect with each other and support one another, similar to the breakout groups experienced at this Youth Summit
- Lower academic expectations of students for the duration of the crisis
- Help teachers understand the mental health needs of their students. Not every student is comfortable speaking up about what they are dealing with at home, so teachers should send emails and invite space to talk.
- Teachers should exercise patience and allow students to miss deadlines in extenuating circumstances
- Refund school fees to families to reduce financial stress
- Send students care packages with art supplies or other activities
- Invest in outdoor public spaces
- Create a mental health curriculum to be taught in schools
- Make mental health resources and counsellors financially accessible to everyone
- Provide youth with activities to replace the extracurricular activities they no longer have access to

- Improve the relationship between Chicago police and youth so that police are not a source of stress and trauma
- Train police to understand mental health
- Adopt a more proactive stance toward mental health citywide
- Reduce violence citywide

**Mental health breakout questions that facilitators asked youth:**

1. When you have been faced with emotional hardship during the pandemic, where have you gone for healing and help? What have you tried that has worked? If you feel comfortable sharing your low points that led you to seek support, please do. There is no wrong answer, and if you have not found anything that is working, that is OK. Not everyone needs to answer this question.
2. Thank you for sharing. Let us take a few minutes to brainstorm: what could the city, your neighborhood or schools provide that would help more youth find effective mental health support? These can be long-term, big ideas or simple things to do now.
3. Is there anything you wish that the city, your neighborhood, school, or other youth could provide for mental health over this summer?
4. What are ways that have been helpful to others - family, friends, classmates - who are experiencing mental health difficulties?

## THE STATE OF YOUTH

After the first breakout group session, we shuffled all groups and broke out for a second time to discuss how the city can support Chicago's youth more generally. All attendees participated in the State of Youth discussions.

### Opportunities identified by youth

- Open the lakefront to socially distant recreation, perhaps with a schedule
- Mark and put up signs in parks and public spaces to encourage social distancing
- Shut down streets to cars to create more outdoor space for recreation
- Provide SAT/AP tutors or summer school programs for students over the summer
- Create virtual spaces for youth to connect with and meet new people
- Help friend groups connect with each other and do things together
- Create arts and other activity groups for youth to meet each other and share hobbies
- Include youth in the civic process (budgeting, governance, Mayor's office) more
- Advertise existing opportunities for youth to be involved in the civic process
- Provide free masks to people who need them
- Government officials can use social media (like Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok) to engage youth as long as they are being genuine
- Remote, community-wide celebrations around graduation
- Drive-in movies and church service
- Encourage young people to check in on each other
- Have teachers and counsellors check in on youth
- Help youth/families who've experienced loss during the pandemic cope with their grief
- Hold car parades
- Make public transit free once the pandemic is over
- Educate people why it is important to wear masks, as many people still do not want to
- Create one place for youth to go to get information from the city about the pandemic
- Put up hand sanitizer stations across the city
- Lower the age limit required to get a work permit so youth can get jobs more easily
- Send people mail with important information
- More communication targeted toward youth
- Create volunteer opportunities for youth
- Create more jobs for youth and a youth job board to search for opportunities
- Important information should come from youth leaders, not just the city government

### Questions we asked

1. How have you been finding ways to socialize and stay in touch with friends and classmates? What has been working well (or good enough) that others could try?
2. What do you wish Chicago had to offer people our age during this summer of the pandemic, knowing that we still cannot gather in groups? Feel free to think big - even if you do not think your idea is possible to pull off.

3. What do you wish Chicago had to offer people our age once the pandemic subsides and we can all be outside and close to other people again? This could be anything - like more clubs and cafes for youth, or more skateparks, for example. What would it take for Chicago to be the best city for youth?
4. Some folks are worried that people are not going to be safe and follow guidelines - and that could be because they're bored and restless or just making poor decisions. What do you need from adults so you can stay safe?
5. If the City was able to offer some of these ideas you've come up with, what would be the best way for you to learn about them? Should the city be sharing out via TikTok? How could you imagine finding out about new resources for youth?

