



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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CHICAGO CELEBRATES 187 YEARS OF RESILIENCE, INNOVATION AND DIVERSITY
["Happy birthday, Chicago!" video](#) features Chicago residents, visitors, City workers and special guests wishing a happy 187th birthday to the greatest freaking city in the world

CHICAGO – Today, the City of Chicago commemorates Chicago's 187th birthday, honoring the city's rich history of resilience, progress and cultural significance. From its modest origins to its current status as a global metropolis, Chicago continues to be a beacon of opportunity and a testament to the American spirit.

"I am immensely proud and so fortunate to serve as this city's 57th mayor, and as one of countless stewards of the soul of Chicago," said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. "It is the unshakable spirit, unyielding innovation and diversity of Chicagoans that makes us so special, and I would like to wish a heartfelt happy birthday to the greatest freaking city in the world."

Founded in 1837 by Haitian trader Jean Baptiste Point du Sable and his wife Kitihawa, Chicago's origin story is one of diversity and entrepreneurship. Du Sable's pioneering spirit laid the foundation for a city that would become a melting pot of cultures and ideas, attracting settlers from across the United States and abroad.

Chicago's history is defined by extraordinary resilience, exemplified in the aftermath of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. From the ashes of destruction, Chicago rose anew. The city's swift recovery and rebuilding efforts captured the world's attention and became a symbol of determination.

The city rebuilt and recovered so successfully that just a couple of decades later, Chicago was selected to host the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. This historic event showcased Chicago's architectural prowess and cultural diversity, introduced the world to

the Ferris Wheel and presented groundbreaking achievements in technology, industry and the arts.

Throughout its history, Chicago has been a battleground for civil rights and social justice, and also at the forefront of progressive movements. Mayor Harold Washington, the city's first Black mayor, exemplified Chicago's commitment to inclusivity and empowerment. His administration focused on improving city services, increasing affordable housing and advocating for minority representation in government. Mayor Washington's legacy continues to inspire leaders and activists to fight for a more just and equitable city.

Chicago's sports and music history are legendary, with iconic figures and pioneering genres marking the city's cultural landscape. That rich cultural tapestry extends beyond sports and music to world-class food, museums and a fine arts scene that has helped shape the city's identity, along with being a hub for business and higher education.

Chicago's iconic skyline, dominated by landmarks like the Willis Tower, 875 N. Michigan and the Jeanne Gang and Studio Gang Architects-designed St. Regis Chicago, showcases the city's architectural ingenuity and global influence. The Willis Tower, formerly known as the Sears Tower, redefined skyscraper design upon its completion in 1973, becoming the tallest building in the world. Each skyscraper ascent reflects Chicago's commitment to progress, from historic landmarks like the Monadnock and Wrigley buildings to modern marvels like the Aqua Tower.

From Lake Michigan's vibrant shores to every corner of its 77 communities, there is something for everyone in this great city. As we celebrate Chicago's 187th birthday, we honor the legacy of those who have made it the jewel that it is and recommit ourselves to building a future that reflects values of diversity, equality and opportunity for all.

[Happy birthday, Chicago!](#)

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