

CHANGING THE FRAME: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH A RACIAL EQUITY LENS



**Institute for Research on
Race and Public Policy**

Research that Makes a Difference

Changing the Frame: Civic Engagement Through a Racial Equity Lens is dedicated to all the organizers and Community-Based Organizations working day-in and day-out to make racial equity and social justice a reality for all Chicagoans.

A Report for The Chicago Community Trust

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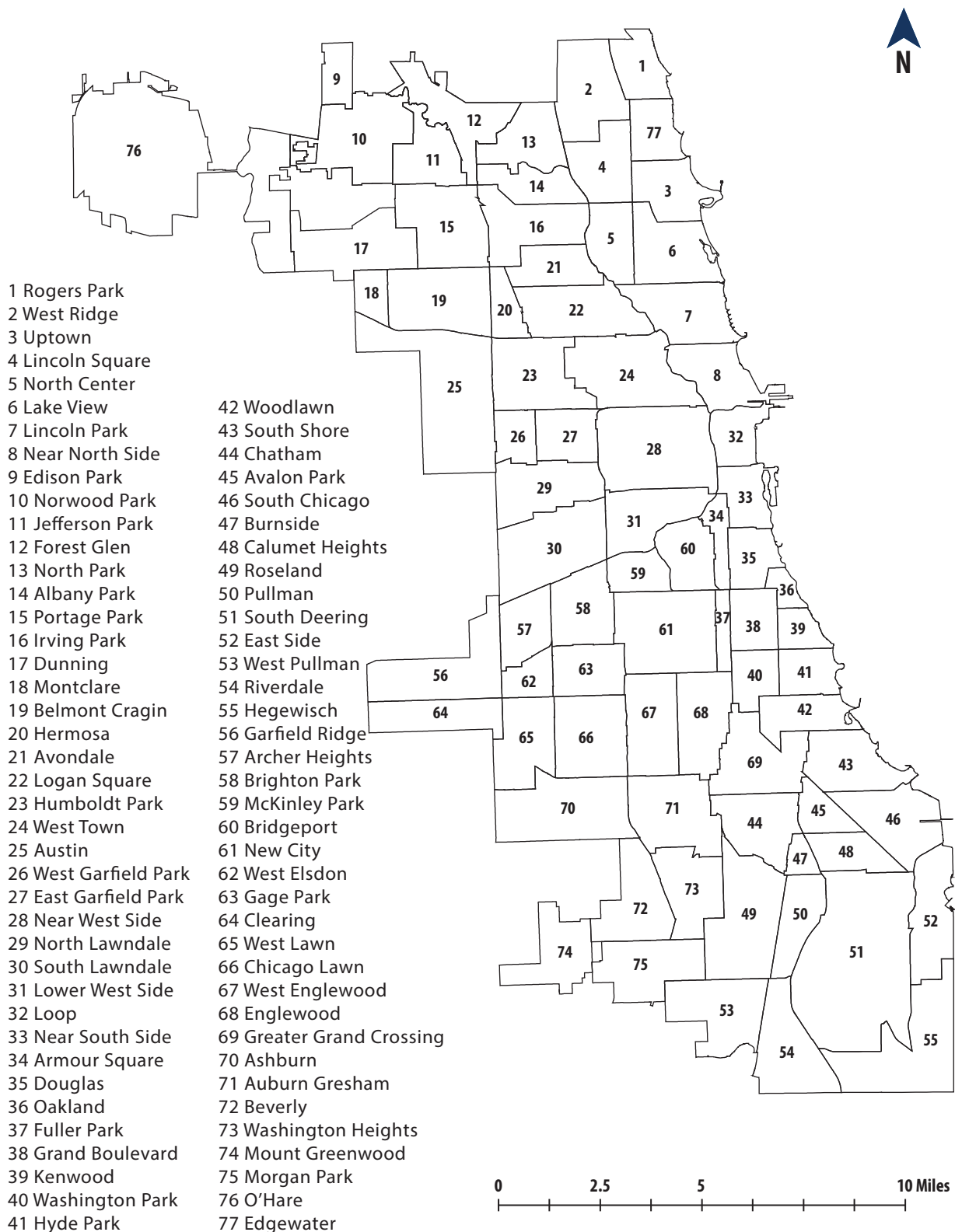
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CHICAGO COMMUNITY AREA MAP



Foreword

by Maritza Bandera

Chicago, our beautiful city full of contradictions, is nationally and globally known for many things including violence, segregation, political corruption, its neighborhoods, deep dish, architecture, museums, and much more. One of the many things Chicagoans are known for is their deep love and devotion to the city. Our individual and collective commitments are manifested in many ways, from block parties to volunteering to setting up mutual aid networks to taking to the streets demanding social justice.

This second edition of the Chicago's Civic Health Report tells part of our collective story, our successes and shortcomings during the past decade. At The Chicago Community Trust, our commitment to the city and region is to close the racial and ethnic wealth gap and we know that in order to do so we need to increase resident civic participation. We know residents have channeled their collective energy and mobilized to demand for what is just and their human right to live a dignified life. Residents are telling their own stories and reframing what people think they know about Chicago and its people.

Civic engagement means more than volunteering or voting; it's manifested in the ways we act on behalf of our communities. Just recently, we have witnessed Chicagoans taking action and holding those in decision-making power accountable. Chicagoans from the Southeast Side demanded more and better from their local elected officials. They went on a hunger strike to stop the permit approval of a metal shredding company attempting to relocate to their community, an already heavily polluted area. They organized for months and they won. This was their victory, this was a victory for all Chicagoans. Workers from El Milagro, a well-known local tortilla company, went on strike to demand better wages, safe working conditions, and sexual harassment training for their managers. Workers won their demands after months of organizing. The people are harnessing their power, their voice, and their ability to act.

I write this as my screen notifies me of the breaking news that the Supreme Court of the United States has overturned *Roe V. Wade*. There are innate rights promised to each and every one of us. Rights that are fragile. Rights that are sometimes not fully realized, violated, or rescinded. In times like these we need to remind each other of the power we hold individually and collectively. We need to remind ourselves that hope is a discipline. I am reminded of Margaret Mead's quote, "never underestimate the power of committed people to change the world." The power of the collective, ultimately, will be what shifts our city to where equity is central – and opportunity and prosperity are in reach for all.

INTRODUCTION

Since Robert Putnam's 1995 article "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" and his 2000 book of a similar title, policymakers and nonprofit funders have sent out warning signals about the state of civic engagement. Traditional measures of civic life and volunteering show declining rates of civic engagement since the 1960s. For example, these measures consistently show low rates of voting and volunteering among Black and Latinx, young, and working-class people. The interpretation of these measures often leads to bleak declarations about the state of civic life: "Leading thinkers have issued warnings that we are increasingly 'bowling alone', 'coming apart', and inhabiting a 'fractured republic.'"¹ According to the U.S. Joint Economic Committee's 2017 report on social capital, "Our social fabric has seen better days."² Likewise, the 2010 *Chicago Civic Health Index* report began with the startling assessment that "Chicagoland's civic health is on life support."³

However, this picture is partial. These descriptions of declining civic health tend to be rooted in a particular framework of civic life that privileges voting and volunteering, specifically the form of volunteering that involves donating one's time, labor, and money to formal organizations doing work outside of one's own neighborhood, community, and immediate interests. That is no doubt an important form of public participation. However, when analysts use these activities as *the* measuring stick of civic life, they tend to obscure a broader range of civic engagement that is disproportionately practiced by Black, Latinx, and working-class people. These alternative forms of civic engagement include participation in informal support networks and social movement organizing, both of which are rooted in and aimed at addressing racial inequities.

In our report, we provide a broader analysis of civic life using a racial equity lens. We take into account racial inequities and the practices and policies that reinforce them along with the perspectives of people engaged in the critical work of addressing these inequities. Our work over the last seven years has allowed us to collaborate with a host of community-based organizations deeply invested in this work. We have seen the importance of their contributions in fostering equity and laboring to make

Chicago a city that works for all. By incorporating a racial equity lens and the voices of these community actors into our analysis, we hope to broaden the discussion of what counts as civic engagement and better understand how to encourage it.

Summary of findings

Our report assesses the state of Chicago's civic health a decade after the 2010 *Chicago Civic Health Index* report. Civic engagement is broadly understood as the collective participation of individuals in society to promote the public good. Researchers, policymakers, and nonprofit funders are interested in measuring civic engagement as it points to the capacity of individuals to come together to solve challenges facing our society.⁴ Acting collectively, therefore, undergirds the concept of civic engagement. As the U.S. Joint Economic Committee noted in its 2017 report on social capital, the "web of social relationships through which we pursue joint endeavors"⁵ is a "space where we are formed, where we learn to solve problems together, where we learn the 'art of association' – a space held together by extended networks of cooperation and social support, norms of reciprocity and mutual obligation, trust, and social cohesion."⁶

While we provide updated data on civic health using the Current Population Survey,⁷ a commonly used survey instrument to study civic engagement, our examination moves beyond this measure to consider what we know and have seen about the wide array of ways that Chicagoans participate collectively in society to promote the public good. Our analysis points to, for example, the disconnect between findings that suggest relatively low rates of civic participation among Chicago's Black and Latinx residents and the committed community engagement that we have witnessed among these residents in the past decade. This disconnect led us to step back and consider how civic engagement has been conceptualized, measured, and interpreted – what we can learn from it and what is missing. The conceptualization and measurement of civic engagement, on the one hand, and the interpretation of these measures, on the other hand, is not just a matter of intellectual debate. It shapes the types of activities and organizational forms that get included in analyses, it frames the resulting portrait of civic participation across place, race, and class, and, most critically, it shapes policy and funding decisions regarding the best ways to encourage and enhance civic participation.

In this report, we aim to a) better understand whether or not “Chicagoland’s civic health is on life support,”⁸ b) generate a much-needed discussion of the (racial and class) blind spots of traditional measures and interpretations of civic engagement, c) offer a wider-lens picture of patterns of civic engagement in the city and, d) point to the kinds of public policies that are needed to support a thriving and engaged civic ecosystem for all Chicagoans.

We begin by providing updated data on civic engagement using the Current Population Survey, a prominent survey used by the federal government, research and policy organizations, and academics to study civic participation. We then examine how this survey instrument conceptualizes and measures civic engagement and volunteering. We suggest that these traditional measures of civic engagement underreport civic activities and forms of collective organizing (such as informal support networks and social movement organizing) that are central to how Black and Latinx people in Chicago have come together to address long-standing patterns of racism and structural disinvestment.

Next, we analyze patterns in the Current Population Survey civic engagement data and draw attention to how institutional inequities and government policies are key factors shaping these patterns. Our approach stands in contrast to perspectives that focus solely on individual or group culture as the drivers of civic participation trends and patterns; such perspectives often offer what social scientists refer to as a “deficit lens” which pathologizes those being discussed and misses key societal dynamics (see the expert commentary by Nelsen and Cohen as well as the “Wounded City” sidebar for more on this). We point to structural inequities in income, employment, and education, as well as the City of Chicago’s uneven budget cuts, disinvestment, and policing as some factors that explain depressed rates of civic engagement among Black and Latinx and working-class people. Our vantage point allows us to identify policy changes that would substantively enhance material conditions and facilitate civic participation among Chicago’s Black, Latinx, and working-class residents.

Lastly, we turn to other data sources to offer a wider lens on how civic engagement is practiced among Black, Latinx, and working-class people in Chicago. While voting and volunteering rates may be low overall in Chicago and particularly low among working-class communities of color, we also find that Chicago’s Black and Latinx working-class – especially young people – practice vibrant and resilient forms

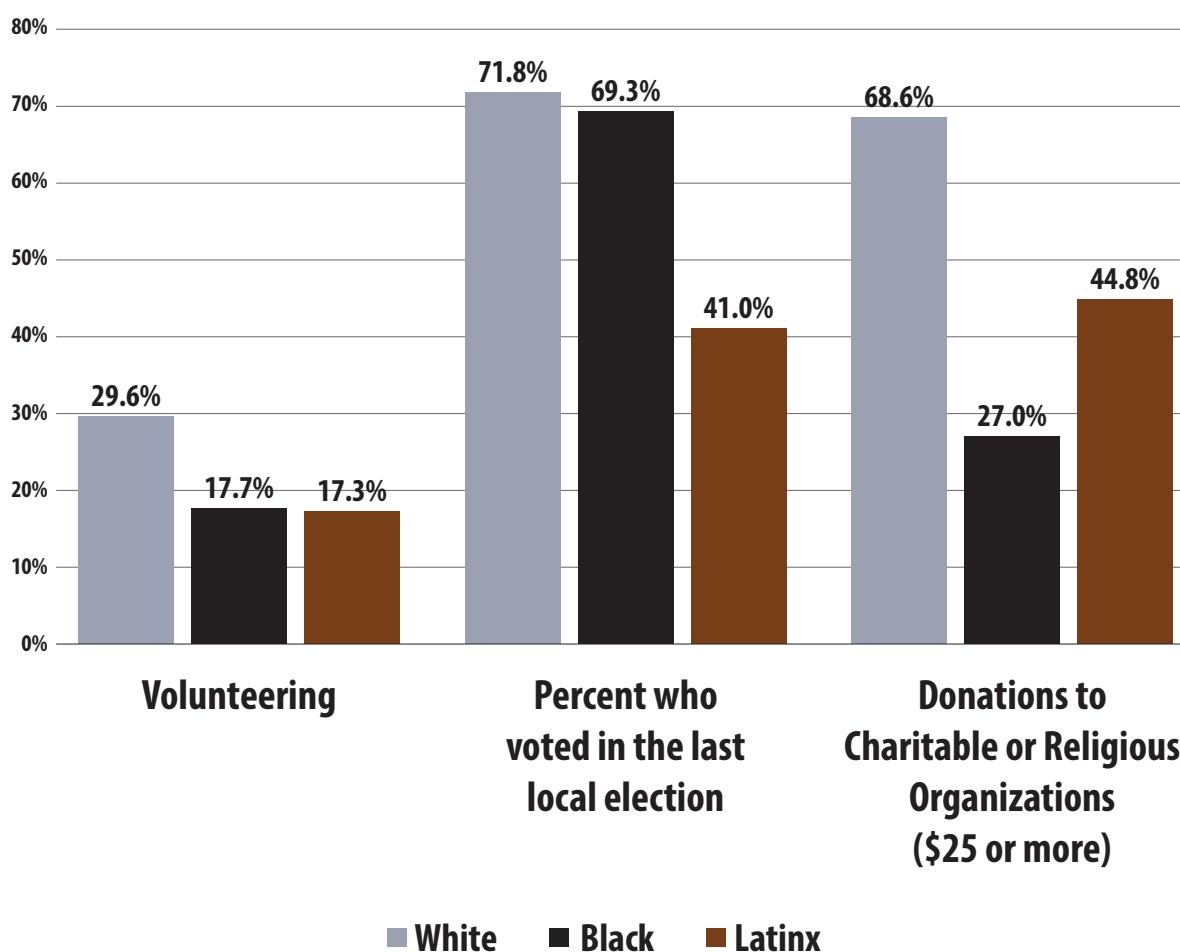
of collective engagement. We look at an array of measures that capture different kinds of collective participation in civic life, including pivotal civic events in Chicago in the 2000s and 2010s, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) nonprofit data, and City of Chicago block party permit data. We also interviewed 21 local organizers, activists, and nonprofit staffers to gain insight into how they understand civic engagement, the state of civic health in Chicago, and what dynamics hinder or facilitate participation in civic life.

We suggest that the Current Population Survey data and its interpretation offer only a partial picture of civic engagement. Framing civic engagement through a racial equity lens provides new ways to assess civic life in Chicago overall along with the civic participation of Black and Latinx Chicagoans in particular. Although this demonstrates that Black and Latinx Chicagoans are more civically engaged than popular narratives would suggest, there are still reasons to be concerned about the state of civic engagement. However, our concerns are rooted not in a particular group or individual's lack of engagement but in how institutional inequities and City of Chicago policies create material barriers in people's daily lives that constrain their opportunities to be civically engaged and the types of engagement they pursue. The implications for policymakers, researchers, funders, and nonprofits that want to increase civic participation in Chicago are clear: rather than focus on incentivizing individuals to vote or volunteer outside of their neighborhood or community, we must focus on policies that close the gap in the persistent, pervasive, and consequential economic, educational, health, housing, and criminal justice inequities that have been a structural reality of our city for the past 50 years or more.

CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY SNAPSHOT OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN CHICAGO

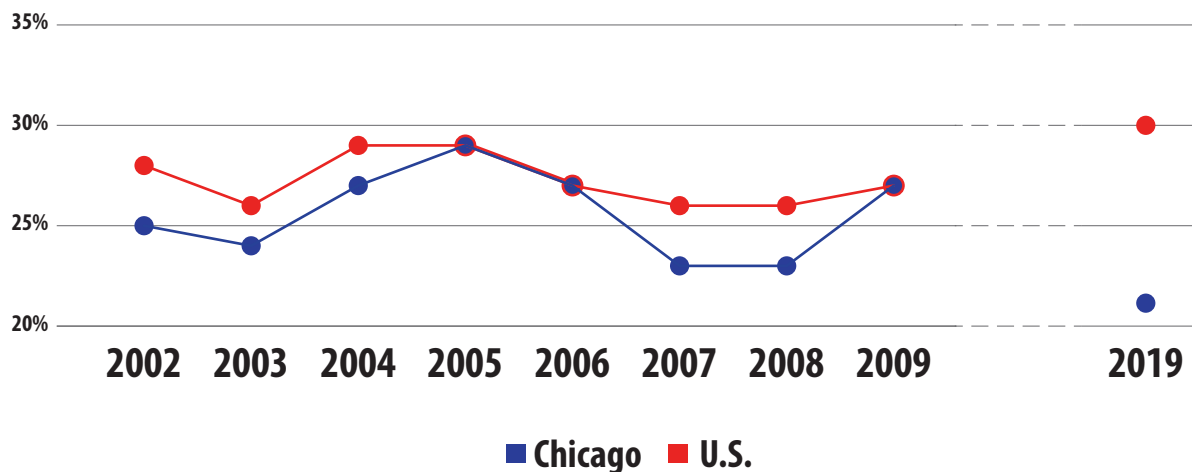
We begin by presenting U.S. Census Current Population Survey data on civic engagement. The data tells a familiar story accepted in most of the academic literature on the topic. Chicago has lower rates of volunteering compared to the state and nation. This pattern is consistent with findings that urban areas generally have lower volunteering rates compared to suburban and rural areas.⁹