## MESSAGES TO THE CITY'S LEADERS

During the welcome session, we asked participants, "What's something you wish the City's leadership knew about being a young person in Chicago right now?" Below are what they shared, in their own words.

- The mental health issues that a lot of teens face right now
- You should not expect our academics and work ethic to stay the same because a lot of us, like me, function better in a school environment and had a fixed mindset that we could only adhere to in an academic environment
- This new generation is really trying to work hard for social issues/justice. Most of us really want the best for everyone but feel like we are not being heard enough from people who are older than us.
- Chicago youth are talented and we could give in brilliant ideas.
- Just like adults, we feel pressured too at times. We are just as humans as everyone else so we are bound to make mistakes.
- Young people have things besides schoolwork to worry about.
- The state of panic we are in
- The stress from a lot of parents we get. We are pressured to work hard and striving to overcome and adapt. But it is easier said than done. A sudden, huge change such as this is not easy. I also wish they would acknowledge mental health more, with this new age, depression and anxiety are something that is common, and it needs to be addressed. I also wish they would understand we are all different, we are not all drones to our phone, and we are not all ignorant.
- Young people really value academics, as well as hobbies, but we lose our focus on mental health in the midst of it all.
- There are countless responsibilities that teens face regarding societal pressure, family pressure, and educational pressure. It should be known that these struggles are valid and voiced.
- It can be very stressful. You may have parents that have lost their job and cannot afford to pay for food. As for school it is very difficult and can be stressful if you do not have a computer and if you have family problems.
- I hope they notice our engagement
- The way the education system is set up in the city creates completion with selective enrollment and takes away from the core focus of education further allow class stratification to dictate whether or not someone gets a good education
- It is scary for people who do not have money because it is pretty hard to find a medical mask and it costs money.
- The struggles of having to maintain their grades and work ethic. From my personal experience, recently, I felt like I was being bombarded with work.
- We are taking on roles that are not usual, so we need more flexibility in school to enable us to help our families.
- Feelings directly correlate to the quality of work we're able to output within academic settings, and that the grading policies in place don't do a good enough job at accommodating the changes that have been made during the shelter in place.

- Not everyone lives in the best environment to be taught and learn.
- Understood how vulnerable young people in our city are to violence now more than ever. Therefore, those young people being affected by the violence should have a say in the solutions that are being proposed.
- Such a historical event has a really large impact on us unlike many adults, and having the time we are growing and learning shift tremendously will likely affect the rest of our lives
- Giving a space for both youth and adults to obtain is important in the decision-making process. Everyone has a story, an experience and even an idea that is as equally as important to hear as an adult's idea. Communication and collaboration is key, always.
- We should also be highly considerate of undocumented students and parents that do not have the privilege of accessing stimulus checks and government aid.
- It is already difficult for us to gain employment and job experience and COVID-19 did not make that aspect of our lives any easier. Also, that our holistic mental wellbeing should be our main priority in a time where many of our resources and safe spaces have been taken away from us.
- Global pandemics should not feel like less stress to students and workers than school and work, and the fact that people feel more relieved in the current climate is indicative of how problematic the way stress is handled in cps.
- Our leadership is showing an example of how we should act
- I feel divided. A lot of people in Chicago have gone to use social distancing to make everyone feel individualized. Safety is important, but I wish this pandemic felt more like we were battling this pandemic together rather than each family by themselves.
- It seems unfair to have a similar workload as when we were in school.
- Many young people in Chicago are resilient and are overall able to get through the various hardships that many of us are facing today. We just need our city's leadership to provide more resources that help keep us engaged with each other virtually.
- Many children in Chicago Illinois on the southside do not have a voice and we have ideas and thoughts too, also that we are not all ignorant and that we love when someone takes the time out to explain how we feel and what we have to say.
- We are taking this pandemic seriously, in many cases a lot more seriously than many adults.
- It can be for us because they somethings tend to not understand how hard this pandemic is for us especially the class of 2020 working so hard to get this far deserving all of the activities and graduations, etc. which is why I'm pretty sure why this youth summit is happening.
- I wish our City and state leaders knew how scary it is to live here in Chicago, with all the gun violence or even violence in general, and how stressful it is to be a student during this global pandemic.

