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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES HISTORIC \$54M IN GRANTS FOR 133 SMALL BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS REVITALIZING COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS AND MAKING CATALYTIC NEIGHBORHOOD INVESTMENTS

Today's announcement is the culmination of four years of work by the Lightfoot administration making strategic block- and neighborhood-level investments promoting economic growth

CHICAGO — Today Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot named 133 Chicago small businesses, not-for-profits, cooperatives, and environmental organizations as finalists for more than \$54M in City grants. The finalists were selected from over 670 applications received by the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) in early 2023 and represent the largest single round of economic development grant-making in Chicago history. Award amounts range from \$10,000 to \$5.9M. Collectively, the finalists announced today promote business revitalization, job creation, and neighborhood transformation through the estimated \$253M in construction and development they will generate.

"I am immensely proud of the investments that the City has made in small businesses and nonprofits throughout my administration," said **Mayor Lightfoot**. "By issuing these development grants to budding entrepreneurs and organizations who provide essential services and opportunities, we are making an investment in the vitality of our communities. These individuals and organizations do the hard work to make our neighborhoods safer, healthier, and more prosperous and these grants highlight the City's commitment to supporting them."

Lightfoot added: "I want these grants to set a new standard for the role City government can play in supporting small businesses to revitalize commercial corridors, fund climate resilience, build community-wealth and spur transit-oriented development. I hope each and every one of the organizations and communities benefiting from these grants will go on to thrive and remember what we have been able to accomplish together when City Hall listens and responds to the voices from every Chicago neighborhood, not just a select few."

Details on all grant recipients announced today are [here for CRP](#) and [here for NOE](#). An interactive map of today's finalists and those announced in previous funding rounds can be found [here](#).



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Today's grant announcement includes funding for new, innovative City initiatives, including technical assistance programs to help make City grants accessible to a broader and more diverse range of organizations.

Finalists will receive funds through nine separate City programs that were combined into streamlined universal application processes. Six of the programs are Chicago Recovery Plan (CRP) grant streams: Community Development Grants (CDG) small and large grants, Climate Infrastructure Fund (CIF) grants, Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD) pre-development and development grants, and Community Wealth Building (CWB) grants. Finalists announced today also include applicants receiving funding through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) small and large grants.

This latest round of grants takes the Lightfoot administration's total direct economic development grant-making in communities to over \$250M.

Today's announcement includes the fourth funding round for Chicago Recovery Plan grants since the first round was announced on May 2, 2022. Pairing City-issued bonds with American Rescue Plan funds from the Biden Administration, the CRP supports an equity-based investment strategy leading to sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The scale of this investment is completely unprecedented. With the 133 finalists announced today, we're taking the total number of direct economic development grants made under this administration to over 530 projects, representing more than \$250 million in grants," said **Deputy Mayor Samir Mayekar**. "Collectively, these grants are unlocking more than \$750 million in total development based on the overall cost of these projects. Those are funds going directly into neighborhoods, not just supporting an equitable economic recovery but helping to build thriving, safe, and sustainable communities for the long-term."

The latest round of grants shows the successful evolution of the City of Chicago's strategy to mobilize businesses, not-for-profits, philanthropy, and government to leverage local talent and capacities to uplift communities.

"Each of today's grants represent an investment in people," **DPD Commissioner Maurice Cox** said. "The recipients are partnership builders and trust builders who are giving everything of themselves to lift up the communities they love while making the city more equitable and resilient for all Chicagoans."

Grant funding will be provided as reimbursements for eligible costs based on the grant category. Most grants will involve building rehabilitation work, new



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construction, and energy efficiency upgrades. Total project costs for capital work under the grants are estimated at \$253M.

133 finalists will receive grants across nine programs, coordinated as one cohort of economic development grant recipients. The next round of grant applications is open until August 18, 2023.

Today, 30 CDG finalists were announced, representing a total of \$27M in grant funding. The program prioritizes catalytic projects with a strong local impact that leverage local talents, capacities, and institutions to strengthen and contribute to the community. They are open to community developers, business owners and entrepreneurs, and property owners. Residential-only developments are not eligible to receive CDG funding, but individuals and teams seeking to initiate mixed-use developments projects are encouraged to apply. Examples of CDG finalists announced today include Deeply Rooted Dance Theater's South Side Center for Black Dance in Greater Grand Crossing and Cleo's Southern Cuisine in Grand Boulevard.

A total of 32 finalists were announced in the CIF category and will collectively receive \$6.2M in funding. Climate Infrastructure Fund grants support neighborhood projects that mitigate the effects of climate change and accelerate the city's equitable transition to the green economy. Finalists were selected based on multiple eligibility factors and alignment with the following three sub-categories: Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Systems, Electric Vehicles (EV) and EV Charging Infrastructure, and Green Infrastructure. Projects selected include The Firehouse, Plant Chicago to renovate a 115-year-old former firehouse into a community hub for the circular economy and Safer Foundation EV Fleet Project, allowing an East Garfield Park reentry program to replace its fleet with clean vehicles.

"The Climate Infrastructure Fund represents a landmark moment for the City of Chicago," said **Angela Tovar, Chief Sustainability Officer** for the City of Chicago. "We now have funding in place for nonprofit organizations and small businesses to help realize the goals laid out in the 2022 Climate Action Plan. We are incredibly excited to seed community-level climate infrastructure and for the sustainability leadership these finalists will provide for the whole city."

In the ETOD category, 26 finalists were announced, totaling \$4.7M in grants. Equitable Transit Oriented Development grants support projects that create intentional community benefits, build more walkable, affordable neighborhoods and increase transit ridership. Equitable Transit Oriented Development grantees help reduce traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, promote housing stability and economic vitality, and improve public health. Finalists announced in the ETOD category include Abrams Intergenerational Village providing affordable housing to seniors caring for their grandchildren, and housing insecure youth, and Food Matters



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providing healthy food options in a transit accessible location off the Green Line in Bronzeville.

In the CWB category, 27 finalists were selected to receive a total of \$3.8M in grant funding. Community Wealth Building grants are used to refine cooperative and shared-ownership development proposals through technical and design assistance. Priority models for CWB grants include worker cooperatives, limited-equity housing cooperatives, community land trusts, and community investment vehicles. Finalists announced today include Corner Store Co-Op at the National Public Housing Museum, cooperatively owned by current and former public housing residents, and Turning Red Lines Green, a community land trust that will include a community kitchen.

In addition to the CRP programs listed above, 17 finalists were announced for NOF grants. The NOF program offers two types of grants, Small Projects (awards up to \$250k) and Large Projects (\$250k to \$2.5M). Today, 16 Small Projects grants were announced for a total of almost \$4M in funding, and one Large Project will receive \$2M.

A media kit including background information on selected highlighted projects, select project renderings, a map of all CRP grantees and further information is [available here](#).

The Chicago Recovery Plan is the City's plan to amplify once-in-a-generation federal funding to create an equity-based investment strategy to catalyze a sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Applications are open for all CRP grant programs through August 18, 2023. For application information, visit [DPD's website here](#).

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