CHICAGO VOLUNTEERING, VOTING, AND CHARITABLE DONATION RATES, 2019



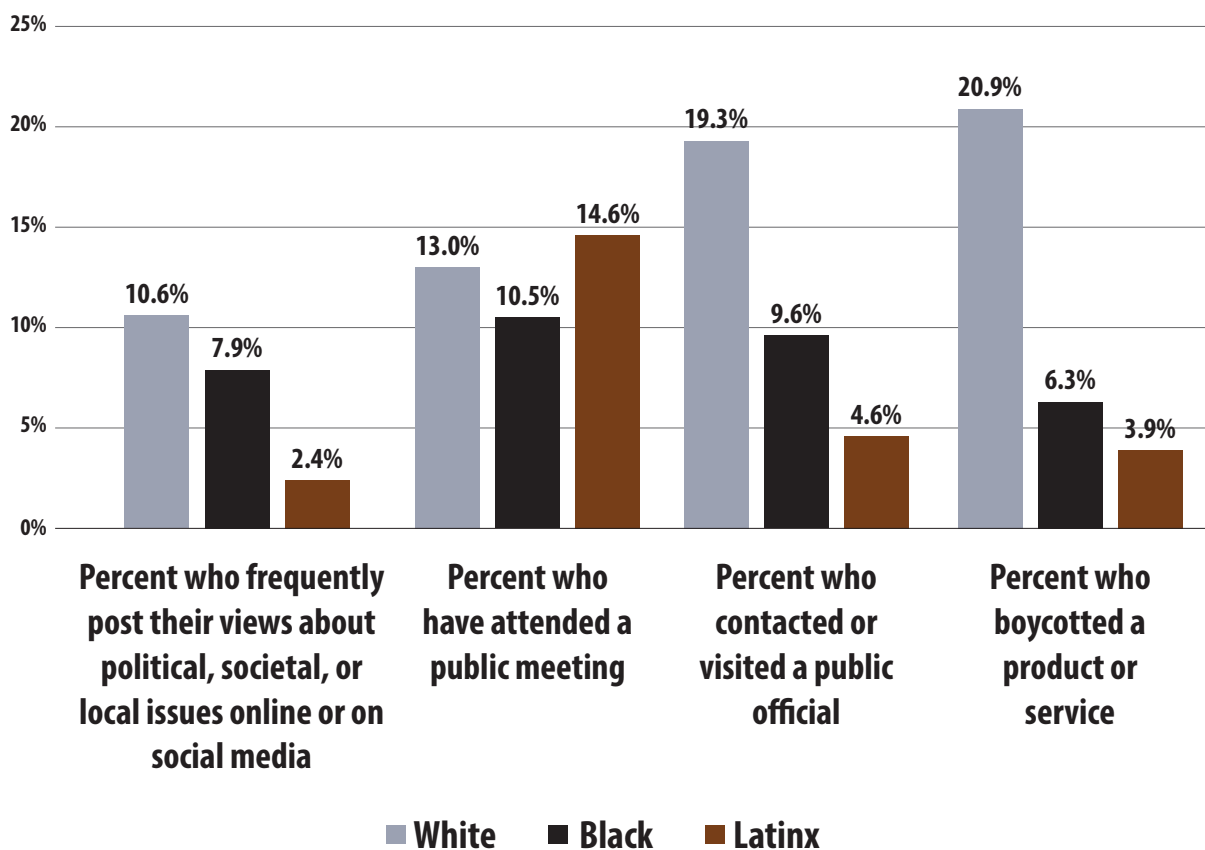
Source: U.S. Census Current Population Survey

COMPARISON OF CHICAGO AND U.S. VOLUNTEERING RATES, 2002 - 2009 & 2019



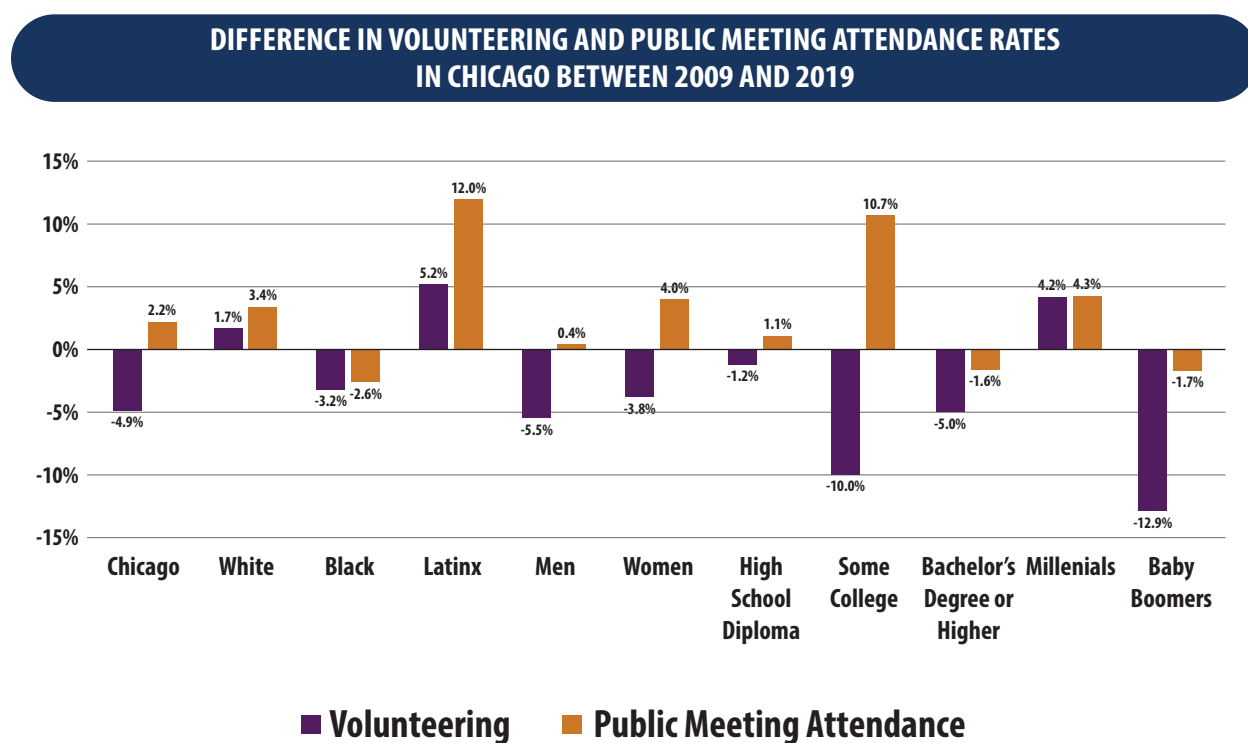
Source: U.S. Census Current Population Survey

CHICAGO POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT, 2019



Source: U.S. Census Current Population Survey

Furthermore, across many measures of civic engagement, Chicago rates are below national rates. Some examples include voting rates (61.4 percent versus 66.8 percent), donation rates to non-political organizations (46.4 percent versus 50.5 percent), and rates of non-electoral political engagement, such as boycotts and conscious consumption (10.8 percent versus 14.8 percent).



Source: U.S. Census Current Population Survey.

Note: Millennials refers to those born in 1981 or later. Baby Boomers refers to those born between 1946 and 1964

In terms of the variation in rates of engagement by race and class, the Current Population Survey data for Chicago mirrors broader trends. Across most measures, Black and Latinx people have lower volunteering and civic engagement rates than white people; moreover, those with lower educational attainment and less income tend to have lower rates of volunteering and civic engagement than those with higher educational attainment and more income.¹⁰

There are some interesting changes over time. First, between 2009 and 2019, volunteering rates in Chicago declined from 26.7 percent to 21.9 percent. This drop diverged from patterns of volunteering rates across the U.S. which increased

from almost 27 percent to almost 31 percent and is contrary to what we would have expected to happen based on research that shows that volunteering rates have remained relatively stable since the 2000s except for recession-related dips.¹¹ Accordingly, rather than decline, we would have expected that by the 2010s volunteering rates would have rebounded to pre-recession levels in Chicago, as they did in the U.S. overall. In addition, while volunteering rates declined overall, they increased for whites, Latinxs, and Millennials. The growth in volunteering rates for Latinxs and Millennials grew 7 and 3 times faster, respectively, than the growth in white volunteering rates. Public meeting attendance rates increased most among Latinxs and those with some college.

Census 2020 and the Role of Government in Strengthening Civic Infrastructure

By Kathleen Yang-Clayton

In May 2020, while the world was locked down due to Covid-19, caravans of cars would honk horns through the streets of Little Village and Englewood, encouraging residents to come outdoors to pick up much needed masks and maybe a t-shirt or reusable bag. A video showed up on YouTube of a young Black rapper who was passionately speaking her vision of why being counted mattered to her. Students at UIC were planning rallies on the main quad, with cotton candy and popcorn. Was this about voting? No. Was this a political campaign? No. Was this a protest? No. These are some of the examples of civic engagement from Illinois' experience with the 2020 Census that underscores why the role of government should go beyond simply delivering services and levying taxes and towards strengthening the civic infrastructure of democracy.

Often, when one thinks of civic engagement, images of voters in line at polling stations, earnest park cleanups, and contentious public meetings come to mind. Indeed, many of the examples in this report highlight that we should expand our definition of what counts as civic participation well beyond the act of voting. In that same line of argument, I would offer that the U.S. Census should be seen as one of the greatest litmus tests of the civic health of any city or state. The official decennial census differs from the more periodic surveys that are sent out by the U.S. Census Bureau and other federal agencies (e.g., American Community Survey, Current Population Survey). The U.S. Census is based on the *actual* self-reporting of individuals, mainly, and is supplemented with administrative data when the target populations are highly mobile or severely limited in ability (e.g., homeless shelters, senior homes, student dormitories).

From my work on supporting the last Census count, it is clear that funding programs that strengthen the civic infrastructure of a region to increase trust in government is an urgent and important need in every community across the country.

In 2019, the State of Illinois understood that the upcoming 2020 Census would present a major opportunity for the state to make sure that every Federal tax dollar, electoral college vote and congressional seat was secured for the residents of Illinois. But this required that every resident in Illinois fill out their census forms, either online or by mail, and return those forms in time for the final count to be tallied. The failure to count every Illinois resident would have devastating effects on Illinois' ability to meet the needs of its residents. In Fiscal Year 2016, Illinois received nearly

\$35 billion under the 55 largest federal programs based on the 2010 census. Even a one-percent undercount would result in an annual loss of \$19,557,435 over the next ten years, resulting in a total loss of \$195,574,350 directly impacting all residents of Illinois, especially its most vulnerable.¹²

One of the most important components to achieving the highest self-response rates for the entire state was figuring out how to engage “hard to count” (HTC) communities across the state, and especially in Chicago where because of population density, low self-response rates in some of the smallest census tracts could lead to thousands of residents being omitted from the official census count. Whether it was residents responding to outreach attempts in the middle of the South Side of Chicago or in small rural communities like Alexander County which has less than 50% internet access, the barriers to getting a full count were only part logistical. A central challenge was that most HTC communities have very high levels of distrust in government. Many “HTC” communities have lower education and income levels, higher concentrations of limited English-speaking residents, and a persistent history of segregation and marginalization that the government has unfortunately been complicit in creating.

Therefore, a strategy was necessary that focused not just on contact but on connection. The strategy in Illinois was adapted from a “hub and spoke” model initially pioneered by the State of California where great focus was placed on 31 Regional Intermediaries (RIs), who in turn funded over 400 nonprofits and municipal governments as Subrecipients (SRs) across the state (see complete list of organizations in the [Making It Count](#) report and the [“defining our decade”](#) digital archives).¹³ This network of nonprofits ranged from small religious organizations, food pantries, local health clinics to daycares, local libraries, schools, and municipalities. This allowed trust to be built between government agencies and the diverse communities of Illinois. The census created privacy concerns for many Illinoisans, especially those from hard-to-count communities, but a network of trusted messengers allowed the development of trust in filling out census forms. The model allowed for a relatively easier use of a large network of trusted messengers from those communities to conduct education and outreach efforts. The model also gave agency to RIs to utilize their existing partnerships in local communities and contracting them as Subrecipients.

Justified skepticism about government created enormous barriers in “Hard to Count” communities in the city. Raising up a support infrastructure to enable over 400 health clinics, libraries, schools, and local municipalities to conduct outreach and engagement for the 2020 Census was going to be a major challenge. In March 2020, with Covid-19 cases and deaths skyrocketing, this challenge turned into a literal fight for the lives of residents across the city. As all of these small organizations

struggled to change field plans, care for the lives of their employees, and still deliver essential front-line services to those most in need, it became exceedingly clear that government agencies and municipalities had a critical role to play in rebuilding the literal health of our communities.

By the fall of 2020, as self-reporting numbers began to stream in from all parts of the country, many participants of the Illinois 2020 Census program wondered if all of their efforts through the challenges of Covid-19 and the social and civil unrest in response to police violence had made an impact. And it did. Illinois, one of the largest states that had invested over \$30 million to support these outreach efforts made the top ten list of highest response rate states (71.4 percent) in October of 2020. What remains an unmet challenge, however, is that much the network we helped build of Census grantees is slowly disintegrating. Municipalities and other government agencies that had been given minor grants to promote civic engagement find their interest in continuing engagement unsupported and marginalized as the focus shifts to rebuilding American communities ravaged by Covid-19 and racial unrest. As this report highlights, sometimes building a connection between the public and their local library and civic engagement might be just as important as building a bridge or library itself.

We make the argument in the Census 2020 Report: *Making it Count*, that building stronger civic infrastructure now in 2022 will actually yield greater civic engagement and (hopefully) higher response rates in 2030 and beyond. But even more important is that rebuilding trust between the public and government is the most urgent and important need of all.

LIMITATIONS OF CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY DATA

The Gallup Poll and the U.S. Census Current Population Survey are the most consistent publicly available data sources on civic participation. The Current Population Survey is the more consistent and more comprehensive of these surveys. It is also the only survey that allows for state, metropolitan area, and, with the correct methodology, local estimates.

Although the Current Population Survey provides one of the only regularly produced measures of civic life, its conceptualization is based on underlying assumptions that have important implications for the measures and interpretation of civic engagement. Volunteering provides an important example since volunteering rates are almost always privileged as a paragon of civic participation.¹⁴ Volunteering, in the Current Population Survey, can be understood as providing a good or service without compensation to a formal organization or association (e.g., giving out drinks and cookies at a blood drive, repairing / building a house through Habitat for Humanity, or providing a coordinating role in a meeting). The “Helpful Hints” provided to those conducting the Current Population Survey (to navigate what is and is not included as volunteering) explicitly tilt volunteering towards participation in organizations doing

CHICAGO NUMBERS THAT COUNT

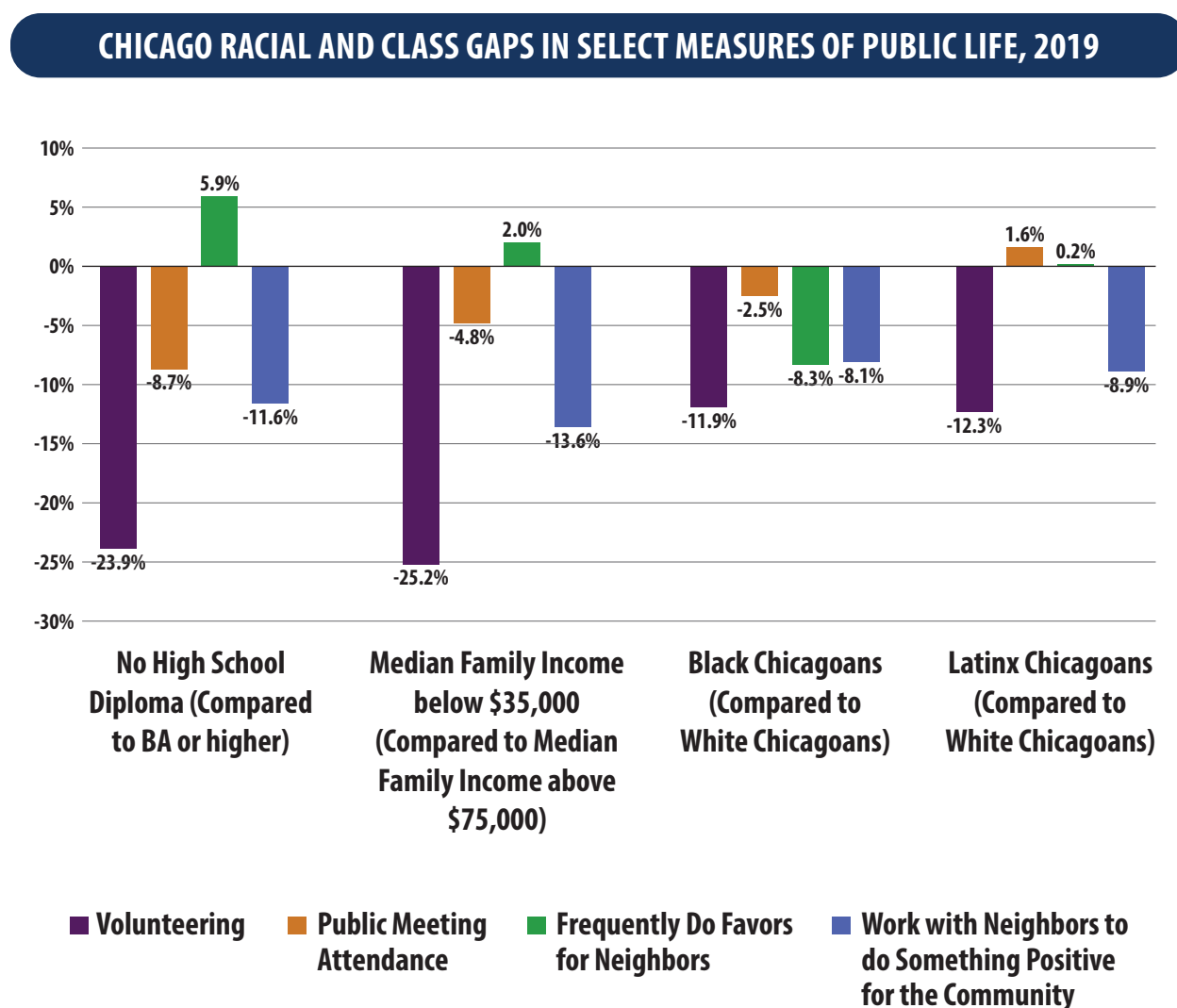
Current Population Survey “Helpful Hints” for what counts as Volunteering

Question S16, S16a: Volunteer Activities	
Included	Not Included
Collecting eyeglasses for the Lions Club to send overseas	Being a member of the Lions Club
Giving out drinks and cookies at a blood drive	Giving blood
Sorting donations at Goodwill (unapid)	Taking your old clothes to Goodwill
Distributing food at a food bank	Giving food to a food bank
Helping with a religious service (cantor, chalice bearer, acolyte, muezzin)	Attending religious services
Mentoring with Big Brothers / Big Sisters	Mentoring / guiding a child you know (not through an organization)
Participating in the Adopt-a-Highway program	Cleaning trash from streets as an individual
Repair / build a house through Habitat for Humanity	Fixing an elderly neighbor’s house on your own
Presiding over a homeowners association meeting	Attending a homeowners association meeting
Being the secretary at the church voters meeting	Attending a church voters meeting

work outside of one's neighborhood and interests. For example, donating labor to help fix an elderly neighbor's home is not included as volunteering, while repairing or building a house through Habitat for Humanity is considered volunteering.

In general, then, the survey has a clear and explicit bias towards a particular kind of volunteering activity – formalized participation in service-related activities outside of one's place, community, and interests. These parameters exclude a wide range of less formal activities through which people help their neighbors and community members and participate in civic life.

When we broaden the parameters of volunteering to include activities like attending local meetings or doing favors for neighbors, race and class gaps in civic participation shrink or even reverse. Our graphic shows gaps between disadvantaged groups and



Source: U.S. Census Current Population Survey.

their more advantaged counterparts, such as the difference in volunteering rates between those without a high school diploma and those with a Bachelor's degree or higher, or between Black and white people. As this figure shows, Black and Latinx volunteering rates are around 12 percentage points less than white volunteering rates. If we included attending local public meetings as a form of volunteering, the Black-white gap shrinks to 2.5 percentage points and the Latinx-white gap reverses: Latinx meeting attendance is 1.6 percentage points greater than whites.

Attending local public meetings is a meaningful and well-practiced form of democratic civic participation which requires people to take time out of their day to participate. Importantly, in the measures shown on the graphic, participation extends beyond playing a coordinating role at a meeting. Organizations such as unions or tenant associations, for example, depend as much on membership quorum for the success of their meetings as they do on the people making the agenda or chairing the meeting. If we expand the idea of volunteering to include the broader function of public meetings in democratic societies (e.g., learning about issues, providing input, and voting), the race and class gaps in volunteering would be vastly reduced.

A similar argument could be made for doing favors for neighbors, such as providing childcare, lending tools, or helping with auto or home repair. Working-class people disproportionately rely on these types of informal support networks.¹⁵ This class-inflected pattern is reflected in the Current Population Survey data. Rates of doing favors for neighbors are highest among those without a high school diploma, families with median incomes below \$35,000, and Latinx residents. Like meeting attendance, if the conceptualization of volunteering included participation in informal support networks, race and class gaps would again shrink or even reverse.