## Conclusion

The Rise & Recover Youth Summit demonstrated that Chicago's youth are eager to participate in providing feedback and taking action to improve their communities. The Summit had a cap of 250 participants, and there were more who wanted to attend but missed the deadline.

Youth were hungry for space to process with one another, hear from each other's experiences, and generate productive ideas. Having representation across nearly all wards of the city helped youth hear from their peers who are facing very different challenges and circumstances. Not only were they able to widen horizons and gain empathy for each other through what was shared, they were also able to see the variety of living situations and socio-economic divides by being on video with each other.

The Mayor's Youth Commissioners showed tremendous leadership and creativity in generating the names, topics, questions, code of conduct and tone of the event. This group is primed to create more gatherings like this, to grow as facilitators and leaders for civic engagement, and to attract more Chicago youth to participate in shaping city policies and culture.

## Recommendations

### Future Architecting

Asking questions to youth about their lived experience garnered no shortage of answers and observations in the time allotted for breakout discussions. In order to generate more ideas, designs, and visions for the post-pandemic Chicago from a youth perspective, we recommend small follow-up gatherings in which youth are guided through a design process over a longer period of time.

### Follow Up Roundtables / Focus Groups

The city now has a list of 250 youth who are interested in providing feedback on a variety of topics. We recommend this group is tapped for smaller follow-up focus groups or roundtables that can provide feedback on policy ideas and help to shape the CPS plan for fall education.

### Facilitator Training

Each breakout had a facilitator who received a short training given the event's time constraints. To get deeper and more nuanced insights and forward-looking ideas on these topics, we recommend using trained facilitators, allowing more time for facilitator training, or training a subset of MYCs/adult volunteers in facilitation to catalyze future community conversations.

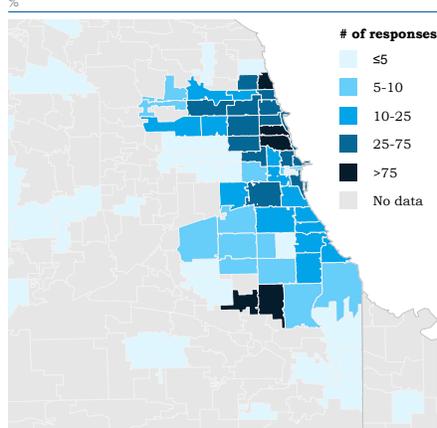
### Processing George Floyd and Beyond

Given the intense and historic protests, rioting and looting that Chicago and so many cities experienced in late May and are continuing into early June, we recommend either another Youth Summit (Rise & Repair?) or ongoing community conversations that will enable this group to come together and discuss and process these traumatic events. Having youth voice, insight, and leadership on what they experienced, what they are hearing and what they need to feel safe and supported is critically important.

# Public Survey Results – Recovery

## Survey respondent demographics

Breakdown of respondents by zip code<sup>1</sup>, %



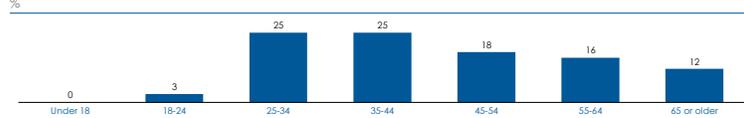
1. Which zip code do you live in?
2. What is your gender?
3. How old are you?
4. What is your total household income?

