



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES CHICAGO WORKS COMMUNITY CHALLENGE
FOR SECOND ANNIVERSARY**

The \$10M community investment will award up to \$1.5M in each of the City's 7 planning regions for public infrastructure projects such as playground improvements in parks and schools, co-working space or meeting room upgrades in libraries, and community gardens on vacant lots.

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced the Chicago Works Community Challenge. The Mayor's Reimagine Chicago award is a \$10M community investment award that will make seven awards of up to \$1.5M for [each of Chicago's 7 planning regions](#). Awards will be issued to fund community-identified enhancements to city-owned properties including, public parks, schools, libraries, or city-owned vacant lots in residential zones through the Chicago Works capital plan. The City expects the projects like playground improvements in parks, co-working space or meeting room upgrades in libraries, and community gardens or playgrounds on vacant lots.

"Chicago Works Community Challenge serves as our city's latest step in the mission I set out to accomplish two years ago, which is to deliver the investments and change our residents need in order to thrive," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Like many of the other programs we've launched over the past two years, community input will play a huge role in this initiative because our residents know their neighborhood best and deserve to have a say in what projects are developed in their neighborhoods. I am grateful to each and every one of the City, community and business partners who have not only stepped up to make this initiative a reality but have worked closely with my administration to create a better, more equitable and more inclusive Chicago."

Chicago Works is Mayor Lightfoot's five-year capital plan that will invest in communities through infrastructure. Chicago Works dedicates funding to repair and replace roads, bridges, sidewalks, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible crosswalk ramps, streetlights, traffic signals, and other traditional infrastructure projects. The Chicago Works plan also includes funding for projects that will redefine Chicago. This investment will create nine new streetscape



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projects in INVEST South/West neighborhoods, provide funding for public art, tree planting, and implement Complete Streets designed for the next century.

“Resilient communities are strengthened when we elevate the voices of residents and empower them to implement innovative and sustainable improvements in their neighborhoods,” said Megan Harte Executive Director of Local Initiatives and Support Corporation. “Chicago’s neighborhoods are as different as they are vibrant, and it is imperative that we center the visions of residents as we all work to create equitable and thriving communities. I commend Mayor Lightfoot’s decision to listen to Chicagoans and invest in the future of our city by giving communities a say in how their tax dollars are spent.”

Starting June 1, applications will be available for proposals until September 1. Finalists in each region will partake in community feedback and engagement sessions between October and December. Winners will be selected for funding based on a range of criteria, including financial feasibility, community preferences, project design, and impact. The City will aim to break ground on many of the projects in 2022.

Awardees will be selected through a multi-phase process. First, eligibility will be determined by a prescreening process that will confirm if the land or facility proposed can receive funding under Chicago Works capital plan guidelines. After the initial screening, the proposals will be subject to deep community engagement and an evaluation process based on feasibility, design, community input, and impact.

“This type of investment is vital to the community development and quality of life for individuals that rely on public assets in their neighborhoods,” said Department of Planning and Development Commissioner Cox. “In particular with vacant lots, finding other uses for these developments supported by the City will allow neighborhoods to make use of public infrastructure that is otherwise ignored.”

Eligible projects must be located on residentially zoned City-owned vacant lots (directory [here](#)) or in facilities operated by Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Park District, or Chicago Public Library.

For more information on the Chicago Works Community Challenge or to submit a proposal, visit chicago.gov/chicagoworkschallenge.

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