In effect, the conceptualization and measure of volunteering in the Current Population Survey data may simply be capturing activities more commonly engaged in by the middle- and upper-class. The Current Population Survey thus captures a narrow subset of volunteering activities focused on providing goods and services without compensation to formal organizations often doing work outside of one's neighborhood, community, and interests. This framing excludes forms of collective civic participation disproportionately practiced by young people, the working-class, and Black and Latinx people. This helps to explain why we see some of the racial and class disparities in the data on volunteering. To be sure, it is well worth tracking

volunteering activities that provide goods and services to formal organizations outside of an individual's neighborhood and beyond their self-interests. However, when it is used as the sole measuring stick of civic participation, it leads to racial and class biases that perpetuate dominant narratives that working-class people of color lack the capacity or culture to be civically engaged. In turn, working-class and people of color become, at worst, disparaged or, at best, treated as victims rather than as actors with the motivation and ability to address the problems and needs of their communities collectively.

Reassessing the Civic Health of Chicago

by Matthew D. Nelsen and Cathy Cohen

Active and equal opportunity to participate in public life are professed to be fundamental democratic ideals. As early as the 19th Century, observers of American politics such as Tocqueville suggested that the defining characteristic of American society was a dense network of local institutions that allowed (white, male, landowning) citizens to be active participants in their communities.¹⁶ Countless studies have critiqued this characterization of civic life in the United States, highlighting the ways in which unequal access to critically important resources such as time and money as well as discriminatory and racist public policies make civic and political participation significantly more difficult if not impossible for poor and racialized communities that exist at the margins of traditional hierarchies of power.¹⁷ Yet, despite such insights, commentators continue to rely upon metrics such as social capital and a limited set of participatory acts to assess the civic health of American democracy.¹⁸ This often results in deficit-minded accounts of the civic life of racially and ethnically diverse cities such as Chicago.

The Chicago Civic Health Index Report concluded that the city was “failing to prepare its youngest citizens for their adult civic responsibilities” citing low rates of community volunteerism, limited social connectedness, and declining voter turnout.¹⁹ At the same time, the report found that Chicagoans were *more likely* to participate in a number of political activities – attending a protest, contacting public officials, participating in a boycott, and attending political meetings – than the nation as a whole.²⁰ We are concerned that valorizing certain political activities such as voting and volunteerism while downplaying the significance of extra systemic political action undermines our attention to actions and policies that might actually shift and build power in marginalized communities and thus strengthen the civic health of cities such as Chicago.

Numerous studies – as well as lessons from our nation’s history – highlight the necessity of extra systemic acts of contentious collective power. By contentious collective power, we refer to the ways people come together to challenge perceived injustices and articulate grievances. We believe there are at least three reasons to center contentious collective action when assessing the civic health of our communities. First, acts of contentious collective power allow for a larger cross-section of individuals – including those who have yet to reach voting age and those who face barriers to the ballot box – to advocate for policies that actually serve them. Second, these actions frequently work with and in addition to political institutions, demanding changes to the policy domain that shift power and make traditional sources of political power such as voting more accessible. For example, when organizations such as the New Georgia Project succeeded in facilitating a massive voter turnout effort during the 2020 election, they leveraged “an expansive history” of lessons learned from Black

organizers.²¹ These lessons not only emphasized the importance of electoral turnout but both the historic and present need to use extra systemic acts of contentious collective power to ensure that institutionalized forms of political action such as voting are actually accessible to those at the margins of traditional hierarchies of power.²² Finally, at a moment when public trust in political institutions is at an all-time low, especially among young people,²³ it is important to consider the legitimacy (and necessity) of contentious collective acts that provide voice and yield results when government fails to respond. For example, research suggests that younger generations of Americans view contentious collective action such as organizing as a more effective means for leveraging change than voting in national elections.²⁴ Of course, by pushing policy makers to view contentious collective acts as an important metric for gauging the civic health of a community, we are not suggesting that activities such as voting and volunteerism do not matter. Rather, we contend that centering extra systemic action when considering how to rethink policies related to civic education and neighborhood investment may have spillover effects into more frequently assessed domains like voter turnout as well.

Civic education courses have frequently been viewed as a way to prepare young people for full participation within public life. Yet, a number of studies demonstrate that traditional civic education courses that highlight themes such as the Bill of Rights, how a bill becomes law, and great American heroes are presently failing to live up to their promise and have almost no effect on civic and political acts such as voter turnout.²⁵ However, others have found that civic education initiatives that highlight the lived experiences of students and the grassroots collective action of marginalized groups are associated with feelings of empowerment and a greater willingness to participate in multiple political activities, including acts of public voice, voting, and volunteering within one's community.²⁶ Thus, centering and discussing collective action in educational settings helps to create more meaningful civic learning experiences for young people.

Finally, we believe that investing in community organizations and local movements is one of the most important ways to protect and strengthen the vitality of democracy in Chicago. Countless accounts of American politics bemoan low rates of social capital²⁷ while city leaders simultaneously enact policies that lead to historic *disinvestment* in Black and Latinx neighborhoods, wearing away at the very institutions that allow community connectedness to thrive.²⁸ While investing in schools and neighborhood-level non-profit organizations certainly works towards this end, existing work also demonstrates that vibrant movement infrastructures contribute to higher rates of political participation and a stronger sense of collective identity at the local level.²⁹ Put bluntly, for Chicago to achieve its full civic potential, it is first essential for policymakers to recognize the importance of contentious collective action and public voice in democratic life in this city and the country.

INTERPRETING CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY DATA THROUGH A RACIAL EQUITY LENS

While research has consistently found that civic engagement, in the various forms it takes, is meaningfully associated with levels of education and income, among other socio-economic variables, it is always important to ask why this is true. For example, one clear pattern is that inequities related to income, employment, education, housing stability, and other material and structural conditions shape the extent to which people have the time and resources to volunteer.³⁰ Accordingly, the table below shows economic inequities in Chicago by race to provide context for the disparate rates of civic engagement noted above.

CHICAGO NUMBERS THAT COUNT

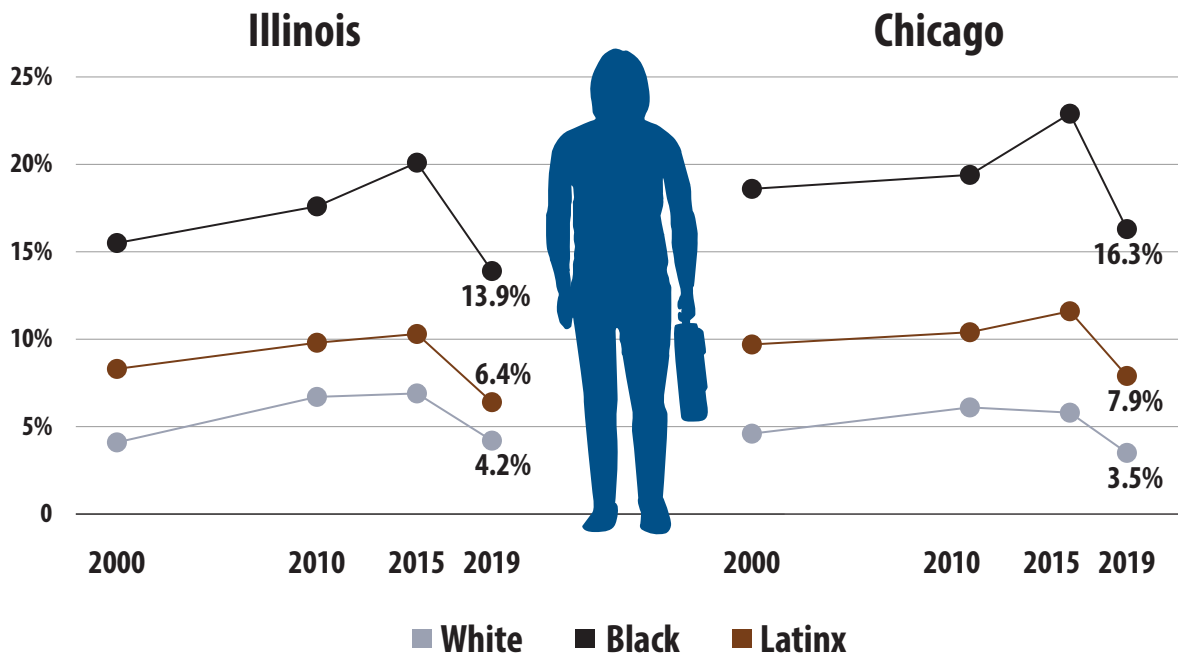
Income, Education, Employment, & Housing Indicators by Race, 2015 - 2019

	White	Black	Latinx
Median Household Income	\$87,998	\$33,301	\$50,496
Percent with a BA or Higher	64%	21%	17%
Percent Unemployment	4%	16%	8%
Percent who are Renters	47%	66%	53%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2015 - 2019

Research on the relationship between unemployment and volunteering has documented ways in which employment fosters civic skills and creates social networks that are conduits to civic activities, as well as how unemployment and income inequities³¹ negatively affect political and non-political forms of civic engagement.³² Over the past 20 years, Black unemployment rates in Chicago have never been less than 16 percent. Latinx unemployment rates have fallen recently to under 8 percent but have generally been around 10 percent. Meanwhile, white unemployment rates have been consistently much lower, typically hovering around 5 percent.³³

PRE-PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN ILLINOIS AND CHICAGO BY RACE, 2000 - 2019



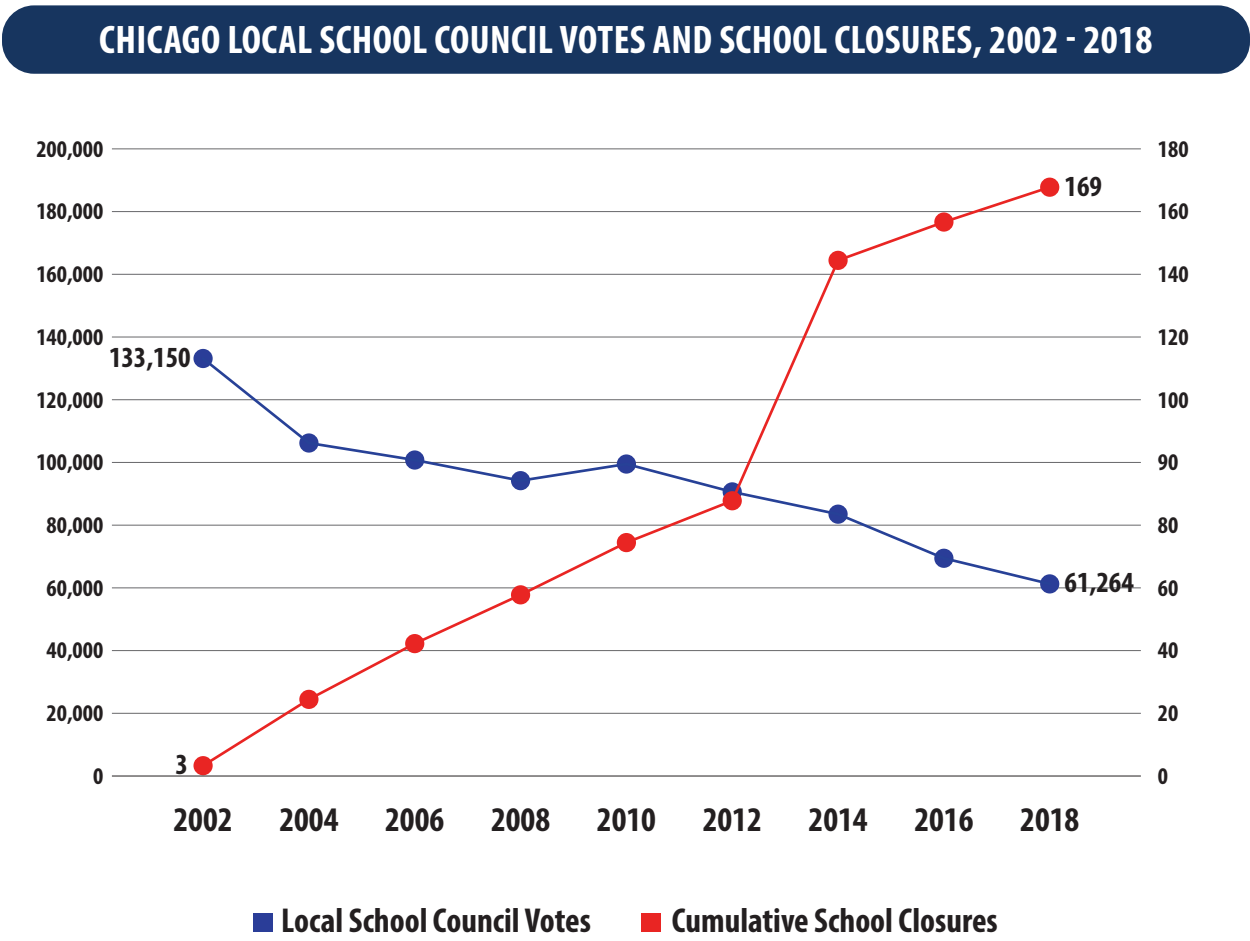
Source: IPUMS USA, American Community Survey, 2019 5-Year Sample

In addition to how differences in education, employment, and housing factor into the *opportunities* for residents to be civically engaged, Black and Latinx communities have disproportionately experienced the adverse effects of City of Chicago policies which have created further *barriers* to civic engagement. This includes budget cuts (e.g., school and mental health clinic closures and layoffs in the public sector), long-term disinvestment, and a punitive form of policing in their neighborhoods.

For example, according to data from WBEZ, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) closed 169 schools between 2002 and 2018. There were 51,532 students affected by these closures, and a full 87 percent of them were Black students. The percent of students affected increases to 98 percent when Latinx students are included.³⁴ In 2013 alone, CPS pursued the largest round of public school closures in U.S. history. More than three-quarters of those schools closed were in majority-Black neighborhoods, and nearly nine in ten schools closed were in majority Black and Latinx neighborhoods. Schools are essential neighborhood anchors.³⁵ In addition to their primary role in educating young people, schools bring families together, allowing them to build bonds and create neighborhood cohesion. Stable neighborhood schools create a family base that attracts business activity, and neighborhood public schools provide a

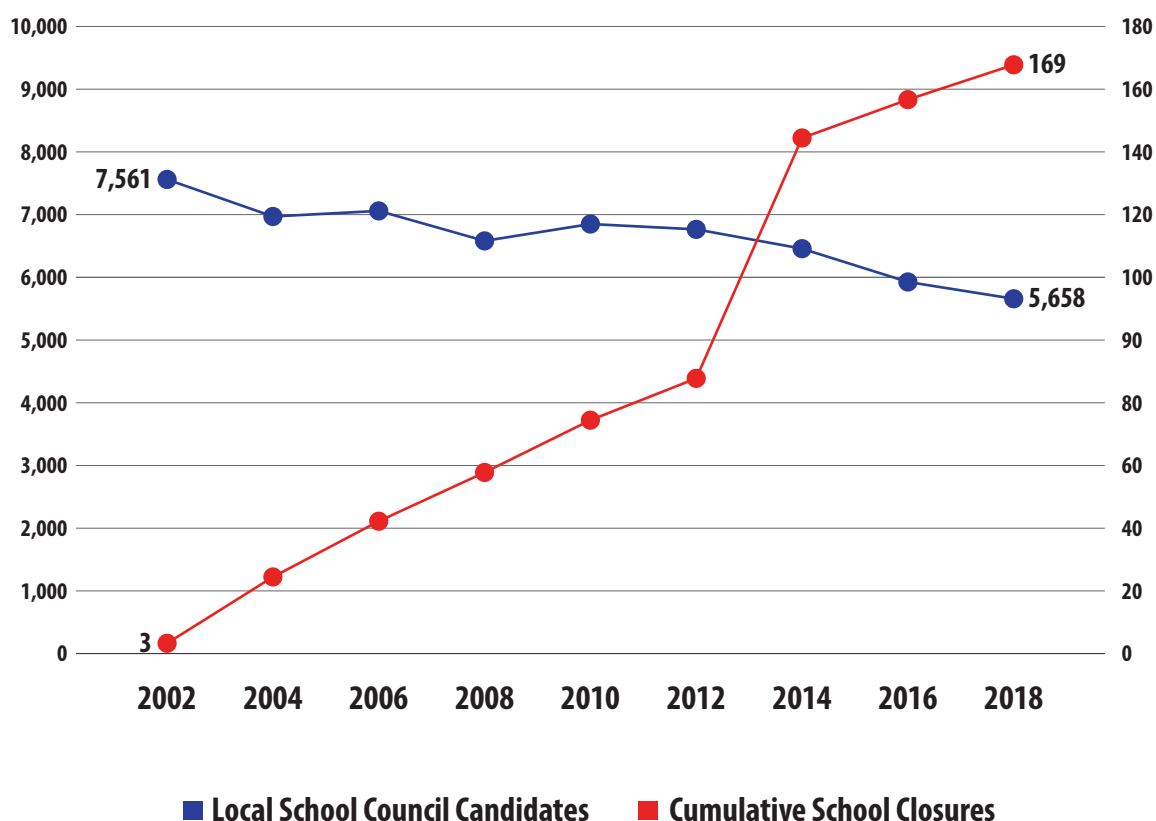
space for parents and community members to be civically active through local school councils (LSCs).

LSCs are a form of school and neighborhood-based means of democratic participation in Chicago through which students, parents, staff, and community members (including undocumented people) are elected to represent the interests of their neighborhood schools. Between 2000 and 2018, votes for local school councils have declined by 82,202 and candidates have declined by 1,630, a decrease of 57 percent and 22 percent, respectively. Generally speaking, increasing school closures have been associated with decreasing candidates and votes for LSCs (see figures below). School closures reduce LSC spots, and they may also dampen the perception of the efficacy of local governance overall.³⁶ As a March 2022 article by *Chalkbeat* noted, out of 6,239 positions, “Chicago Public Schools faces a shortage of about 5,500 parents, students, and community members for seats on a Local School Council.”³⁷



Source: Chicago Public Schools, Office of Local School Council Relations, Family and Community Engagement; WBEZ

CHICAGO LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL CANDIDATES AND SCHOOL CLOSURES, 2002- 2018



Source: Chicago Public Schools, Office of Local School Council Relations, Family and Community Engagement; WBEZ

Budget cuts in Chicago have also led to a loss of public sector jobs, historically a source of middle-class employment for Black and Latinx people.³⁸ Data show that 77 percent of the approximately 7,500 City jobs lost between 2006 and 2014 were located in primarily Black and Latinx communities on Chicago's South Side (40 percent), Southwest Side (23 percent), and West Side (14 percent).³⁹ The economic instability created by public sector job losses is a factor that needs to be taken into account when considering the data on volunteering and voting rates in Chicago's Black and Latinx communities.