Source: City of Chicago Recovery Survey (n=1,359)

Breakdown of respondents by gender<sup>2</sup>, %



Breakdown of respondents by age<sup>3</sup>, %



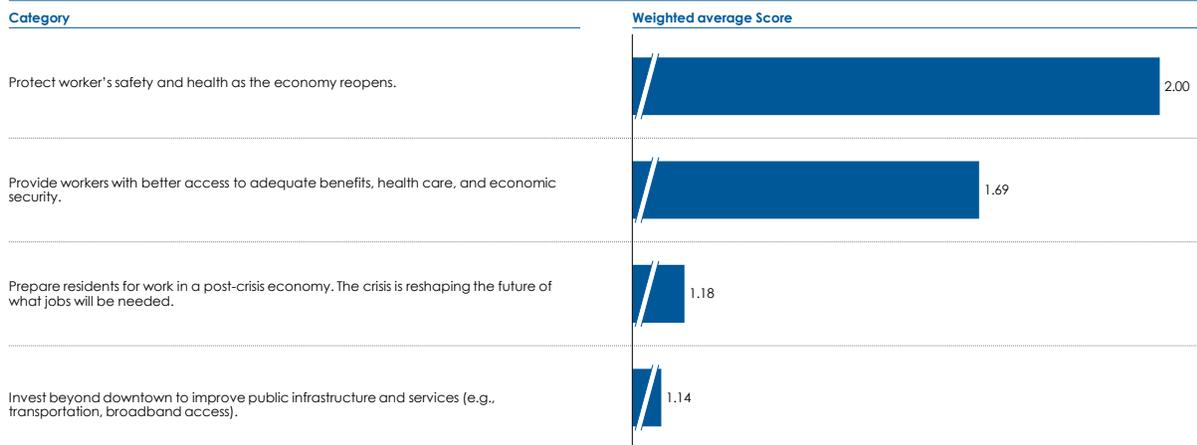
Breakdown of respondents by income<sup>4</sup>, %





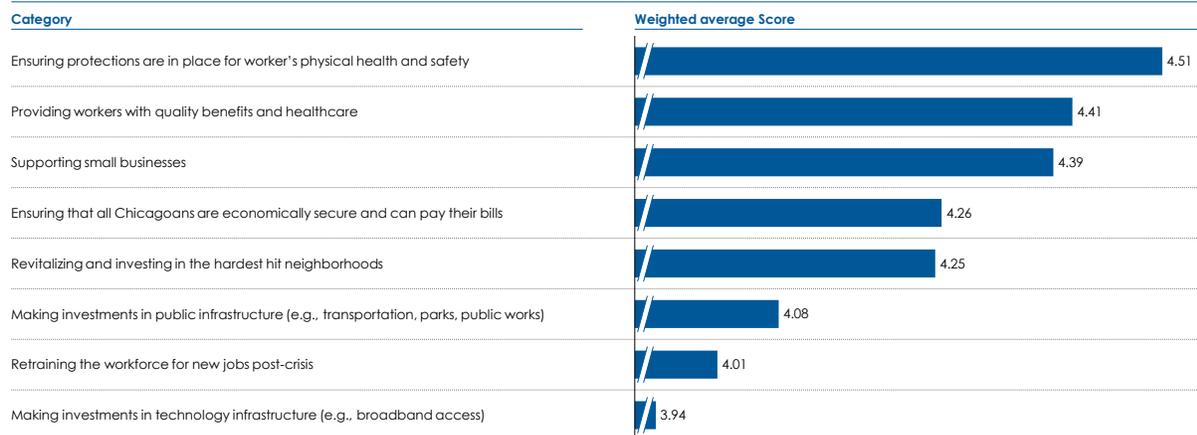
## Policy and Economic Stimulus – Themes

Q8. Rank the following Policy Economic Stimulus themes from highest priority (four) to lowest priority (one)  
Rank



## Policy and Economic Stimulus – Priorities

Q7. On a scale of one to five, how important do you think the following Policy and Economic Stimulus priorities are for Chicago's future (one being unimportant, five being highly important)  
Rank





## Mental and Emotional Health – Themes

Q10. Rank the following Mental and Emotional Health themes from highest priority (four) to lowest priority (one)

