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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND CPD EXPAND NEIGHBORHOOD POLICING INITIATIVE TO THREE MORE DISTRICTS

*District Coordination Officers (DCO) to begin working this fall in the 9th, 10th and 11th Districts;
New initiative completes Mayor Lightfoot's 90-Day reform to launch community-immersion training*

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and Chicago Police Department (CPD) Superintendent David O. Brown today announced the expansion of the Neighborhood Policing Initiative to the 9th (Deering), 10th (Ogden) and 11th (Harrison) District. As part of the expanded initiative, each district will rollout new District Coordination Officers (DCOs) this fall, who will work directly with community members to resolve public safety issues through collaboration and remedy neighborhood issues with the help of beat officers, detectives, aldermen, area businesses and sister agencies. To ensure DCOs are fully integrated in the neighborhoods they serve, the Department is also launching a new community-immersion training program, completing one of Mayor Lightfoot's 90-day reforms announced in early June.

"As public servants, our first mission is ensuring the safety and security of our residents and communities, and that's a mission not built on force, but on a foundation of trust. That's why the Neighborhood Policing Initiative is designed to connect residents with their local officers by developing relationships and solving public safety issues together," said Mayor Lightfoot. "As part of our 90-day community policing and reform deadline we set earlier this summer, these new officers participating in this initiative will be specially trained by neighborhood residents to not only formally connect them to the specific dynamics within their community but also deepen their understanding of key historical factors related to policing in that district."

First piloted in the 25th (Grand Central) District in January 2019, the Department's Neighborhood Policing Initiative is designed to better connect police officers with the residents they serve through collaboration and partnership. While patrol officers have little time to create meaningful connections as they work from one radio assignment to another, the initiative trains officers to become DCOs, whose job instead focuses on building valued relationships with residents, which are proven to lead to better community tips on crimes and decrease the amount of 9-1-1 calls for service.

"The expansion of this initiative will play a key role as the Department works to rebuild trust within the community," said Superintendent David Brown. "People trust those that



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they know, and these officers are tasked with getting to know residents within their communities on a personal level.”

Led by Commander Angel Novalez, who now leads CPD’s Office of Community Policing, the Neighborhood Policing Initiative is now in five police districts in Chicago, with a presence in every district in Area 4. In each district, DCOs are equipped with cell phones, business cards and email addresses to provide to residents so they can not only express their neighborhood concerns one-on-one but work with the officers on ongoing non-emergency public safety issues affecting the community, such as speeding cars or a loud neighbor.

“I’ve seen the value of the Neighborhood Policing Initiative firsthand,” said Commander Angel Novalez of the Office of Community Policing. “The officers that sign on as part of this new initiative have the ability to change lives and transform communities by working hand in hand with those that live within these communities.”

Building on the initiative’s pilot launch in the 25th District last year, the new DCOs in these districts will participate in a new community-immersion pilot as part of Mayor Lightfoot’s 90-day reforms announced earlier this summer. Launching in the three districts, the new Community Training Academy is a three-day training co-created by CPD, the Metropolitan Peace Academy (MPA) and other community organizations that will bring community members in as teachers. An initiative supported by the National Football League, the Players Coalition and the Pritzker Pucker Family Foundation, this community-led and designed program will increase the officer’s capacity to work collaboratively, effectively and respectfully with the residents and stakeholders in their district. By utilizing an asset-based community development framework, restorative practice and hyperlocal focus, the training will introduce specific dynamics within a given community and deepen understanding of key historical factors related to policing.

“This training provides officers with the history of each community from perspective of its citizens. Officers will get an introduction to key community and business leaders, the resources available within the community and the ongoing challenges they face. It is our hope that this training will provide an opportunity for community members to get to know officers on a human level and set the stage for a new relationship built on mutual respect, trust and collaboration,” said Vaughn Bryant, Executive Director of Metropolitan Peace Initiatives and member of the Players Coalition.

Completing one of the Mayor’s 90-day reforms, the training is designed to emphasize the role of the CPD officers in creating communities that are both safe and just. Officers will not only learn directly from community members and vetted stakeholders about key assets and challenges in their neighborhoods, but also develop an understanding of the biases that prevent authentic community-police engagement, and engage in critical conversations with key adults and young people in the community.

“The Neighborhood Policing Initiative is the future of the Chicago Police Department,” said Alderman Chris Taliaferro, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee. “This intensive



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community policing approach not only prioritizes relationship building but also focusing on the top priorities of the community. I applaud the Mayor and Superintendent for expanding this groundbreaking community policing initiative.”

Today’s expansion of the Department’s community-policing approach has not only built trust and rapport with officers across Chicago but has resulted in fewer service calls, such as in the 25th District where officers have experienced 1,538 less 9-1-1 calls compared to last year. The reduction in 911 calls has also resulted in fewer Radio Assignments Pending or RAPs in the 25th District. These are typically low priority calls for things such as fireworks or a barking dog that are placed on a backlog until a unit becomes available. RAPs are down 26% in the 25th District this year through Sunday, compared to the same 8-month period in 2019.

“This initiative gives community members a meaningful voice in their neighborhoods on how we address public safety, and I know this firsthand because I’ve seen it work in my ward,” said Alderman Reboyras. “We will continue to build on this community policing effort block by block and district by district so that we can truly build meaningful relationships between officers and the residents they serve.”

Modeled off the Neighborhood Policing Structure in New York City, Chicago’s Neighborhood Policing Initiative is supported thanks to The Joyce Foundation and John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Over the coming years, the Department will continue to expand the program across police districts in the city, prioritizing those who experience the highest levels of violence.

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