In addition to budget cuts, Black and Latinx neighborhoods have been subject to long-standing patterns of disinvestment in infrastructure and public services. Tax increment financing (TIF) investment provides one measure of such disinvestment. TIF is a form of community and economic development, ostensibly, aimed at channeling

CHICAGO NUMBERS THAT COUNT

Per Capita TIF Dollar Allocations

Black and Latinx Plurality	\$1,039
White Plurality	\$3,457
Chicago	\$2,080

Source: City of Chicago data portal, "Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Funded RDA and IGA Projects"

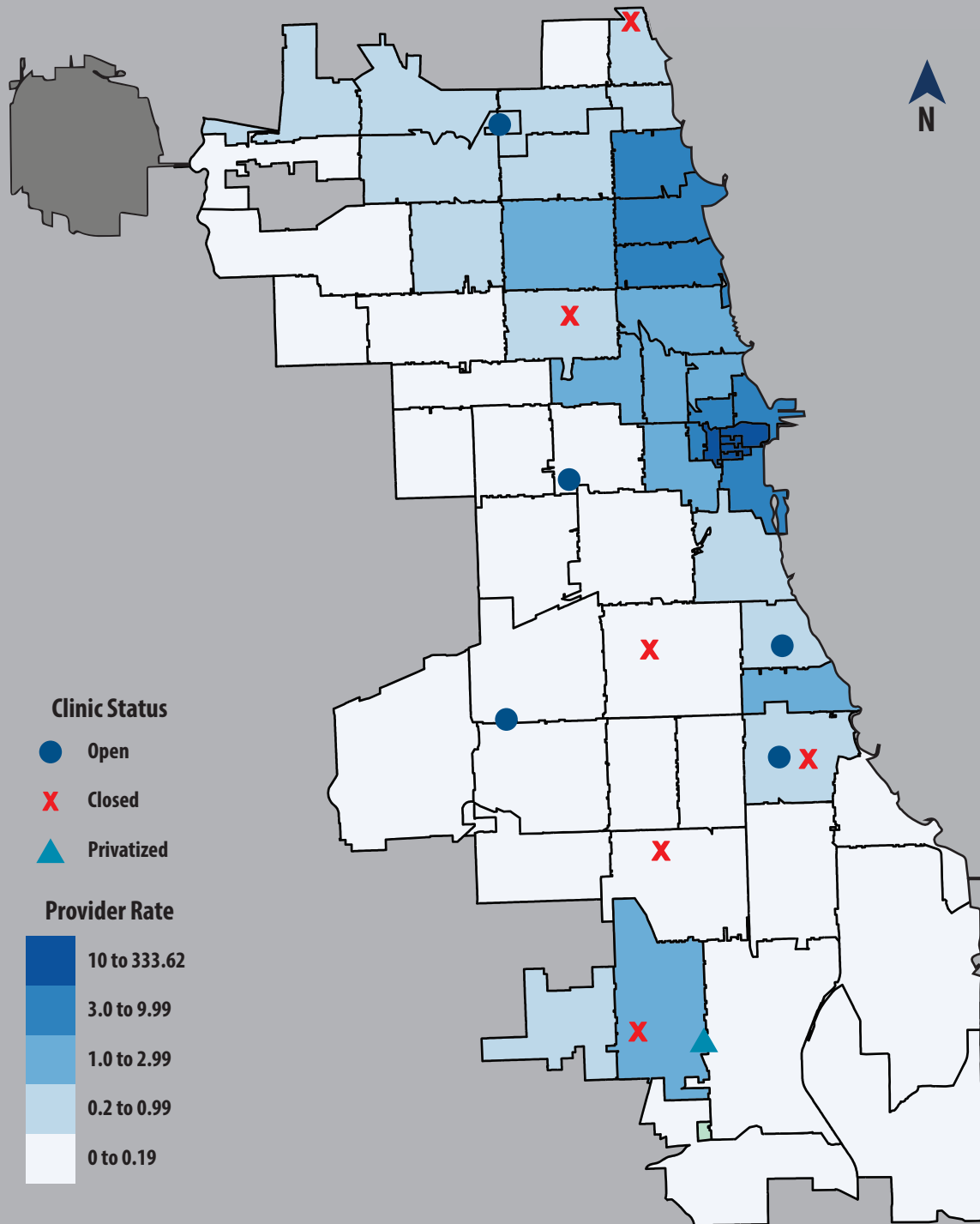
public revenues into disinvested neighborhoods to facilitate private investment. An analysis of TIF data shows that communities with a plurality of Black and Latinx residents have received only two-thirds of the amount of per capita TIF dollars relative to plurality-white neighborhoods. In effect, public dollars are being channeled away from Black and Latinx

neighborhoods. In addition to the adverse material effects, disinvestment in Black and Latinx neighborhoods carries a symbolic weight, signaling which residents and neighborhoods the City most values.

Policing is one of few government functions that has mostly avoided budget cuts. Since the 2000s, cumulative net expenditures on public safety in Chicago (the lion's share of which goes to the Chicago Police Department) increased by \$441 million. In comparison, cumulative net expenditures on public health and cultural activities decreased by \$62 million and \$20 million, respectively. In Chicago, as in other U.S. cities, the significant retreat in public investment in racially marginalized and impoverished Black and Latinx communities has been coupled with a turn to policing as the primary means by which to address social problems in those neighborhoods.

For example, Chicago's Black and Latinx neighborhoods have the highest rates of 911 calls related to behavioral health issues, almost two times that of the city-wide rate.⁴⁰ The closure of half of the public mental health clinics in 2012 fueled a mental health crisis in the city and furthered the gap in culturally competent mental health resources available for lower-income, racially marginalized communities. As the rate of 911 calls shows, the lack of mental health clinics and licensed health clinicians have meant that police are having to respond to mental health crises. The result is that, as an article in *The Atlantic* titled "America's Largest Mental Hospital is a Jail" pointed out, "at Cook County Jail, an estimated one in three inmates has some form of mental illness."⁴¹

NUMBER OF LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIANS PER 1,000 RESIDENTS IN 2020 AND STATUS OF CDPH MENTAL HEALTH CENTERS POST 2011



Source: Collaborative for Community Wellness
2020 Mental Health Access Report

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Police have effectively become the primary form of government with which racially marginalized communities engage. As then Attorney General Loretta Lynch noted in remarks to a 2016 meeting of Chiefs of Police, “Today, law enforcement is asked to do more than ever in our communities. We call upon you to respond to so many of the issues [...] outside traditional definitions of law enforcement. [...]. And through all of that, you are often the only face of government in your communities [...].”⁴²

An abundance of research and reporting in recent years has demonstrated that having police serve this role as the “face of government” neither serves Black and Latinx neighborhoods well nor increases their trust in government. For example, according to Chicago’s Office of Inspector General data on public safety, rates of arrests and investigatory stops and searches are consistently highest in Chicago’s West and South Side police districts. In a prior report, we found that Chicagoans of color were more likely to be stopped by the police, searched when stopped, and subject to use of force and police misconduct relative to whites.⁴³ Social scientists have argued that this type of repeated punitive interaction with racially marginalized communities contributes to “civic ostracism.”⁴⁴ Policing practices in Black and Latinx neighborhoods thus subject entire communities to a daily awareness that they don’t have the same rights and aren’t valued in the same way as more affluent white communities. Combined with diminished resources for schools, mental health clinics, and public sector employment, the increased investments in the hyperpolicing of Black and Latinx neighborhoods negatively impact residents sense of their own full, substantive citizenship and deepens suspicion about who government is meant to serve.⁴⁵

NON-TRADITIONAL MEASURES OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

We now turn to other data sources to examine alternative indicators of civic engagement in Chicago: a case study of social movement participation, Internal Revenue Service data on newly formed tax-exempt nonprofits, City of Chicago block party permit data, and interviews with nonprofit actors and participants in Chicago's social movements.

Social movements

Over the past two decades, Chicago has been a major center for numerous social movements, such as the immigrant rights movement, the labor movement, and the education justice movement – to name a few. In many cases, the activities that comprise Chicago's social movements have been organized, led, and disproportionately attended by Chicagoans of color and by youth. Chicago's social movements over the past twenty years encompass prominent civic engagement events and organizations, recognized both city-wide and nationally, and are clear examples of collective activities aimed at addressing social problems. However, typical civic engagement measures like those in the Current Population Survey do not usually include such activities.⁴⁶

Chicago's immigrant rights movement provides a valuable example. In 2006, Chicago was home to some of the largest immigrant rights marches in the nation and is recognized for reviving the immigrant rights movement nationally. Yet, despite the largest mobilization of immigrants and supporters in Chicago's history,⁴⁷ the Current Population Survey data registered that volunteering rates declined between 2005 and 2007. Furthermore, marches, protests, countless organizing meetings, and other activities associated with the immigrant rights revival were not just one-off events. The individuals involved in this movement formed long-lasting networks of activists and new organizations. They drew in new participants, especially young and undocumented people, who reshaped the narrative of immigration in Chicago and the U.S.

For example, Chicago's Immigrant Youth Justice League (IYJL) started the "National Coming Out of the Shadows" week of action, during which undocumented youth publicly fought deportation and the criminalization of undocumented people – boldly announcing that they were "undocumented and unafraid."⁴⁸ Some members of IYJL subsequently went on to form Organized Communities Against Deportation (OCAD), which hosts immigrant rights workshops and connects those facing deportation to legal aid and mutual aid. OCAD provided valuable networks, knowledge, and infrastructure for the uptick in immigrant defense networks in Chicago that emerged after the election of Donald Trump in 2016. It continues to be active in organizing for immigrant rights and in policy campaigns such as the elimination of the gang database in Chicago.

In another example, while the Current Population Survey data shows declining volunteering rates between 2009 and 2019, this was a robust period for other forms of collective civic engagement in Chicago, including an uptick in labor organizing, neighborhood- and school-based organizing, and engagement in progressive electoral politics. These activities drew in a considerable number of new participants and sympathizers, strengthened and expanded existing networks of activists and organizers, and led to the emergence of new organizations. The following list is by no means exhaustive.

In 2010, the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) organized both in the workplace and community to fight for better wages, hours, and conditions and as a means of resisting budget cuts and worsening school conditions. In 2012 CTU went on strike for the first time in over two decades, drawing tens of thousands of Chicagoans into the streets and prompting innumerable solidarity actions and meetings across the city. CTU's turn toward social movement organizing further cultivated parent- and student-led actions to address school conditions and inequities in Chicago Public Schools, such as student-led walkouts, marches, sit-ins, and boycotts. Around this time, in 2010-13, there was an uptick in anti-eviction and anti-foreclosure organizing, which took the form of public defense campaigns and legislative efforts for homeowners, tenants, and public housing residents. Also during this moment, in 2011, Occupy Chicago (an organic formation of activists) and Take Back Chicago (a union-funded coalition of individuals and organizations) emerged to protest economic inequality.

In 2014, the Black Lives Matter movement emerged as a prominent political force responding to police misconduct and long-standing racial inequalities in Chicago. Newly formed organizations, such as Fearless Leading by the Youth (FLY), Assata's Daughters, and Black Youth Project 100, joined with Chicago's existing community and labor organizations to protest gentrification, school closures, cuts to public mental health care, the dearth of health care on the South Side, and the City's cover-up of the murder of Laquan McDonald, among other causes. The black youth leading these collective struggles were instrumental in shaping Chicago's government and policy. Assata's Daughters' #ByeAnita campaign in 2016, for example, helped to elect a new Cook County State's Attorney to replace Anita Alvarez, who did not charge the officer who shot Laquan McDonald until the video of his shooting was made public over a year after the shooting took place. FLY, in coalition with community organizations such as Southside Together Organizing for Power (STOP), the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization (KOCO), and the National Nurses Union, successfully fought for an adult trauma center on the South Side.⁴⁹

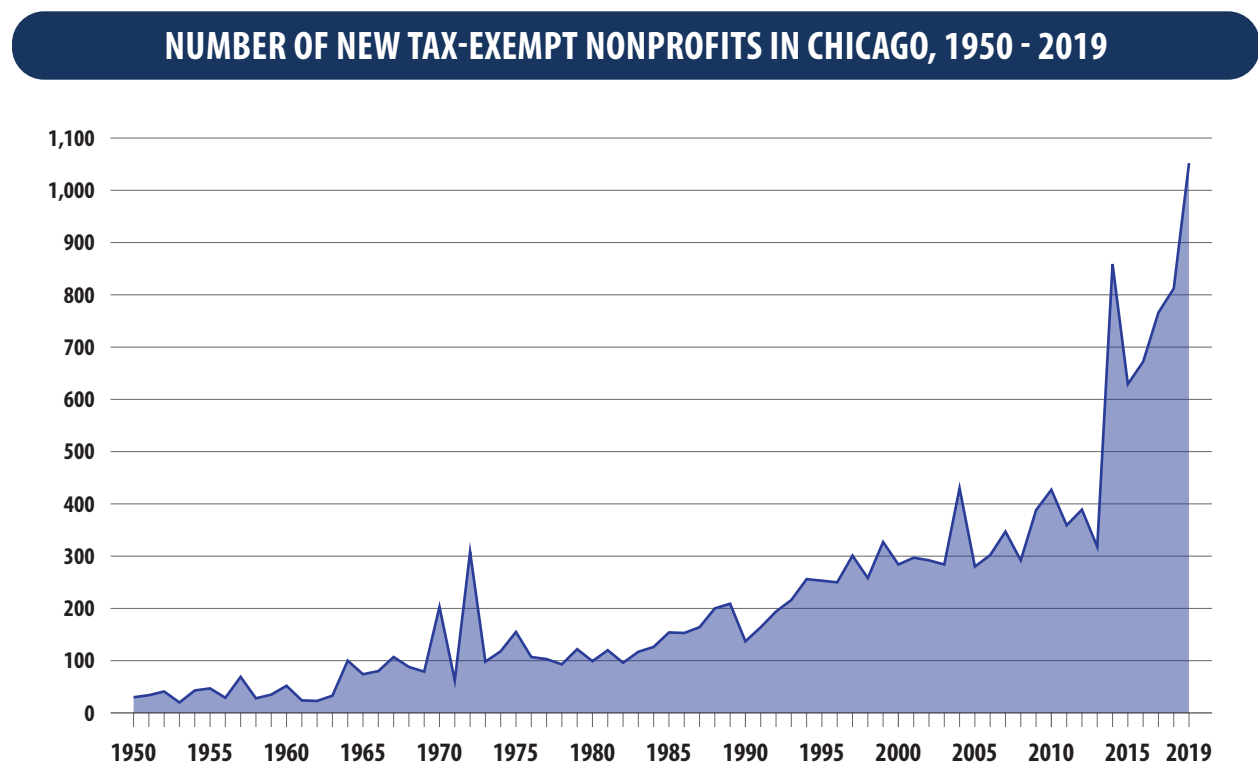
In 2016, Chicago's socialist tradition was revived by the expansion of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). Also in 2016, many immigrant defense networks formed in response to the election of Trump and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement raids. And lastly, in 2015, Chicago's two largest progressive unions founded United Working Families (UWF) to recruit, train, and run working-class Black and Latinx candidates for elected office. By 2019, UWF and DSA elected eight new City Council members. Many of these candidates were community organizers or in some way had participated in the social movement activities mentioned above, such as Jeanette Taylor, who participated in a hunger strike to successfully keep the predominately Black Dyett High School open in the wave of 2013 school closures.

Social movement organizing and events show a very different picture of Black and Latinx civic engagement than the data from the Current Population Survey. Not only does there appear to be an uptick in civic engagement, but these collective events and the organizations leading them and that came out of them intersected in important ways, contributing to an overall spirit of collective promise and resistance during the 2010s. These collective mobilizations led to a new cohort of young people becoming engaged in criminal justice, immigration, neighborhood, workplace, and electoral politics.

Interest in social movement organizing among young and working-class Black and Latinx residents is not surprising. Young and working-class Black and Latinx Chicagoans are often at the crossroads of multiple social problems, including violence, policing, gentrification, budget cuts, and disinvestment. Our examples above demonstrate that this can and does incite a collective response and will to improve material and political conditions, rather than leading to acquiescence and despair. However, social movements aimed at targeting systemic inequities tend to “receive very little analytic attention” in work on civic engagement because of a tendency to view these communities in terms of “deficits (e.g., lacking in organization, resources, efficacy) rather than as resourceful, creative, and deliberate political actors.”⁵⁰

Newly recognized tax-exempt formed nonprofits

Another measure of civic participation that we examined was the establishment of newly recognized IRS tax-exempt nonprofits in Chicago. Measuring the number, types, and geography of these nonprofits is one indication of collective capacity



Source: IRS Business Master File, downloaded from the National Center for Charitable Statistics

building to solve problems. It is important to note that this measure is only one slice of organizational life. The data measures formal organizations (organizations with an established mission and governance structure) that have taken the step to register with the IRS for tax exemption. In many cases, organizations do this to access economic resources. Tallies of new nonprofits, however, do not include ad hoc formations (e.g., a group of neighbors holding a candlelight vigil to address a recent shooting) and formal organizations that do not seek tax-exempt status. Not all formal organizations register with the IRS to become tax-exempt nonprofits. This may be due to time, resources, and knowledge or an organization's political values and strategy. The number of newly recognized tax-exempt nonprofits, therefore, are likely undercounts of the level of organizational activity in Chicago.

According to IRS business master file data on tax-exempt nonprofit organizations, between 2010 and 2019, 6,283 nonprofits were granted tax-exempt status in Chicago (40 percent of the total tax-exempt nonprofits recognized between 1950 and 2019).

CHICAGO NUMBERS THAT COUNT

Tax-exempt Nonprofit Growth Rates by Activity Area, 2013-2019

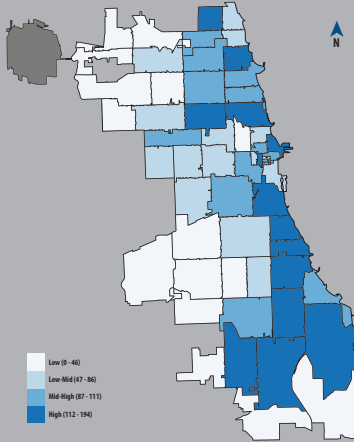
Civil Rights, Social Action, and Advocacy	573%
Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition	420%
Youth Development	391%
Public and Societal Benefit	336%
Mental Health and Crisis Intervention	221%
Overall Non-Profit Growth	117%

Source: IRS Business Master File, downloaded from the National Center for Charitable Statistics

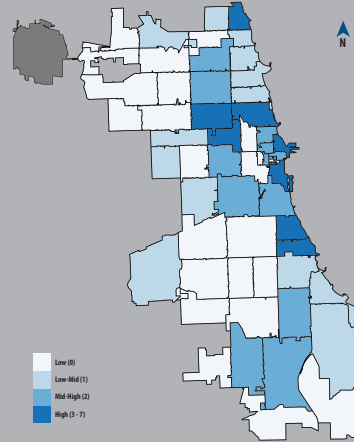
There has been a notable uptick in these nonprofits since 2013. This table shows the five largest areas of growth by major area of activity between 2013 and 2019.⁵¹ Whereas tax-exempt nonprofits more than doubled during this period, tax-exempt nonprofits in the largest growth areas increased anywhere from three times (mental health and crisis intervention) to nearly seven times (civil rights, social action, and advocacy).

The map on the following page provides a snapshot of where this growth took place. It shows total new tax-exempt nonprofits as well as new tax-exempt non-profits per category by zip code. We also include a map of Chicago's racial and class geography for context.