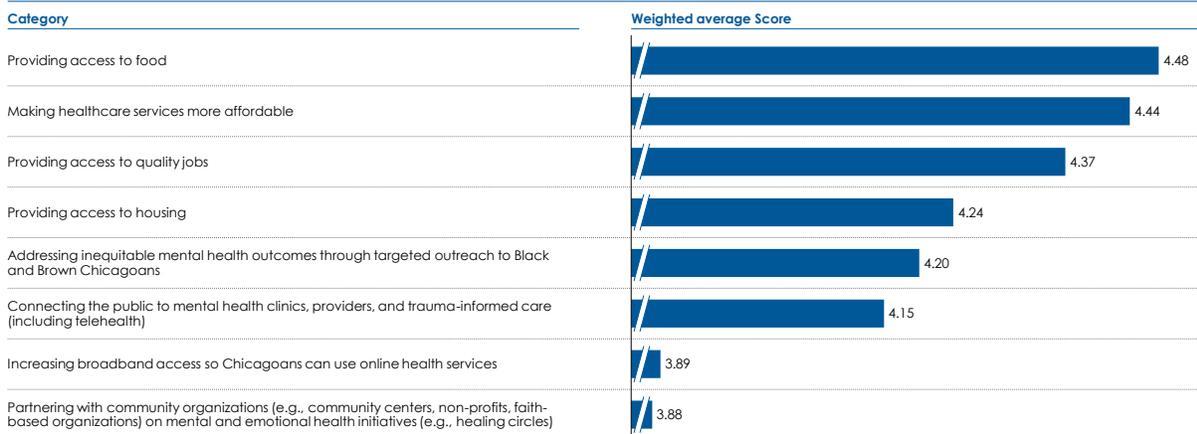
Rank



## Mental and Emotional Health – Priorities

Q9. On a scale of one to five, how important do you think the following Mental and Emotional Health priorities are for Chicago's future (one being unimportant, five being highly important)

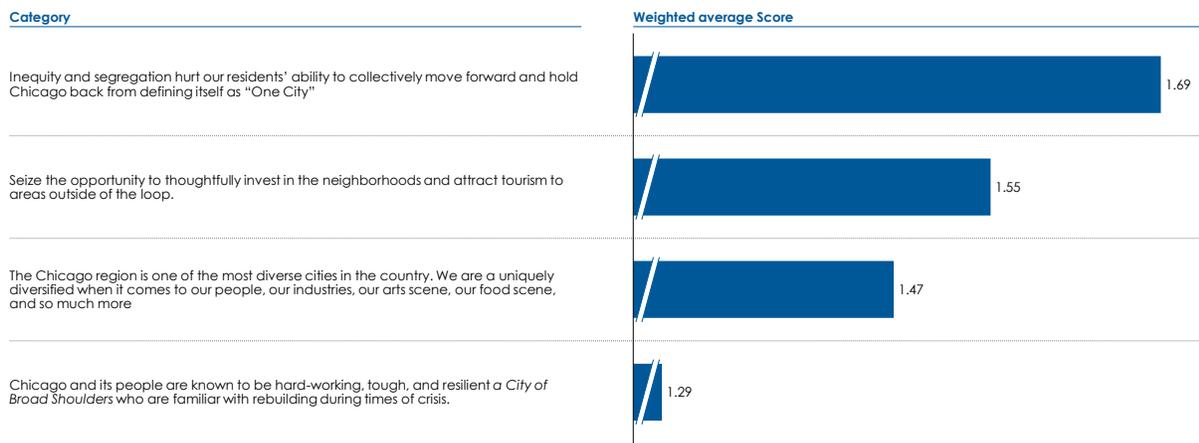
Rank





## Marketing and Business Development – Themes

Q12. Rank the following Marketing and Business Development themes from highest priority (four) to lowest priority (one)



## Marketing and Business Development – Priorities

Q11. On a scale of one to five, how important do you think the following Marketing and Business Development priorities are for Chicago's future (one being unimportant, five being highly important)

