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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES 36 PERCENT INCREASE IN CITY FUNDING
FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION**

*Package of new investments to support Chicago's most vulnerable residents also
includes 19% increase in affordable units*

CHICAGO—Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot announced today that the City of Chicago will increase funding for homelessness prevention by 36 percent, along with a commitment to increase the number of affordable units for Chicago's lowest-income renters by 19 percent. This new package of investments and supports includes an increase in funding for the Flexible Housing Pool by \$5 million to house more than 200 youth experiencing housing instability or homelessness, along with a commitment of \$5 million from the corporate fund to the Low-Income Housing Trust Fund (LIHTF) for 520 new affordable housing units.

Together these investments will provide affordable housing to more than 700 new households through corporate fund contributions geared toward reducing homelessness and stably housing Chicago's most vulnerable residents.

"Homelessness is an unacceptable symptom of a city that is not serving all its residents, which is why we are increasing our investments to support an expansion of available housing and support services for those without a home," said Mayor Lightfoot. "From expanding housing to increasing social services for residents who are most in need, this year's budget will reflect our priorities of building safer, stronger communities and powering new economic opportunities for all Chicagoans."

Benefitting from strong collaboration across the Department of Family and Support Services and the Department of Housing, the administration's investments are focused on strengthening Chicago's network of services to provide greater access to affordable housing to prevent homelessness and increase support/interventions for those who have fallen into homelessness. This year's increase will work toward the following goals:



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- Reduce youth housing instability and homelessness by 25 percent
- Expand the LIHTF by 19 percent for a total of 3,200 households
- Build on the work of the Chicago Continuum of Care and other city partners and delegate agencies who work to connect an estimated 15,000-20,000 homeless individuals with services every year

“This increase is an important step in the direction of better providing for Chicago’s most vulnerable residents and strategically targeting populations and geographies long lacking in affordable housing, thus helping to address the City’s longstanding racial and economic segregation,” said Chicago Department of Housing Commissioner Marisa Novara.

This year’s budget proposes a five-fold increase from the City to the Flexible Housing Pool (FHP), which works to rapidly connect individuals with complex needs who are frequently using crisis systems (e.g., emergency rooms, shelters, or jail detention) with supportive housing and access to needed services. Chicago’s FHP program launched in April of this year, patterned after successful initiatives from other cities that show 96% of participants were still successfully housed one year after placement.

“The fact that youth experience homelessness is an unfair and unjust reality that needs to be corrected,” said Vicki Hadaway, interim director of La Casa Norte, which serves youth and families confronting homelessness. “The Lightfoot administration’s investment and commitment of \$5 million to address the housing needs of LGBTQ+ youth and all youth experiencing homelessness is an encouraging step toward confronting the issue and will ultimately transform lives and communities.”

This year’s increase to the Pool will focus on housing subsidies and services for addressing youth homelessness. Today, there are an estimated 811 youth aged 18-24 experiencing homelessness, including those aging out of the foster care system and the formerly incarcerated. While youth represent among the most vulnerable homeless populations, youth who identify as LGBTQ+ are at a 120% higher risk of reporting homelessness compared with other youth.

The Department of Family and Support Services has adopted a racial and LGBTQ+ equity framework and will seek out youth providers experienced in housing and services for LGBTQ+ youth and incorporate its Youth Advisory Board in program design and oversight. This investment from the City of Chicago will result in 200 young people receiving safe housing and comprehensive supportive services, reducing the number of youth aged 18-24 experiencing homelessness by 25 percent.



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“Our youth need a firm foundation upon which to build their best life,” said Commissioner Lisa Morrison-Butler, Department of Family and Support Services. “For the first time, with these investments, the City of Chicago has a dedicated fund specifically targeted at youth experiencing homelessness.”

The Lightfoot administration will also invest \$5 million in local funds to expand the crucial assistance provided by LIHTF in 2020 for Chicago’s most vulnerable residents: tenants making up to 30 percent of the Area Median Income. This population makes up nearly 70 percent of Chicago’s low-income renters, defined as making up to \$25,000 for a family of four. Unfortunately, most of the City’s affordable housing production tools set “affordable” rents at twice that: \$50,000 for a family of four. This \$5 million investment in Chicago’s lowest-income renters helps correct for that imbalance.

“Everyone, regardless of their finances or circumstances deserves decent, safe affordable housing as a basic right,” said Alderwoman Susan Sadlowski Garza (10). “These investments tell every Chicago resident, especially our youth, that they matter, that we hear them, and that we will work together to provide the resources they need and deserve.”

The Department of Housing will lead the City’s efforts to connect low-income households with more resources by targeting units where affordable housing is lacking and by working to expand capacity where affordability has become an issue due to gentrification.

“The Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund welcomes Mayor Lightfoot’s announcement that her administration will increase funding by an additional \$5 million,” said Annissa Lambirth-Garrett, Executive Director, Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund. “The increased funding will allow the Trust Fund to continue the mission it’s championed for 30 years across Chicago and it signals the Mayor’s commitment to providing critical assistance to our more vulnerable citizens who might otherwise be homeless or living in substandard conditions.”

The City’s 2020 commitments build on a series of recent measures taken by the Lightfoot administration to create affordable housing across the city and reduce homelessness. Those measures include revisions to the 2019 Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) for up to \$60 million in affordable housing resources. Additionally, the administration convened a new Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO) Task Force charged with examining and improving the ordinance, one of the City’s key housing tools that have helped thousands of Chicagoans find an affordable place to live.

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