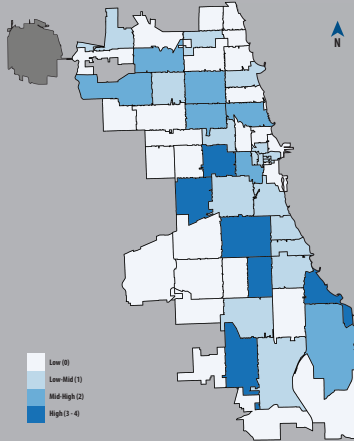
ALL NONPROFITS



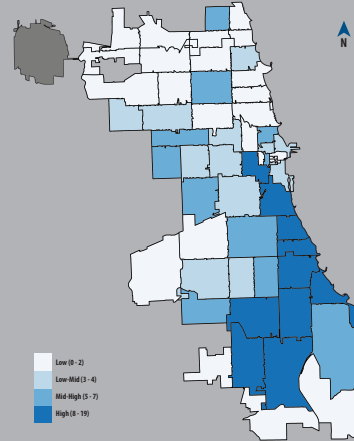
CIVIL RIGHTS, SOCIAL ACTION, & ADVOCACY



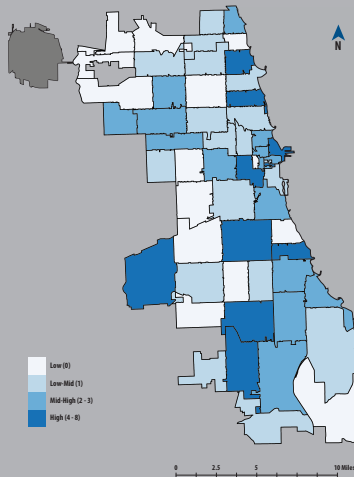
FOOD, AGRICULTURE, & NUTRITION



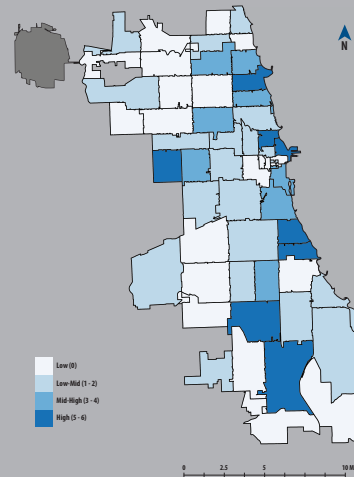
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



PUBLIC & SOCIETAL BENEFIT

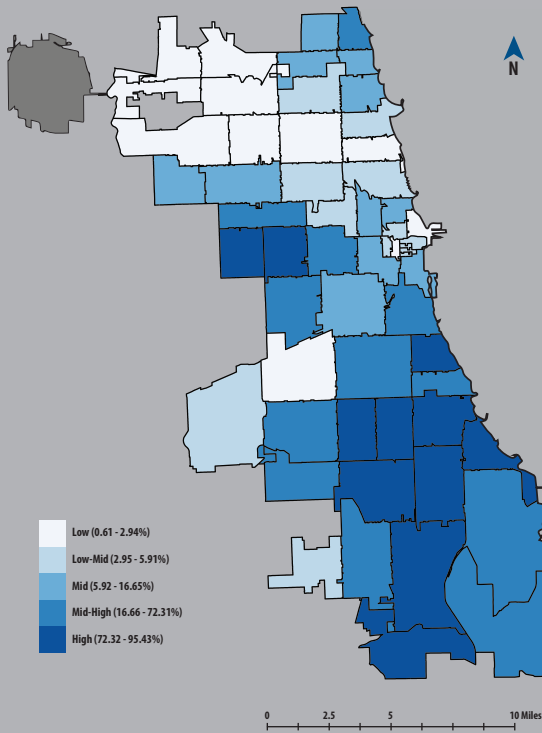


MENTAL HEALTH & CRISIS INTERVENTION

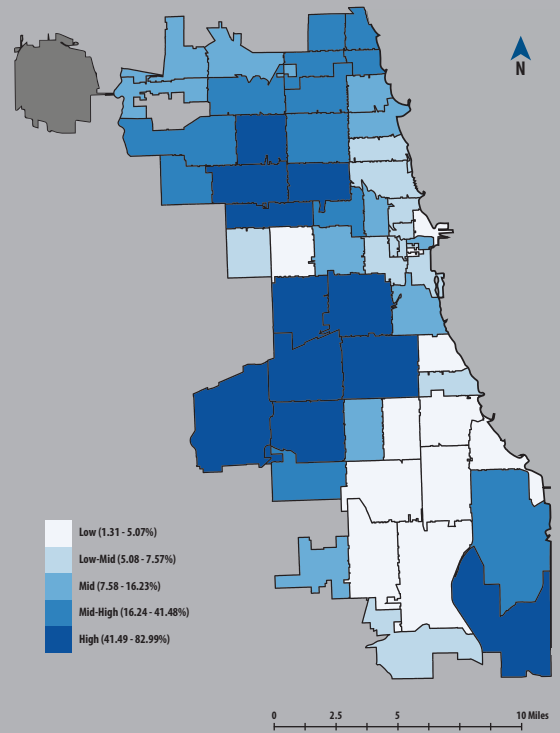


Source: IRS Business Master File, downloaded from the National Center for Charitable Statistics

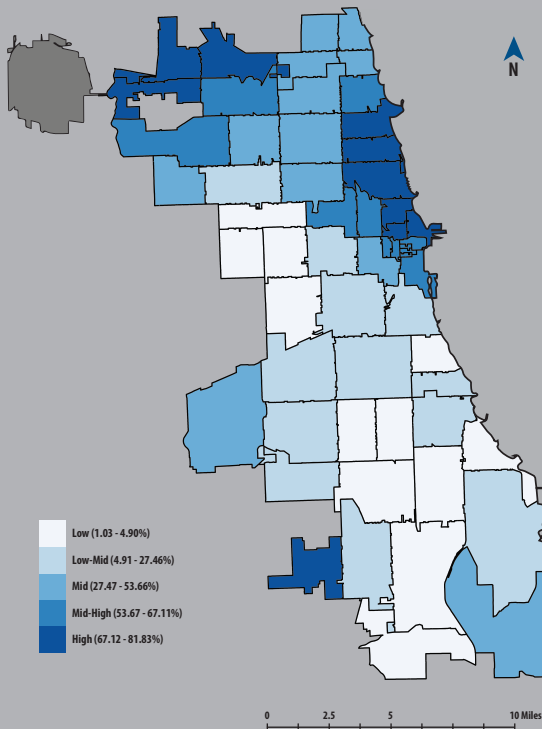
PERCENT BLACK BY ZIP CODE, 2019



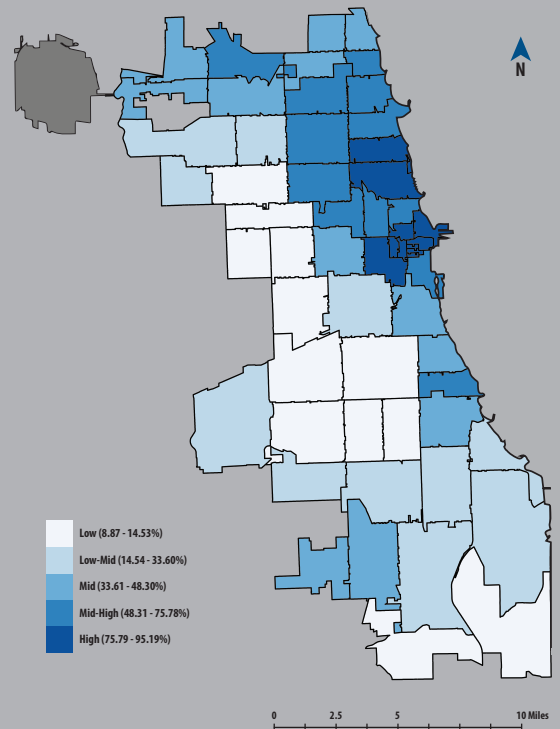
PERCENT LATINX BY ZIP CODE, 2019



PERCENT WHITE BY ZIP CODE, 2019



PERCENT WITH BA DEGREE OR HIGHER (25 AND OLDER), 2019



Source: American Community Survey, 2019

The table below provides a racial geography of tax-exempt nonprofit growth by the fastest-growing activity areas. For example, of the total new tax-exempt nonprofits reporting to the IRS, 21 percent were in zip codes with the highest density of Black residents, 13 percent were in zip codes with the highest density of Latinx residents, and 15 percent were in zip codes with the highest density of white residents.

CHICAGO NUMBERS THAT COUNT

Share of New Tax-exempt Nonprofits in High Density White, Black and Latinx Zip Codes, 2019

	White	Black	Latinx
Overall Growth	15%	21%	13%
Civil Rights, Social Action, and Advocacy	18%	13%	10%
Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition	10%	21%	19%
Youth Development	8%	38%	13%
Public and Societal Benefit	13%	14%	19%
Mental Health and Crisis Intervention	24%	30%	10%

Source: IRS Business Master File, downloaded from
the National Center for Charitable Statistics

The geography of these nonprofits does not always directly reflect the neighborhoods and communities where their work takes place. However, the major growth areas are nonetheless telling. Civil rights, social action, and advocacy organizations provide an example. These include policy groups such as the Action Center on Race and the Economy, political organizations such as the Jane Addams Seniors in Action – a 501(c)(4) offshoot of the Jane Addams Senior Caucus – and advocacy groups such as Black Girls Break Bread Inc. Despite having a higher concentration in zip codes with a higher percentage of white residents, the growth of these nonprofits seems to correspond with the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and increasing protests against police misconduct and racial inequality. Some of the organizations in this category include the Black Youth Project 100 (a Black youth social justice organization), Injustice Watch (“a nonpartisan, nonprofit journalism organization that conducts in-depth research exposing institutional failures that obstruct justice and equality”⁵²),

and the Ella Baker Organizing Fund (a foundation with a mission to educate, train, and support the leadership of a new generation of Black organizers working for a more just and equitable society).

Furthermore, the IRS data points to a particular increase in small, less-resourced nonprofits. The IRS business master file data suggests that a growing proportion of the newly recognized tax-exempt nonprofits reported \$0 in income or reported no income at all, which suggests that they filed a Form 990-N. Form 990s are the IRS' means of collecting the financial information of tax-exempt nonprofit organizations. Form 990-N does not require nonprofits to report income and is less burdensome for organizations whose annual gross receipts are \$50,000 or less, averaged over three years. The IRS' Form 1023-EZ data corroborates this uptick in smaller, less-resourced organizations. Like Form 990-N, Form 1023-EZ is a shorter and easier form that low-resourced organizations can use to seek tax-exemption status. The IRS introduced it to reduce the barriers of entry for tax-exempt status for nonprofits whose annual gross receipts are less than or equal to \$50,000 for the prior 3 years and the subsequent 3 years. The form was introduced in 2014, and 2015 was the first full year of 1023-EZ data collection.

The table below shows the number of 1023-EZ filers in Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles, and the U.S. between 2015 and 2019.

CHICAGO NUMBERS THAT COUNT

Number of 1023-EZ Filers in Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles, and the U.S. between 2015 and 2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Difference 2013 - 2019	Percent Change 2013 - 2019
Chicago	428	498	513	554	630	202	47.2%
New York City	418	352	382	374	414	-4	-1.0%
Los Angeles	318	362	345	414	505	187	58.8%
U.S.	42,392	47,557	49,192	54,773	56,146	13,754	32.4%

Source: IRS, Form 1023-EZ Approval Data by Year

Aside from Los Angeles, which had a significant uptick in 1023-EZ filers between 2018 and 2019, Chicago had the fastest growth rate of 1023-EZ filers between 2015 and 2019 and the largest absolute uptick of the three largest cities in the U.S.

The geography of these small, less-resourced nonprofits shows a pattern similar to that of the maps of NGO tax-exempt status by categories above. The next page presents a map showing the number of nonprofits reporting \$0 or no income created between 2013 and 2019 by zip code. A map on the following page shows the percentage of 1023-EZ filers for 2019 by zip code. As we can see from these maps and the table below, small, less-resourced nonprofits were concentrated in heavily Black and Latinx zip codes.

On the one hand, the concentration of new, less-resourced nonprofits in Black and Latinx zip codes could be taken as a sign of a lack of access to funding in these communities. On the other hand, this concentration also points to a resilience, a capacity for collective action, and the will to tackle community needs despite a lack of material resources.

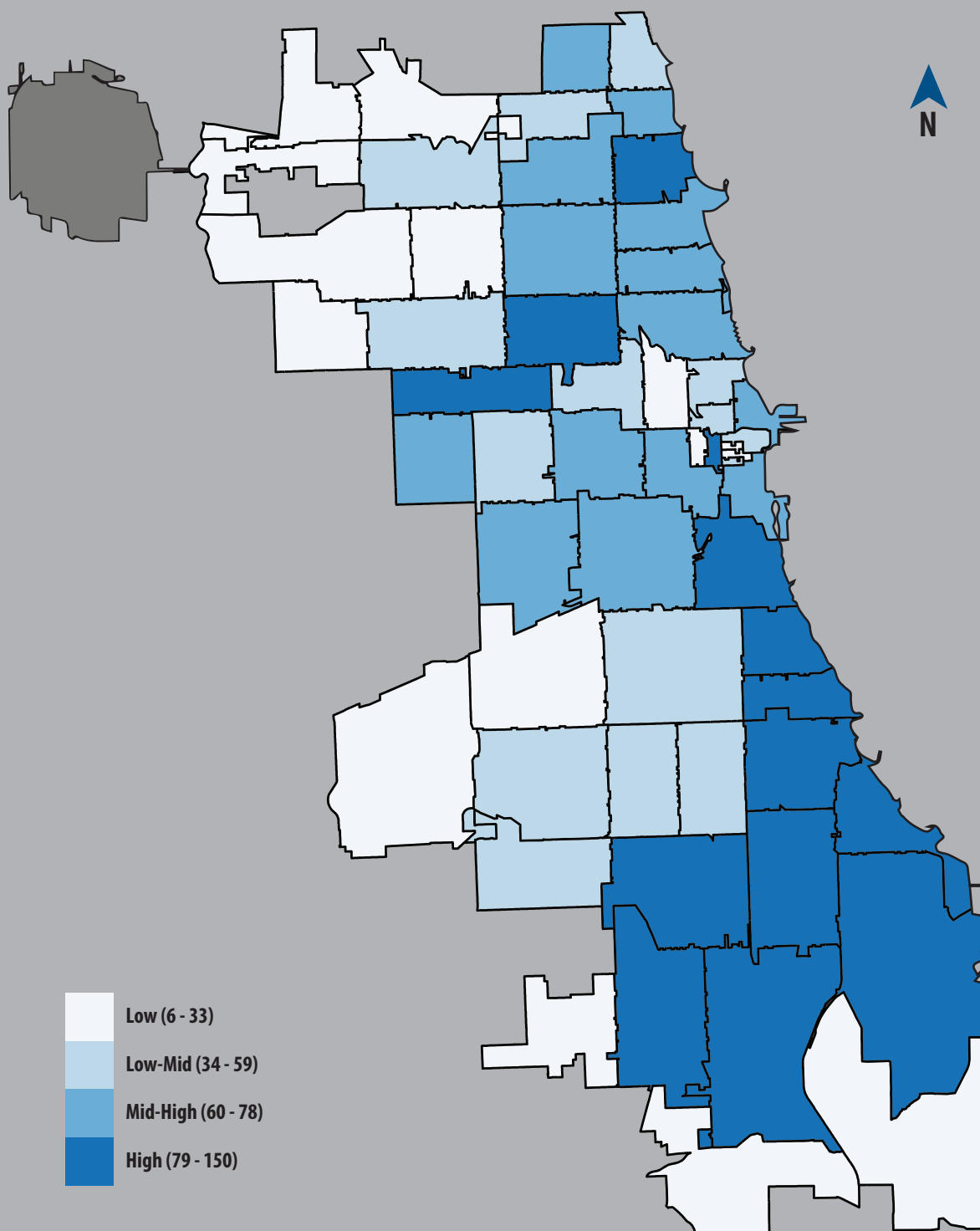
CHICAGO NUMBERS THAT COUNT

Concentration of Smaller, Less-Resourced Nonprofits in Majority White, Black, and Latinx Zip Codes

	White	Black	Latinx
\$0 or No Income Reported	13%	24%	14%
1023-EZ Filer	12%	28%	15%

Source: IRS Business Master File, downloaded from the National Center for Charitable Statistics; IRS, Form 1023-EZ Approval Data by Year

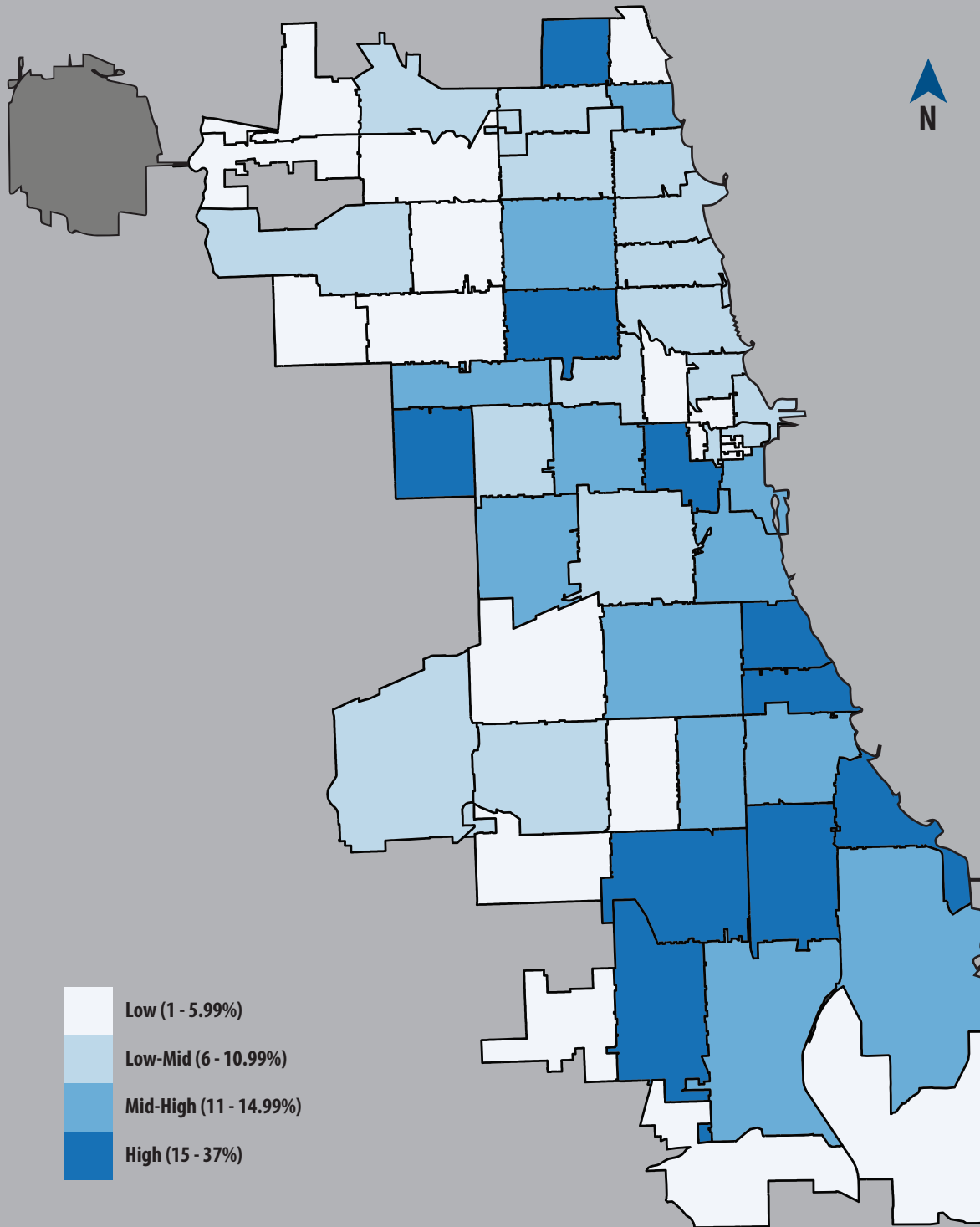
CHICAGO NONPROFITS WITH \$0 OR NO REPORTED INCOME BY ZIP CODE, 2013 - 2019



Source: IRS Business Master File, downloaded from the National Center for Charitable Statistics

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

CHICAGO 1023-EZ FILERS BY ZIP CODE, 2019



Source: IRS, Form 1023-EZ Approval Data by Year

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

The Civic Love That Blooms in Our City's Policy Deserts

by the Pilsen Housing Cooperative

The Pilsen Housing Cooperative (PIHCO) was created in 2017 when longtime residents and artists in Pilsen gathered in the paint studio of a local Latino muralist to discuss the displacement caused by the soaring rents and home prices brought on by housing-market speculation and gentrification in the neighborhood. We had seen entire blocks sold to developers and our neighbors put out. We were viscerally confronted with the uprooting of our community and feared we would soon be unable to stay. Fear wasn't our only motivation, however; our love for our community – our ties to each other and our schools, parishes, and parks – also brought us together. And we were inspired by the story of other co-ops that had started decades ago.

Although we learned much from those co-ops, starting PIHCO wasn't easy. It took many hours of research and countless meetings to develop our scattered site, limited-equity housing co-op that could keep home pricing affordable for those earning a low to moderate income and prevent some of us from being displaced. For the next two years, we organized and developed legal and share-pricing structures collaboratively, brought others into the cooperative through frequent information sessions, got the word out about PIHCO through postcards and our website, worked to become a registered non-profit, and brought on partners such as the Mandel Legal Aid Clinic as our pro-bono lawyers and the National Museum of Mexican Art as our fiscal sponsors.

Our grassroots community organizing efforts finally paid off in February of 2020 when we bought a six-unit building from a neighbor who stayed on and became a co-op member. Given the overwhelming demand for our housing, the co-op immediately began looking for our second building. PIHCO members went up and down hundreds of stairs with a realtor from the Resurrection Project and opened many apartment doors looking at properties in Pilsen. Two years later, in February of 2022, we were able to purchase a second six-unit building. And today, we are under contract for a third building, which we hope to close on in November of this year.

We believe it is imperative that working-class and artist families who have made Pilsen a vibrant neighborhood and a center of Chicago Latinx life have a pathway to stable, affordable housing that allows us to continue to live in and contribute to our community.

And we are not alone in that belief. For our second property, we had financial help from a handful of philanthropies including The Builders Initiative, the Julian Grace Foundation, and the Field

Foundation, and from private donors who had heard about our work; their support allowed us to proceed despite the significant rise in real estate prices since buying our first building. Given the skyrocketing prices that have accompanied ongoing gentrification, philanthropic support will likely be needed for the down payment on our third building and the initial acquisition of future PIHCO buildings.

In addition to philanthropic support, we have also seen strong interest from the Department of Housing and Commissioner Marisa Novara, Pilsen Alderman Byron Sigcho-Lopez, and from the Community Wealth Building Initiative that is spearheaded by the Mayor's Office and the Office of Equity and Racial Justice.

The Department of Housing has convened a series of meetings with us in the past few years to discuss how to change housing policies to support PIHCO and other affordable housing co-ops in Chicago, for example by opening up down payment and closing cost assistance to co-op buyers, by utilizing funds made available through the Affordable Requirements Ordinance, or by addressing Demolition Surcharge Fees. We have been heartened by the labor that Alderman Sigcho-Lopez's office did in drafting an ordinance to amend transfer tax policies to stop double taxation on start-up co-ops. And we have felt honored at having PIHCO be included as a model for affordable housing in the Community Wealth Building Initiative; we see first-hand how this has created growing momentum for co-ops.

So, we have poured energy into and invested in working with policymakers to change and create policies that would strengthen and support co-ops in Chicago – in addition to doing the work of creating our co-op. And we have personally seen the effort that members of the Department of Housing, Alderman Sigcho-Lopez's office, and the Community Wealth Building team have made to support us. And yet, whether because of the speed of institutional policy change at the government level or other bureaucratic barriers, the policies we have suggested or even co-drafted have yet to be enacted. The developer we were connected with as an Affordable Requirements Ordinance partner won approval for their project thanks to PIHCO, but has yet to break ground, meaning the 6-12 units of housing they could help PIHCO purchase or rehab remain a promissory note. No Demolition Surcharge Funds have materialized and transfer tax policies remain unchanged. The Community Wealth Building project remains at the level of an Initiative and won't offer tangible material supports for projects like PIHCO until 2023 at the earliest.

Meanwhile, the pace of gentrification in Pilsen makes our expansion efforts urgent; from 2000 to 2019, the number of Latinxs in Pilsen fell by 40%. Chicago risks losing one of its most unique and historic ethnic neighborhoods. Important community ties our Pilsen families rely on continue to be uprooted.

In the absence of government support – and often in the face of policies that hurt us – our community has over the past decades repeatedly worked to create the institutions it needs, from Benito Juarez High School to the Alivio Medical Center to the National Museum of Mexican Arts. In the absence of government support, Latinx and Black communities like ours have come up with self-help models to support and sustain our neighborhoods. Countless hours and countless numbers of Latinx and Black people have come together with neighbors and will continue to come together with neighbors. We do this not as “volunteers” but as a way to help our communities survive and thrive.

No one can suggest that PIHCO members lack community engagement or civic love. Our community-led anti-displacement strategy is on the cusp of creating 18 permanently affordable housing units in Pilsen.

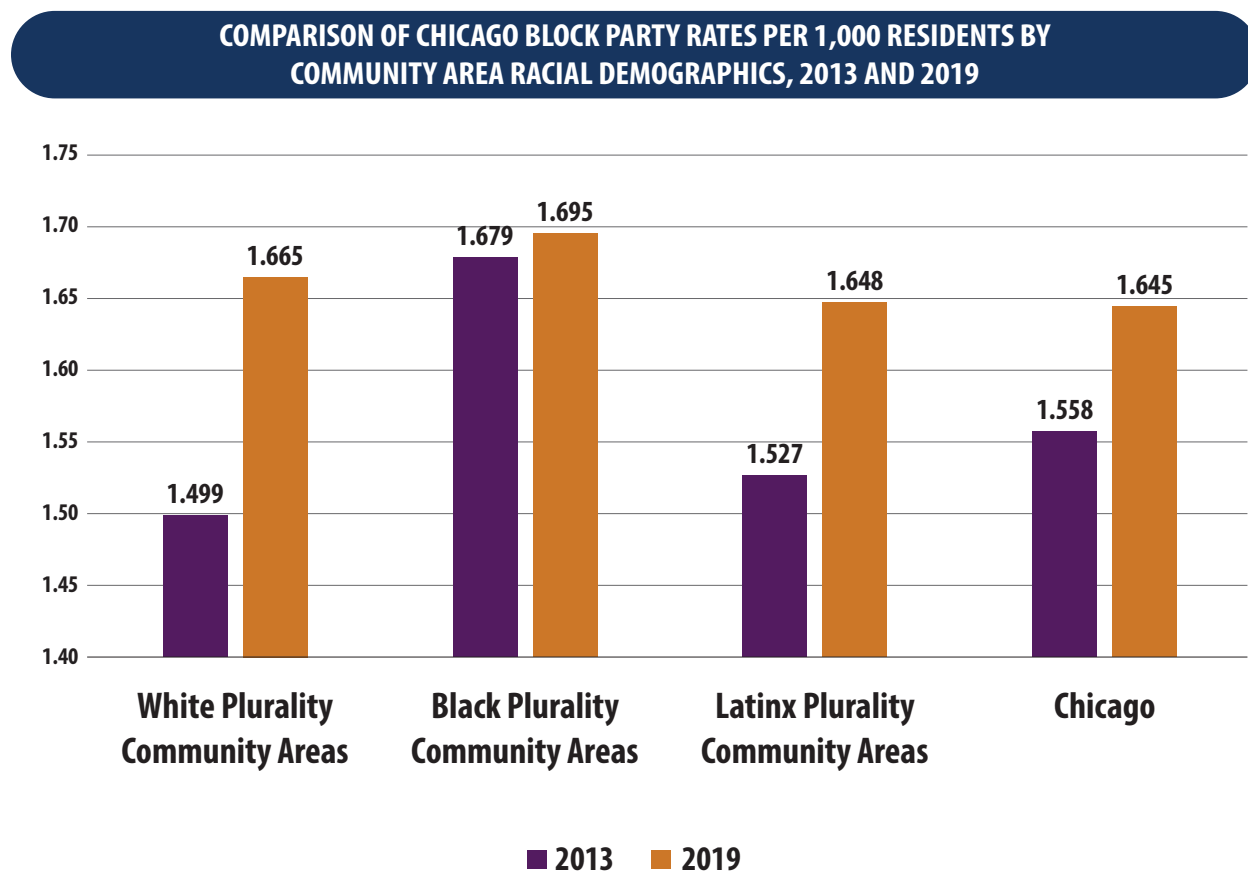
What we lack are effective government policies to support that work. Even when the needs are recognized and named as priorities by government functionaries, we encounter significant structural barriers. Even when there are interested, willing, and invested partners in high levels of local government, we have found solutions are slow in coming – if they materialize at all – and are therefore ineffective in addressing the urgent needs of our communities.

Latinx and Black people in Chicago will continue to organize and work together for the benefit of our neighbors and neighborhoods. We don’t do this as “volunteers,” but because we are committed to building what our community needs – for ourselves and our neighbors – and because policy change at the level and speed of government means that we often have no other choice.

Block parties

Block parties offer an informal measure of civic engagement that further challenges the notion that volunteering is on the decline, especially among Black Chicagoans. Block parties provide a measure that captures many aspects of the social capital involved in the “art of association,” including networks of cooperation, norms of reciprocity and mutual obligation, trust, and social cohesion. To host a block party, residents must collectively organize, seek buy-in and participation from their neighbors, and reach out to the local Alderman’s office to acquire a Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) special activity permit. CDOT data suggests that block parties were on the rise before to the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2013 and 2019, block parties increased from 4,208 to 4,663.⁵³

An analysis of block party density (block parties per 1,000 residents) offers a different picture from the racial discrepancies in civic life suggested by the Current Population



Source: City of Chicago, Department of Transportation

Survey data. As the data shows, neighborhoods with a plurality of Black residents had the highest density of block parties in 2013 and 2019. Neighborhoods with a plurality of Latinx residents had comparable rates to Chicago and to neighborhoods with a plurality of white residents.

The increase in block party density is especially notable in neighborhoods with a plurality of Black residents as these very same neighborhoods saw an 11 percent decline in population and a 10 percent decline in block parties. Despite having nearly 90 thousand Black residents leave the city, the sustained high density of block parties in Black neighborhoods points to the resiliency and rootedness of residents in these neighborhoods.

Civic Love, not Civic Engagement.

By Niketa Brar

The sun beat down as I over-thought the knock my hand was about to deliver on the door in front of me. Four short taps, three long, in a musical way that I hoped said, I'm not cops or management.

A quick peek out by a tanned and wrinkled woman, who reminded me of my grandmother's kind eyes and shy smile.

I shared that I was on the Local School Council at National Teachers Academy across the street, where her grandchild went to elementary school. We'd recently learned that Chicago Public Schools intended to close our school and turn it into a high school for the large, changing neighborhood around us, and wanted to know how families of our students felt about the situation.

Her eyes lit up, and her voice got quiet – "They tried to do this to us before."

She rattled off dates and actions – when they were at South Loop Elementary, the original school in the north end of the neighborhood, how they were told the school's boundaries would be changing soon after developers built up the north end of the neighborhood and wealthier neighbors came flocking. How the school's parent community organized and fought back, and thought they won – only to find out their bus line had quietly been cut. With the trip to the school unsustainable, families kept fighting for a better solution, ultimately getting a promise of a new, separate school for the south end of the neighborhood.

But years later, their kids were still in trailers on an undeveloped site. Eventually, they cornered Mayor Daley on a reelection tour and demanded change. Funds were magically found, National Teachers Academy built, and Daley won reelection handily.

The historian in front of me was also a futurist, sharing strategies and tactics for the fight ahead of us. But when I invited her to join the organizing meeting coming up that week, she knew her answer.

"I've fought this fight before. I don't have it in me to do it again."

...

What is civic health without an acknowledgment of civic harm?

I've found myself wrestling with this question throughout my life in Chicago – for a time as a government employee, and as a Chicago resident. In both roles, I am frustrated by the layers of

bureaucracy, the condescending tone of public meetings, and the regularity with which our public institutions fail to see the public as a partner in finding solutions to the problems our city faces.

For the last five years, I've asked myself the question of how to build a healthy civic ecosystem as the co-founder and executive director of an organization fighting not just for a seat at a table – but to build an entirely different vision of where decision-making should happen.

In this work, I've thought deeply about that feeling shared at the doorstep years ago – and how often I run into that feeling in this city. I've seen it expressed in many different ways, by grandmothers and school board members. But the core sentiment continues to be the same: I don't have the power to fix this.

It is disingenuous to measure Chicago's civic engagement without accounting for civic trauma, the hopelessness that accumulates from repeatedly facing up against a system that actively harms and excludes you. The disillusionment Chicagoans feel towards their government, especially Chicagoans of color, is the natural and logical response to generations facing up against a system that was never built for the common good – but to marginalize and exclude the majority of this city from knowing or exercising their civic power.

And yet, somehow, Chicagoans find their power each day.

We find it in civic healing, a practice that requires us to acknowledge the real harm that has occurred because of past and current policies – and to commit to a more audacious imagination of what is possible for us collectively. We saw this in action during the People's Budget Chicago, a practice we established to engage neighbors in building a vision for their community, sitting in circle to share that vision, then building a community budget around a simple board that captured the 6 categories of spending our government breaks down into 37 departments and agencies. After hearing each others' needs, the mutual frustrations shared by members of the group, and developing a financial prioritization based on this spirit of collectivism, the group compares their budget with the latest city budget.

This practice activates a different type of civic power. It moves us away from individualism and our self-interest to a practice of mutual care. It allows us space to imagine, inspired by and with the needs of the people around us. It bonds us in ways typically not seen in financial discussions.

...

In this work, I've attempted to measure civic engagement in a number of ways – first, with numbers as easy to find as voter participation, town hall attendance, and even calls to aldermanic offices. But these numbers feel empty, because they fail to account for the creative visioning that takes place every day in the parts of the city that were ranked lowest based on these metrics.

In fighting against a school closure in my neighborhood, I saw the ways in which outdated civic engagement metrics fail to measure the purpose that drives the engagement – seeking justice with and for our community. Civic engagement fails to recognize civic love.

In the same communities chastised for lower voter turnout, we find civic love everywhere. We see it in people feeding each other through church pantries or mutual aid networks, in caring for our young in home daycares and childcare co-ops, in marching in the streets when our government's regular failings have met a new threshold we cannot tolerate.

Metrics that have traditionally been heralded as civic engagement continue to promote individualism in this broken democracy. Voting for self-interest, speaking for three minutes at a town hall, anonymously filing violations against a neighbor to a power holder in City Hall – these are actions that protect the existing power structure, one that has been built for the preservation of white supremacy.

There are ways to build this city with civic love, in a spirit of mutuality, shared respect, and collective responsibility. Engaging in collective action, building mutual aid networks, developing solutions for shared prosperity builds towards a common good. The difference between civic love and civic engagement is exactly the difference between building for justice and building for self-preservation.

WHAT DO ENGAGED COMMUNITY LEADERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT CHICAGO'S CIVIC HEALTH?

As we conducted our analysis of existing administrative and survey data, we wondered what those who are deeply engaged in their communities would have to say about the state of Chicago's civic health. We conducted 21 semi-structured interviews with actors in Chicago nonprofit organizations and social movements. Participants were asked to reflect on 1) the Current Population Survey volunteering and civic engagement trends, 2) the circumstances and activities that facilitated participation in their work, and 3) major barriers to engagement. We chose individuals and organizations based on their involvement with working-class and young Black and Latinx residents and attempted to capture a variety of activities, including engagement in policy reform, electoral politics, and issue-based, neighborhood-based, workplace-based, and student organizing. The sample heavily reflects social movement work and should not be taken as a representative sample. Instead, we aimed to capture the perspective of community-based organizations that have successfully mobilized demographics that are often viewed as "disengaged" in the civic engagement literature.

Challenging the narrative of volunteering

Most of those we interviewed were skeptical of the overall trends in the Current Population Survey data. Some were outright puzzled, suggesting that the data may not be capturing the full scope of civic participation in Chicago, specifically participation in public events, such as protests, public hearings, and organizing campaigns.

For example, Patrick Brosnan, Executive Director of the Brighton Park Neighborhood Council (BPNC), questioned the activities that are counted as volunteering: "I think that there's a ton of volunteer events from a bunch of different circumstances [in Brighton Park], not to mention the community activism kind of civic engagement, which are not just about trying to address kind of immediate basic needs or, you know, one time type of things [such as holiday gift drives]. Whenever we organize a big hearing or a protest or an action [...] that's a part of a larger policy change

campaign organizing strategy, almost everybody involved, everyone who comes to these events, everyone who's participating in those things, that's all volunteering. We have hundreds of people every year engaging in these types of actions." He went on to say, "that's all their own time that they're giving because they believe in the community, they believe in the campaign that we're organizing, they believe in the organization's strategies."

Kennedy Bartley, the Legislative Director of United Working Families and a volunteer on the steering committee of Chicago's Defund Chicago Police Department campaign (an outgrowth of the Black Abolitionist Network (BAN)), said of the Current Population Survey data: "it feels untrue to me [...]. I think that Chicago is kind of an epicenter of resistance [...]. People look to Chicago for our organizing and strategies. The range of our organizing feels like a blueprint. And a lot of that organizing is coming from Black and Latinx folks and women and femmes and young folks."

Some we interviewed even noted that membership and participation in their organizations were high and had been growing. Rocio Garcia, Director of Membership of United Working Families, referred to growth in their membership as causing a "high-quality problem." She stated, "we're bringing in a lot of people and oftentimes we have insufficient capacity on the part of organizers to manage folks coming in." Kennedy noted that Defund CPD has weekly meetings with 120-125 participants and has grown to include multiple neighborhoods as volunteers began organizing in "regional pods" in Chicago.

Another common thread throughout the interviews was that, in various ways, respondents made a distinction between "charitable" forms of volunteering and forms of collective action demonstrating and building "civic love" in their communities in which people are engaged in projects of collective action aimed at uplifting one's neighborhood or community. Garcia, for example, ran an organizing training for young people. She said that "when they truly cared about an issue and were part of imagining the activity or imagining the solution, it wasn't just a volunteering type of activity. It was their work, and their commitment to it was like a project." Ashley Galvan, a young Latina who became involved in anti-gentrification work in Chicago, said that her school's community service program often sent students "way in the North Side" to volunteer for things like food shelters and women's shelters. While these are admirable efforts, Galvan felt "that's not where we should be." Galvan

advocated for herself to work in her community and connected with the Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA), where she developed as a local leader and led the charge to pass important anti-gentrification legislation in Chicago.

Activities and conditions that facilitate civic engagement

Another common theme in the interviews was that a personal connection to issues directly impacting working-class people of color was a key motivator for civic engagement. Bartley referred to this as volunteering centered on “love and self-preservation.” Jianan Shi, the Executive Director of Raise Your Hand (RYH), a parent-led education justice organization, noted that RYH emerged as a response to 2010 budget cuts to public education in Chicago. Shi said, “civic engagement is a necessity, like collective organizing as a necessity for people to actually change the conditions of their life.” He went on to explain “I think we can’t think of civic engagement in terms of an effort-based [model],” but rather “as [a set of] conditions.”

Vee Morris-Moore became a prominent leader in FLY and began collaborating with Assata’s Daughters in the 2010s. Morris-Moore was introduced to community organizing by the Southside Together Organizing for Power (STOP) youth organizer who brought them to the U.S. Social Forum in 2010, a gathering of social justice activists. Morris-Moore, who had an interest in Black history and the civil rights movement, said, “that really changed my life. I was introduced to movement work in the current versus just constantly reading about movement work in the past.” Later, they would become involved in the campaign for a trauma center on the South Side after Damian Turner, a school acquaintance and charismatic and esteemed youth organizer, died due to gun violence. Turner was shot in the back just three blocks away from the University of Chicago’s medical campus, which was not equipped with a trauma center. He died in the ambulance on his way to the nearest Trauma center, 10 miles away. Following this, Morris-Moore was invited to a meeting with their peers about his death. It was at this meeting that the youth-led campaign for a trauma center on the South Side came to fruition. In fact, Morris-Moore noted, this was an issue about which Turner was passionate. Alex Goldenberg, the outgoing executive director of STOP, reflected that the trauma center campaign was in part a means by which Turner’s peers were able to grapple with their grief and transform it into something positive through collective

action. Importantly, Morris-Moore recalled the reason they attended the meeting was due to a deep personal connection to loss. While Morris-Moore was not personally close with Turner, at the age of 17, they said, “I attended funerals on a regular basis,” and “holding the emotional weight of that is kind of what motivated me to go to that meeting.” Through this event, Morris-Moore became a local leader in FLY and several subsequent organizations from that point on.

Our interviews also demonstrated that a personal connection to an issue and the sense of being part of a project encourages continued and expanded involvement. Brosnan noted that BPNC’s most successful activities in eliciting participation are those that build upon previous organizing campaigns—becoming involved in collective struggles to address issues facilitated networking and a continued passion for further collective action. Evelyn Osario, a home care labor organizer, told us that she was connected to the labor movement through her work in the Immigrant Youth Justice League. Morris-Moore said, with much respect for STOP, that they felt some of the “older folks in the community and in that organization” did not see “the police as much of a problem as they are, oftentimes because the people who are victims of police crimes are young people.” Morris-Moore’s newly found passion for and personal connection to community organizing led them to seek out new organizations, such as Assata’s Daughters and BYP100 to organize around police violence.

Our interviews also pointed to a sort of zeitgeist in the 2010s in Chicago, which captured the attention of many young people and cultivated their political imagination. Two young Latinx people we interviewed, for example, were motivated by the education justice movement, including the work of the Chicago Teachers Union, and began to work extensively with students, parents, and community members.

Jose Muñoz was inspired to get involved in politics when his social studies teacher, Tim Meegan, an outspoken education justice activist, and unionist, ran for City Council. Muñoz recalled being interested in politics but never having an outlet or connection to it. He said that Meegan’s message spoke to him; he felt an affinity for Meegan’s politics and a personal connection to the campaign. Muñoz quickly rose to become a prominent student leader in Meegan’s campaign. Once the campaign ended, Muñoz continued to work in his community. He helped form a local political organization and initiate an immigrant defense network and, after graduating, ran for

LSC community representative at his high school. Anthony Quezada, a young, working-class Latino born and raised in Logan Square, was also swept up by the education justice movement. He recalled feeling encouraged by the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU). As a student, he saw the work of the CTU “as a force for social good” that demonstrated “if we fought for what is right, we could get the things that we deserve – if we organize, we could win.”

Barriers to civic engagement

Major barriers to civic engagement and sustained civic engagement included organizational issues as well as structural issues, such as burnout due to the difficulty of engaging working-class populations, the often-contentious nature of work aimed at addressing systemic inequalities, and budget cuts.

Sustaining social movement work requires organizational skills such as management and capacity building. Goldenberg (of STOP) and Jawanza Malone (executive director of the Wieboldt Foundation and former executive director of KOCO) both explicitly mentioned the need for more formal training for community organizers around building leadership and mounting long-term campaigns. In reflecting on barriers to sustained civic participation, Goldenberg recalled his own travails as an executive director of STOP. Goldenberg said he felt ill-prepared for his management position, which includes delegating tasks and building leadership. For low-resourced organizations involved in intense, frontline civic engagement work, it is no doubt easy to respond to immediate needs while putting long-term organizational tasks on the back burner. Recently, STOP has prioritized organization building in order to strengthen their work. Goldenberg specifically mentioned the utility of a management center training he attended recently, which the Executive Director of UWF referred him to. He found this type of serious training for nonprofit staff incredibly useful.

Malone also stressed the importance of building organizational infrastructure, especially outside of the paid staff of organizations. For Malone, the influx of organizing that has occurred in Chicago, especially since Trump’s election and in response to police violence, suffers from a lack of long-term, sustained capacity building. This is the type of work Malone is now engaged in at the Wieboldt foundation, which recently launched a capacity-building cohort: “it really is about building the capacity

of these groups so that they can fight even more. There's a significant focus on base-building leadership development, so making sure their campaigns are not staff driven - where you have 'professional' organizers conducting all the work. It really is about strengthening the community as a whole." For Malone, and the Wieboldt Foundation, building networks that encourage peer sharing of experiences and sustainable relationship building is vital work.

Along these lines, while many proponents of civic engagement point to involvement in electoral politics as the shining star of civic participation, Malone took a critical stance against such activities. He was "not a fan" of the shift towards electoral politics by many of Chicago's progressive communities. According to Malone, this is partly because electoral politics draws money and people away from building more sustained community leadership and infrastructure. He also pointed to how assessments of the low rates of voting in Black and Latinx communities mistake low participation for a lack of knowledge about voting or caring about social issues and policy rather than a clear assessment from Black and Latinx residents of the inability of City officials to address their community needs.

Why We Must Organize & Fight

By Jawanza Malone

There is a war raging in the streets of Chicago. That war is wreaking havoc on the lives and institutions of those who reside in this city that rose from the land stewarded by the Potawatomi and other nations indigenous to this territory – the land where Jean Baptiste Pointe duSable decided to call home and start a family among the Indigenous peoples of this land. This war continues to lay destruction in its wake as everyday people struggle to survive. The perpetrators of this war seek to shift the battle to their favor by convincing everyone else that resistance is futile. The war is for control; control of the life-sustaining resources of the natural and built environments. As we'll attempt to highlight here, the easiest way for the perpetrators of this war to win is to convince the rest of us that there is no war to fight. That war is being fought, and it is being fought on the battlefield of community organizing.

This report on Chicago's civic health conducted by UIC's Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy provides critical insight into both sides of this battle. It points to the efforts of the elites among us and those in their service to exploit the resources of our planet to satisfy their desires, and the efforts of the rest of us who seek to survive and ensure the survival of our communities (the places and the people). The report points to the policies and practices enforced from the halls of power to strip away our humanity and basic means of survival. It takes but a second to think about legislative inaction to ensure access to affordable housing, living wages, quality education, and nutritious food for us all.

For example, right now on Chicago's South Side, there's the community of South Shore, which has been dubbed the eviction capital of Chicago. More evictions take place there than in any other community area in Chicago. Yet, the Illinois State Representative for the area remains vehemently opposed to rent stabilization measures to regulate how much rent can increase from one year to the next, which would have an impact on the massiveness of eviction filings there. There are also local city council members who remain opposed to instituting a community benefit agreement (CBA) mirroring a recently-won agreement for the adjacent Woodlawn community. This CBA would protect families from displacement and bring balanced development to the area where property taxes, rents, and home prices skyrocketed after it was announced that the Obama Presidential Center would be built a couple of miles away.

Yet, those same people have passed salary increases for themselves, and stymied efforts to enact stronger ethics and accountability measures to prevent corruption in order to create pathways to resources they deny to everyone else.

Likewise, it takes but another second to think about the challenges faced by communities of color throughout Chicago – closing schools, closing hospitals, closing grocery stores, and most-telling, the disparity in life expectancy based on zip code. These seemingly intractable issues confound our lawmakers; but if you ask the average person on the street what they'd do, they'd likely have a genius and simple answer. However, you'd also likely have to pry the answer from them because, in general, members of our society have been socialized to believe their voice doesn't matter, and that no one wants to honestly hear what they have to say. Not listening has, after all, been the pattern of behavior from our elected and appointed leadership. Taken together, the intentional muting of our voice by those entrusted to lead in our representative form of government, the evidence of the persistent nature of the status quo, and the ability of the powers-that-be to undermine our attempts to create social change (often by violence and the threat of violence) leads people to disengage and retreat into their homes to "protect" themselves and those they care about.

To provide an example of the intentional muting of the voices of the people most-impacted by the issue, we need only look at public housing. Thousands of residents in public housing developments throughout Chicago were displaced with the promise of a right to return through the Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation in the late 1990s. More than 30 years later, those families have largely been unable to return, and the land continues to be used for purposes other than affordable housing. Despite the best efforts of the residents to advocate on their own behalf, their cries for justice largely fell on deaf ears in the Daley, Emanuel, and Lightfoot administrations. Similarly, as proposed school closures were announced, public hearings became kangaroo courts where parents, children, teachers, and organizers pleaded their cases to save their schools only to be pitted against each other by school board members and/or school district representatives who were acting at the behest of real estate developers or other corporate interests as the schools were ultimately closed.

This is why it is critical to elevate the power of community organizing in this moment as it is the great *equalizer*. Effective organizing by those who seek to liberate Society is the only true challenge to the infrastructure that has been built by those who seek to repress Society by conning us into thinking we don't have power to change our reality. Civic participation has, in fact, waned over time;

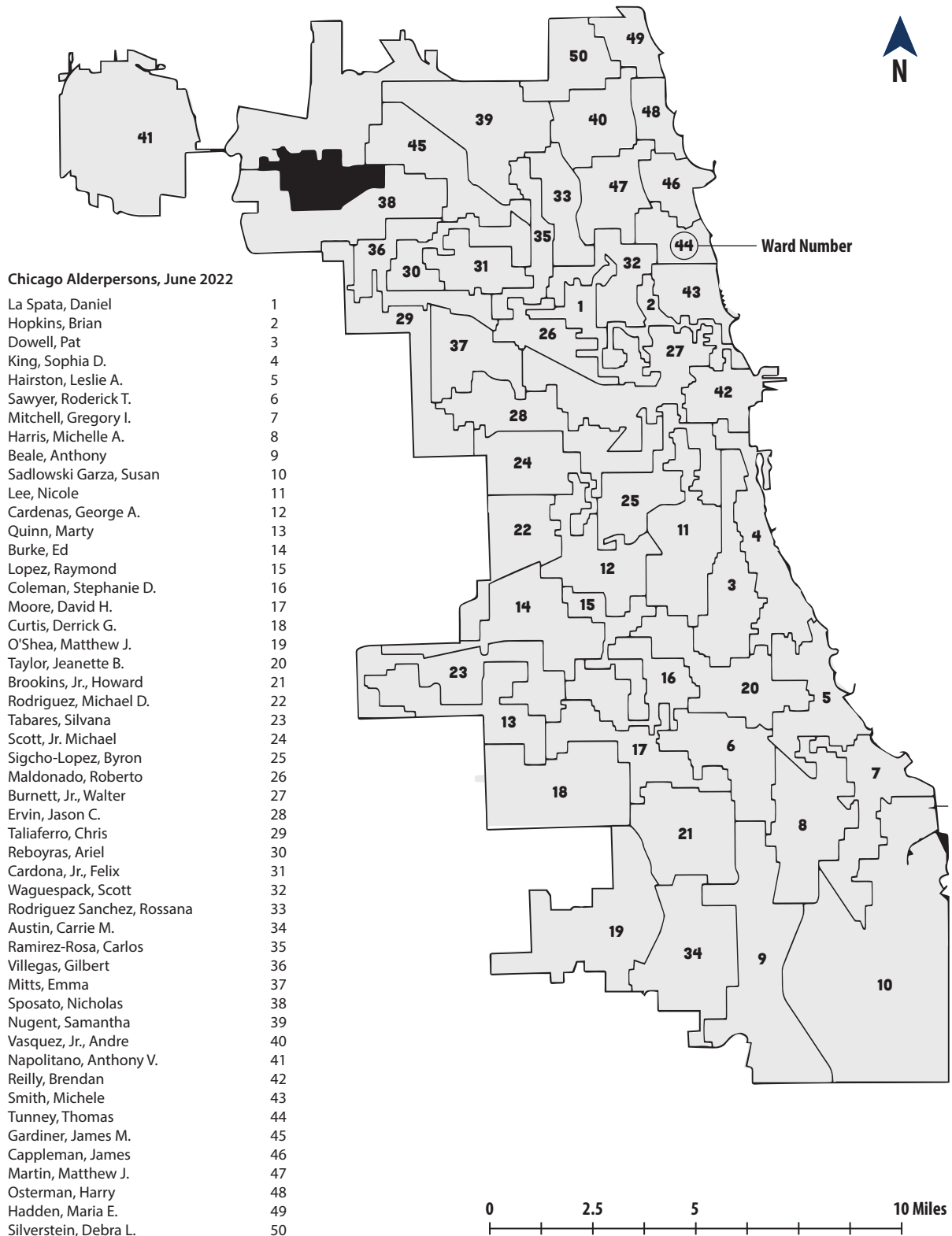
but we shouldn't confuse civic participation with political action. Political action is the intentional engagement of people to create change. This isn't about supporting a political party or a candidate. Political action as defined here is the organizing highlighted by this report.

Whether we're talking about community benefit agreements or saving public schools from closure, the only intervention that forced the powers-that-be to not disrupt, displace, and demolish was the power of community organizing. Community organizing led to a community benefits agreement in Woodlawn, against all odds, that has the potential to create more housing at levels the average Chicago resident can afford than any of the housing plans released from the City of Chicago in the past 30 years. Similarly, community organizing led to the only instance of a closed school being reopened as an open enrollment neighborhood school in Chicago.

The stories of organizing campaigns cited by the authors of this report point to the ways in which power is being wrestled back from the repressive forces in our society. Community organizing is the means by which everyday people continue to preserve democracy in a country where too many of the same people elected to defend it are busy dismantling its architecture. In the political maps of Illinois from the 1990s to today, we see an intense reddening of the State; and the increased potential for anti-labor, homophobic, anti-immigrant, xenophobic, anti-democratic, repressive rhetoric and practices to infect our local and state legislative, judicial and executive offices—rendering vulnerable communities even more vulnerable. We will continue to see families displaced from their homes and welcoming communities, children ripped from their schools away from their friends and caring adults, and workers placed in increasingly unsafe precarious conditions.

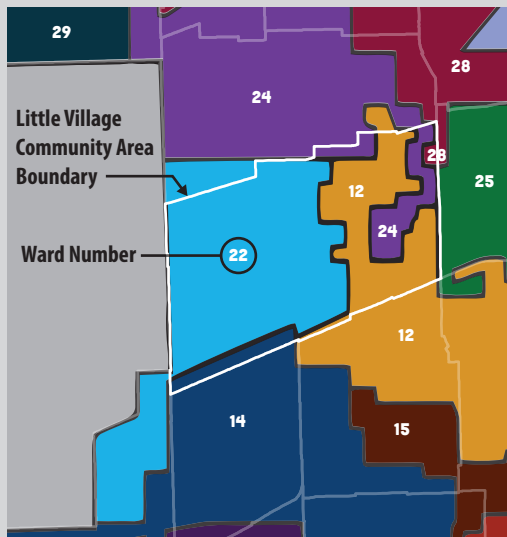
The power in our sheer ability to connect with one another to simultaneously build and resist is the only thing that stands in the way of foreboding disaster. Community organizing is the means by which community and true democracy will be realized. This is why we must organize and fight, and most importantly, be adequately prepared AND resourced to fight long-term and win!

CHICAGO WARD MAP, 2012 - 2022



Sidebar: Wounded City

Robert Vargas' book, *Wounded City: Violent Turf Wars in a Chicago Barrio*,⁵⁴ offers a kind of natural experiment in the City of Chicago: why are there dramatically different levels of violence across two adjacent communities, communities with relatively similar demographics? To explore this conundrum, Professor Vargas engaged in a long and intensive study of the two communities – east and west Little Village – and developed a powerful explanation that offers important insights on the complexity of urban violence and contradicts some of the dominant thinking in the field. Vargas shows that residents in both communities have made significant efforts to address local violence, working with local non-profits, engaging the police, making demands on local politicians, etc. In short, they both demonstrate collective action to improve life in the neighborhood.



What is different across the wards are the paths to power. For example, the long-term gerrymandering of wards in the city meant that west Little Village is largely in a single ward, the responsibility of a single alderman, so residents are able to effectively organize for anti-violence interventions (including everything from youth programs to one-way streets). On the other hand, the adjacent east Little Village is cut into small slivers throughout multiple adjacent wards where powerful aldermen negotiate for new boundaries to maintain power through demographic shifts. Moreover, for the Alders in the 24th and 12th ward, east Little Village is a smaller area of their larger ward, diluting the concerns of the residents of this neighborhood. In east Little Village, residents are not able to get local needs addressed.

What is different in these spaces is not whether community members care, are engaged, and work to improve the quality of life in their neighborhood but what kind of responses they get from police, local government, and community organizations. When we think about intervening into neighborhood level challenges throughout cities like Chicago, his work suggests that a singular focus on engagement, or lack thereof, is not the answer. The question is not “do people care about their communities or want to work for safer spaces to live and raise their families” but “do public officials and government entities respond to community needs?” More needs to be done to ensure that our institutions and political structures are responsive, especially in a city where the gerrymandered boundaries of our ward maps divide many communities.

Burnout was another theme that came up in our interviews. Burnout showed up in at least two ways. First, engaging working-class populations can be difficult because people have barriers to involvement such as childcare responsibilities, mobility, and work constraints. A tenant organizer in an immigrant-heavy neighborhood in Chicago said that working with these tenants can be “a long and demanding process.” His organization is attempting to address the problem of childcare by providing free childcare at their meetings. However, providing such services can be burdensome for volunteer-driven organizations such as his.

Burnout is also an effect of the contentious nature of social movement organizing, which often involves contesting a policy or practice in which others – usually more powerful actors – have a vested interest. Brosnan explicitly stated that the City government is not interested in the kind of civic engagement BPNC is engaged in: “those in power do not want it.” He noted that the City Council and Mayor, in fact, have increased barriers to civic engagement, including expanding lobbying to include grassroots activities and violating public open meetings rules every month. This pushback can lead to long and arduous campaigns that can last for years. The trauma center campaign and Galvan’s work to pass an anti-gentrification ordinance, for example, were both five-year campaigns. Those we interviewed noted that sustaining involvement and participation over such long periods of time is difficult. Muñoz recalled the difficulty of sustaining the level of involvement after Meegan’s campaign. He noted that students went on to college or became more preoccupied with work.

Furthermore, in some cases, civic engagement was met with direct violence from the police. Bartley explained that Defund CPD emerged from an ad hoc group, the Black Abolitionist Network, which formed in response to police violence against activists involved in the 2020 uprisings in Chicago. While this prompted new Black youth to get involved, it was a physically and emotionally intense and overwhelming experience that led some to also take time away from organizing work. For example, Morris-Moore shared that the experience of police violence directed at a civil disobedience action in protest of Trump’s speaking engagement at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2016 triggered deep-rooted traumas that led them to take a 4-year hiatus from organizing. Morris-Moore returned to organizing during the 2020 summer uprisings when they connected with Assata’s Daughters’ members at a march that fortuitously came by their work.

Morris-Moore considered the power dynamics of social movement organizing along racial lines, highlighting a structural critique of civic engagement and why young, working-class, and especially Black people are active in social movements as opposed to more “acceptable” forms of civic engagement such as voting. They pointed out how “get out the vote” campaigns, for example, often present Black, young, and working-class people with a choice between candidates that do not have their political and material interests in mind. When this is the case, votes elicited from minority communities serve to perpetuate structural racism. “People don’t participate in elections and electoral politics,” Morris-Moore noted, because the “lane [of acceptable civic engagement] has always been carved out for Black people, because we’ve never been invited into those rooms, unless we were useful.” This leads people to find alternative forms of engagement to better their lives and their communities. It also leads to a conscious rejection of and antagonism towards practices of civic engagement such as voting. As Morris-Moore stated, “I am [...] not going to [...] engage with these systems that impact my life in negative ways in a civil manner, nor am I going to organize other people to do so.”

Likewise, consistent cuts to the public sector have prompted many to become civically engaged but have also created barriers to sustained involvement. Brosnan said that cuts contribute to a belief that the government is incapable of solving problems and contributes to a “kind of civic malaise that exists out of total cynicism and kind of lack of faith in our elected officials.” On the one hand, this has inspired many to become involved in social movements and shape government and policy by means other than the ballot box. However, according to Brosnan, it can also contribute to a retreat away from larger scale city-wide or national politics into local, private nonprofit forms of civic engagement.

Cuts to the public sector also decrease a prominent source of employment for Black and Latinx people.⁵⁵ Gary, a founder of Positive Force Youth Foundation (PFYP), a mentor nonprofit for young people, provides an example of the importance of stable, public-sector employment. Gary’s impetus for PFYP came from his work in youth development nonprofits. He felt that too much funding was going to administrative staff and away from development programs for young people. He explained that his ability to start PFYP was made possible because of his public sector employment. It allowed him the time and resources to start PFYP and volunteer to help young

people. It even allowed him some discretion in accepting grant money. He explained that he once turned down a corporate sponsorship because the strings attached to the grant ran contrary to the organization's mission and goals. Evelyn explicitly cited budget cuts as one of the biggest challenges her union faces: "there needs to be more resources invested [...in] care work. That's just so essential. Like whether it's childcare or home care nursing homes [...] but these are always on the chopping block when it comes to funding and are not being able to survive." Evelyn mused about the possibility and positive effects of having more public daycare centers, "like we have public schools."

CONCLUSION

Our analysis of current civic engagement measures and the civic engagement landscape in Chicago suggests that traditional measures and interpretations of civic engagement offer only a partial picture of civic life. The existing partial picture comes from several factors: 1) a tendency to use voting and volunteering as the sole measuring stick of civic life; and 2) a tendency to use narrow definitions of volunteering which exclude many activities that could feasibly be considered volunteering, such as attending public meetings or doing favors for neighbors. The Current Population Survey measures encompass only a particular type of volunteering, one that privileges individuals donating their time, labor, and money to formal organizations. Those we interviewed referred to this as a “charity model.” This type of volunteering is undoubtedly an important expression of civic responsibility. But the ability to donate one’s time, labor, and money to address the needs of others are structurally available to those with more money and stability. This leads to a racial and class bias in this measure of civic engagement. Using this as the measuring stick of civic life thus encourages a deficit framing of civic engagement in which Black, Latinx, and working-class people are viewed as lacking the capacity and resources to participate collectively in society. This deficit perspective ignores the resilience, vibrancy, and resourcefulness of young and working-class people of color to come together to solve problems facing their communities.

Contrary to the Current Population Survey data, our case study of Chicago social movements, examination of IRS nonprofit data, block party permit data, and interviews with social movement actors all point to expanding civic engagement in the 2010s, especially among young and working-class people of color in Chicago. For example, Current Population Survey data shows dips in volunteering rates during two moments of robust increases in civic engagement in Chicago: during and immediately following the 2006 immigrant rights movement and following the Great Recession during which Chicago saw a litany of racial justice, labor, neighborhood-based, and issue-based organizing. Many of these activities were led by, organized by, and attended by Black and Latinx working-class and young people. Furthermore, data on the formation of new nonprofits shows an uptick in the creation of formal organizations following 2010

in Black and Latinx neighborhoods, some of which corresponded with the rise in the Black Lives Matter movement in Chicago and across the country.

Furthermore, our interviews with social movement actors provide valuable insight into potential pathways to sustaining and enhancing civic engagement among young, working-class people of color in Chicago and easing barriers to further engagement. It was resoundingly clear from our interviews that a personal connection to an issue and the feeling of collective responsibility and agency in addressing that issue attracted young people of color to be civically engaged. Chicago Public Schools' (CPS) turn toward project-based community service learning is an excellent example of how to encourage such activities. Prior to this model, CPS practiced a form of service learning more in-line with the "charity model" of volunteering, in which civic participation was seen as the sum of the hours devoted to discrete activities, often to the benefit of other places and communities. The new turn towards project-based community service learning encourages a more holistic and rooted approach to civic engagement based on "civic love" for one's community.

For those interested in enhancing civic life, the concept must be widened beyond traditional notions of charitable work or participating in the ballot box and include a wide range of civic activity, including what are often considered more contentious forms of civic engagement. Although some of those we interviewed were directly involved in elections, many participated in shaping government and policy through marches, protests, civil disobedience, and so on. This type of work can be exciting. It shows those involved that it is possible to change "the conditions of their life," as one of our respondents noted. It also connects young, working-class people of color to a rich history of city-wide, national, and even international social movements, which can give more meaning to civic participation.

Our report also raises questions about how to address barriers to civic engagement. Some of those we interviewed noted the need for more organizational development training to build community capacity and sustain community organizing. Interviewees pointed to structural barriers to sustained engagement as well perpetuated by City of Chicago policies. These included tamping down on political forms of expression and budget cuts. To enhance civic engagement, it is crucial to advocate for policies that expand the right to political assembly and expression and to expand the public sector.

Collectively, our data all point to the reality that a vast number of young, working-class, and Black and Latinx people in Chicago are, in addition to those who are normally counted as “civically engaged,” dedicating their time and efforts to informal support networks, building new organizations, and to social movement forms of civic engagement. In doing so, they are meaningfully engaging in the “art of association” to respond to the acute problems affecting their communities. This challenges the notion that Chicago is civically unhealthy. More importantly, it calls on policy makers, philanthropy, and the private sector to go further in supporting community-based efforts that are addressing the core needs of Chicagoans. Community-based organizations and community organizers are foundational in the work of building civic trust, healing from civic trauma, and in creating thriving and sustainable communities, they need and deserve our support.

Afterword

By Joe Hoereth

The 2022 IRRPP Civic Health Report has masterfully brought into clear relief a huge gap in what is known to be “standard” or “traditional” conceptions of civic engagement. Specifically, that those conceptions miss a lot of civic activity in Black and Brown communities. Fifteen years ago, my institute adopted the broad definition of civic engagement of political scientist and philosopher Peter Levine as “any action taken with the intent to influence a legitimately public matter.” This IRRPP report extends how we think about civic engagement and its related measurement to be more inclusive, more accurate, and closer to Levine’s broad definition.

The report identifies the dimensions of traditional civic engagement – particularly voting and volunteering – that have come too often to define our notions of what encompasses civic engagement. This traditional notion is convenient because it is easy to measure at the level of the individual or household through the Current Population Survey, as this report points out. However, for some time I have wrestled with the thought of what I perceived to be a tension between these types of activities and other kinds of engagement rooted in the community organizing tradition in Chicago, particularly its foundation in the social capital harnessed through individual and group relationships. The extent to which individuals have strong bonds and form networks with each other, as manifest by the extent to which they support and assist each other with specific needs, seemed to be more consequential in many ways than whether individuals participated in any formal volunteering activity. Community organizing activity, for many Black and Brown Chicagoans, whom historically gained little from the long tradition of political patronage, may also have been more impactful in their lives than voting per se.

In Chicago neighborhoods, particularly its communities of color, residents engage both in traditional and collective types of civic activity which at moments exist in parallel but are also often complementary or integrated. What this report highlights in particular is how poor a job the traditional conceptions of civic engagement and their related data sources do in capturing and measuring that collective action. This is not to say that they can’t be measured at all or that new forms of measuring need to be created, rather the report identifies other existing data sources that may not be thought of as civic engagement activity but actually do contribute to understanding and measuring it, especially for communities of color. In doing so, different types of analyses are possible: such as examining connections between civic engagement and school closures, TIF

resources, and unemployment all of which are issues with disproportionate impact on minorities or communities with less power.

Expanding the notion of civic engagement in this way also makes possible a completely different take on the level of civic engagement in Chicago. It flips our perspective from that of deficits or disengagement, to the opposite, as the report states: the “resiliency, vibrancy, and resourcefulness of young and working-class people to come together and to solve problems” is accounted for in the measure. However, there may be something else at play too, something that future research in this space needs to take on. What also needs to be measured is the institutional context, the presence of formal and informal organizations that both create opportunities for engagement and also provide the infrastructure needed to mobilize, coordinate, and access resources often very much needed in minority communities. Future research should explore the work of such organizations and the impact they are having on underserved communities.

This study and the data compiled within it has moved the needle tremendously on painting a much more accurate picture of civic engagement in Chicago. One that funders, government, and communities themselves can use to catalyze and drive action to transform Black and Brown communities from spaces of need and deficits to spaces of opportunity where families and individuals thrive.

APPENDIX: NCOC TECHNICAL WRITE UP

Unless otherwise noted, findings presented in this report are based on the National Conference on Citizenship's (NCoC) analysis of the U.S. Census Current Population Survey data. Any and all errors are NCoC's own. Volunteering and Civic Engagement estimates are from Current Population Survey September Volunteering/Civic Engagement Supplement from 2019 and voting estimates from 2020 November Voting and Registration Supplement.

Depending on the Current Population Survey supplement, the single-year Chicago Current Population Survey sample size used for this report ranges from 409-413 (volunteering/civic engagement supplement) and to 348 (voting supplement) residents from across Chicago. This sample is then weighted to representative population demographics for the district. Estimates for the volunteering and civic engagement indicators (e.g., volunteering, working with neighbors, making donations) are based on U.S. residents ages 16 and older. Voting and registration statistics are based on U.S. citizens who are 18 and older (eligible voters). When we examined the relationship between educational attainment and engagement, estimates are based on adults ages 25 and older, based on the assumption younger people may be completing their education.

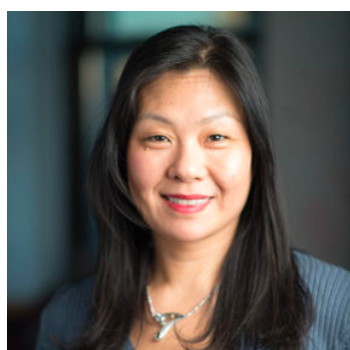
Because multiple sources of data with varying sample sizes are used, the report is not able to compute one margin of error for Chicago across all indicators. Any analysis that breaks down the sample into smaller groups (e.g., gender, education) will have smaller samples, and therefore the margin of error will increase. Furthermore, while helpful in benchmarking, national rankings may be small in range, with one to two percentage points separating the state/district ranked first from the state/district ranked last.

It is also essential that our margin of error estimates is approximate, as Current Population Survey sampling is highly complex, and accurate estimation of error rates involves many parameters that are not publicly available.

EXPERT COMMENTARY AUTHOR BIOS



Maritza Bandera is a Program Manager for the Building Collective Power strategy at The Chicago Community Trust. She is responsible for designing grant making initiatives that support community organizing, community leadership and networks, civic power, and resident campaigns that advance the Trust's vision to close the racial and ethnic wealth gap. In this role, she has launched the Changemakers Network, a community of practice designed to provide practitioner, organizational and network support to community organizers.



Kathleen Yang-Clayton is a Clinical Associate Professor with Public Administration at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her work focuses on the operationalization of racial equity practices inside of large public organizations that increase the public's trust in government and improves government performance, especially but not exclusively in historically marginalized communities. She is a Research Fellow at the Great Cities Institute and a member of several national initiatives that integrate public administration and racial equity.



Matthew Nelsen is a Postdoctoral Scholar affiliated with the Department of Political Science and the GenForward Survey at the University of Chicago. He received his Ph.D. in political science from Northwestern University in June of 2020. His research centers on how local-level institutions, especially schools and neighborhoods, act as microcosms of democracy and how these institutions can simultaneously serve as sites that exacerbate existing racial inequalities while also holding the potential to foster agency and equal political voice.



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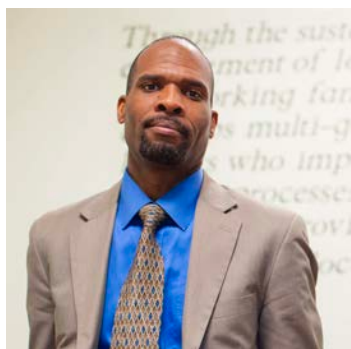
EXPERT COMMENTARY AUTHOR BIOS



The Pilsen Housing Cooperative (PIHCO) is a limited-equity, scattered-site affordable housing cooperative for longtime residents of Pilsen. The co-op was started by longtime Pilsen artists and working-class families looking for a way to stay in our community despite skyrocketing rents and fierce speculation. PIHCO is a stand against gentrification and displacement. And it challenges an economic system that views our neighborhood as a commodity and source of profit rather than a community that people call home.



Niketa Brar is the Executive Director of Chicago United for Equity. Her career has been driven by a desire to build community-centered approaches to policymaking, informed by her experiences as an organizer, educator, Local School Councilmember, and policy director at city and state government offices related to education and community economic development. Brar holds a BA in Public Policy and International Affairs (George Washington), MA in Education (American University), and MA in Public Policy (U of Michigan).



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Joe Hoereth is the Director of the Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement (IPCE) at the University of Illinois at Chicago. IPCE creates opportunities for scholars, concerned citizens, students, and government to participate in public discourse and educational programs on current policy issues and social trends. The Institute has produced multiple reports for diverse initiatives such as The Chicago Community Trust's "On the Table" program and as an Independent Monitoring Team for the Chicago Police Consent Decree.

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Chris Poulos is a Postdoctoral Associate at the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago. His research relates to the central role of financial markets, institutions and their intermediaries in contemporary urban political-economy. He is interested in the causes, consequences, and inner workings of urban financialization as it has generated a full spectrum restructuring of state institutions, from the provision of public services to the reconfiguring of revenue streams.



Iván Arenas is an Associate Director at the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy at UIC. The Institute supports engaged research to increase society's understanding of the root causes of racial inequities and create research-based policy solutions. His work focuses on how social movements use creative art practices to establish solidarities beyond the state. He is a member of Chicago Torture Justice Memorials, the Pilsen Housing Cooperative, Chicago United for Equity, and the Chicago ACT Collective.



Amanda E. Lewis is the Director of the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy and College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Distinguished Professor of Black Studies and Sociology at UIC. Her research focuses on how race shapes educational opportunities and how our ideas about race get negotiated in everyday life. She has authored several award-winning books and co-authored many reports for IRRPP's State of Racial Justice in Chicago project chronicling the experiences and conditions of racial/ethnic groups in the city.

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- 33 It is important to keep in mind that these unemployment rates measure what the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) refers to as the "official unemployment rate," or it's U-3 measure of unemployed, which excludes discouraged workers, those marginally attached to the labor force, and those who are employed parttime for economic reasons. Including these workers (what the BLS refers to as the U-6 measurement) almost doubles the unemployment rate. The U-6 measurement is no doubt exceedingly higher than the average for Black and Latinx residents who are disproportionately channeled into much more precarious labor markets or

excluded from labor markets altogether. Readers can see the differences in BLS unemployment measures and their definitions here: <https://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cpsatab15.htm>.

- 34 Lutton, Linda, Becky Vevea, Sarah Karp, Adriana Cardona-Maguigad, and Kate McGee. 2018. "A Generation of School Closings." *WBEZ*. December 3, 2018. Accessed June 14, 2022. (<https://interactive.wbez.org/generation-school-closings/>). The article provides a link to the data used to derive our numbers.
- 35 Ewing, Eve L. 2018. *Ghosts in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- 36 For example, Chicago Public Schools revokes the authority of LSCs of schools placed on probation (e.g., for low achievement) to vote on school improvement plans and budgets.
- 37 Walker Burke, Cassie. 2022. "Chicago needs 5,500 more applicants for Local School Council elections." *Chalkbeat Chicago*. March 2, 2022. Accessed April 6, 2022. (<https://chicago.chalkbeat.org/2022/2/28/22955190/chicago-local-school-council-elections-participation-covid-lsc>)
- 38 Dumke, Mike. 2014. "Black and Latino areas still bearing the brunt of city job cuts." *Chicago Reader*. May 14, 2014. Accessed January 3, 2022. (<https://chicagoreader.com/blogs/black-and-latino-areas-still-bearing-the-brunt-of-city-job-cuts/>); Parks, Virginia. 2011. "Revisiting Shibboleths of Race and Urban Economy: Black Employment in Manufacturing and the Public Sector Compared, Chicago 1950–2000." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35(1). (<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00942.x>)
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 This data comes from the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General's data on public safety. (<https://igchicago.org/about-the-office/our-office/public-safety-section/>)
- 41 Ford, Matt. 2015. "America's Largest Mental Hospital is a Jail." *The Atlantic*. June 8, 2015. Accessed April 13, 2022. (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/06/americas-largest-mental-hospital-is-a-jail/395012/>)
- 42 Lynch, Loretta E. October 17, 2016. "Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch Delivers Remarks at the 123rd Conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police." United States Department of Justice. Accessed April 13, 2022. (<https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-loretta-e-lynch-delivers-remarks-123rd-conference-international>)
- 43 Henricks, Kasey, Amanda E. Lewis, Iván Arenas, and Deana G. Lewis. 2017. *A Tale of Three Cities: The State of Racial Justice in Chicago Report*. Chicago, IL: Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy. (<https://uofi.app.box.com/s/kj2zgks3bl3sw5gst49kf1yjldl0x2ud>)

- 44 Soss, Joe, and Vesla Weaver. 2017. "Police Are Our Government: Politics, Political Science, and the Policing of Race-Class Subjugated Communities." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20(1): 565-91. (<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-060415-093825>). As social scientists have recently noted, having racially marginalized communities contend daily with governing institutions and officials from police forces to housing authorities that use "coercion, containment, repression, surveillance, regulation, predation, discipline, and violence" often lead to community members "experiences of civic ostracism, social and political oppression, economic marginalization and state-led governance." (Soss and Weaver 2017: 567).
- 45 Additionally, arrests, searches, and police misconduct alongside budget cuts and poverty may contribute to a perception of what Desmond and Travis referred to as concentrated suffering (e.g., the concentration of poverty, incarceration, etc. in one's neighborhood). See: Desmond, Matthew, and Adam Travis. 2018. "Political Consequences of Survival Strategies among the Urban Poor." *American Sociological Review* 83(5): 869-896. They found that while disadvantaged neighborhoods have support networks to deal with economic challenges, the concentrated suffering associated with this can dampen perceptions of the efficacy of collective political capacity.
- 46 There are, arguably, three exceptions. First, according to the Current Population Survey's "helpful hints," the question on public meeting attendance technically includes: "Attending an anti-war protest, gay rights rally, pro-life march," but unless the respondent interrogates this question, it is not intuitive from the question itself that a protest, rally, or march is within the parameters of the imagined response since the question itself reads "did [you/NAME] attend a public meeting, such as a zoning or school board meeting, to discuss a local issue?" There is also a question on boycotts and conscious consumption: "did [you/NAME] buy or boycott products or services based on the political values or business practices of that company?" However, this question is restricted to boycotts, which are only one type of social movement activity. In addition, conscious consumption itself is biased towards those with adequate disposable income. Lastly, there is a question asking the respondent if they got together with neighbors to do something positive for their neighborhood or community. Again, it is not necessarily intuitive that this would include marches, protests, organizing meetings, etc.
- 47 Pallares, Amalia, and Nilda Flores-González. 2011. "Regarding Family: New Actors in the Chicago Protests." In *Rallying for Immigrant Rights. The Fight for Inclusion in 21st Century America*. Edited by Voss, Kim, and Irene Bloemraad. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp 161-180.
- 48 Kunichoff, Yana. 2012. "Despite Risks, Undocumented Immigrants Stage 'Coming Out of the Shadows' Week." *Truthout*. March 7, 2012. Accessed June 15, 2022 (<https://truthout.org/articles/despite-risks-undocumented-immigrants-stage-coming-out-of-the-shadows-week/>). The Coming Out of the Shadows week began on March 10th, which was the day of the 2006 immigrant rights protest in Chicago.

- 49 Ransby, Barbara. 2020. "Black Chicago's Future Depends, in Part, on Black Community Organizing." *Between the Great Migration and Growing Exodus: The Future of Black Chicago?* Chicago, IL: Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy, pp. 52-53. (<https://uofi.app.box.com/s/vb27q325rrp2sipd8otjs2zawe7ufrue>)
- 50 Soss, Joe, and Vesla Weaver. 2017. "Police Are Our Government: Politics, Political Science, and the Policing of Race-Class Subjugated Communities." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20(1): 565-91, pp. 583. (<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-060415-093825>)
- 51 The Urban Institute's National Center for Charitable Statistics provides a list and definitions of activity areas: <https://nccs.urban.org/project/national-taxonomy-exempt-entities-ntee-codes>.
- 52 Injustice Watch. (<https://www.injusticewatch.org/about/mission/>)
- 53 2013 is the first year the CDOT data is available.
- 54 Vargas, Robert. 2016. *Wounded City: Violent Turf Wars in a Chicago Barrio*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- 55 Parks, Virginia. 2011. "Revisiting Shibboleths of Race and Urban Economy: Black Employment in Manufacturing and the Public Sector Compared, Chicago 1950-2000." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35(1). (<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00942.x>)

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