



# 2020: HIGHLIGHTS

The year has challenged us all. When the pandemic forced the world to shelter-in-place, we placed our **Adaptability value** and **Racial Equity and Public Health lenses** at the center of Elevated Chicago's COVID-19 response, taking several measures to mobilize resources and partnerships locally and nationally. Then, racial justice protests and their aftermaths – reckonings for many – made these adaptations even more necessary. Later in the year, we worked and lived on virtual platforms while advancing equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD) toward a new City policy whose tenets we hope will be embraced by our new federal administration. Along the way, we've strived to consistently consider our partners' needs, our privilege, and ways to make our work more intentional.

## New grants received and in proposal development

- Funding from [Convergence Partnership](#) and [SPARCC](#) allowed us to **double our 2020-2021 grant pool for our five Community Tables to \$200,000**, increasing community collaboration, capacity and power to advocate for an equitable COVID-19 recovery. We also were able to allocate funds for cross-collaborations among our eHubs for meaningful arts and culture projects, from community murals to sunflower fields.
- A **\$75,000 award from The Funder Network**, matched 1:1 by The Chicago Community Trust, made **\$150,000 available to the Mayor's Office and Elevated Chicago to implement ETOD policy jointly with community organizations** throughout 2021, in partnership with City departments and CTA.

- Along with our Atlanta partners, we were awarded a \$200,000 Innovation grant from SPARCC to **fund our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion learning cohort pilot** led locally by the Metropolitan Planning Council.
- Elevated Chicago received a \$50,000 grant from Polk Bros. Foundation for general operations.
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Urban Institute awarded Elevated Chicago a **\$40,000 grant to enhance data collection and storytelling in our walkability projects**.
- We submitted a \$250,000 proposal to the U.S. Conference of Mayors with the City of Chicago Mayor's Office and the Chicago Dept. of Public Health (CDPH) to support ETOD implementation and a \$200,000 proposal for a SPARCC Innovation grant with Memphis to support community ownership models for ETOD, led by Enterprise Community Partners.



Latinos Progresando future home (rendering)

## Capital investments & program design/implementation

- The Elevated Chicago Steering Committee approved submission to SPARCC of a \$100,000 capital grant and \$500,000 loan request, for the **expansion of Esperanza Health Centers' administrative offices in Little Village** (California Pink Line eHub). This transit-oriented administrative space will allow a 20% increase in patients served.
- We've completed disbursement of **\$500,000 in capital grants** for projects supported by our Community Tables, including the conversion of a former public library building into new headquarters for **Latinos Progresando** (see image, top right) and a mixed-use development at Homan and Harrison by **Foundation for Homan Square** and **IFF**.
- The **Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning** and the **Regional Transportation Authority** launched an ETOD action planning initiative in our Green Line South Garfield eHub, developing a visual history of Washington Park and initiating a matching grant to Emerald South for community engagement. This work will support a SPARCC \$133K capital grant for branding, walkability and wayfinding.



Mayor Lori Lightfoot tweet (Sept. 2020)

## Grants made

- We allowed **maximum budget flexibility** in our active 2019-2020 grants to community-based orgs (\$150,000+) so they could adapt to remote work and community engagement. We also allowed new expenses to include tech (laptops, webcams, software subscriptions, etc.), deep cleaning, supplies, mutual aid funds, etc.
- CDPH extended its **Seed Grants program for walkability to and from CTA stations** (approx. \$150,000) into 2020, by continuing support of the current six grantees in Elevated Chicago eHubs and allowing adaptation of our programming to COVID-19, racial justice and economic recession impacts.

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## 2020: HIGHLIGHTS *continued*

- Elevated Chicago sent written support to the City Council's Finance Committee for [approval of \\$24M in financing for the Emmett Street ETOD, 100 affordable homes in the heart of our Logan Square eHub](#). We are grateful for the leadership of the departments of Housing and Planning & Development, and for Logan Square Neighborhood Association's role engaging community and advocating for this development.

### Systems & narrative change agendas

- In April, Elevated Chicago joined Active Transit Alliance, MPC, Center for Neighborhood Technology and other advocacy organizations, in signing [a letter calling for RTA, CTA, Metra and Pace](#) to establish an equitable, clear and transparent process for the regional transit response to COVID-19, and offering our support.
- Elevated Chicago and MPC hosted **four Diversity, Equity & Inclusion webinars** attracting 100+ leaders and professionals in fields shaping the built environment.
- In May, we culminated our journey toward the City of Chicago's first ETOD policy plan by co-hosting, with the Mayor's Office, Dept. of Housing and Dept. of Planning and Development, two **virtual ETOD Working Group policy workshops**, with 80+ participants. With support from [MZ Strategies](#) (to assist with the policy draft) and [JNJ Creative](#) (to create a vision for its visual presentation), we spent the summer drafting the policy document.
- On June 4, we published [an op-ed in Crain's Chicago Business on the role of equitable TOD in addressing the covid-19 pandemic and the more recent racial justice protests](#), featuring the Emmett Street ETOD.
- In early June, [Congressman Jesús "Chuy" García introduced a bill that we endorsed, which will create an Office of Equitable TOD and Mobility within the USDOT](#), significantly increasing capital and technical

assistance to implement TOD in communities of color and low-income communities.

- During summer, we helped convene and launch [Just Action](#), a racial equity collaborative formed to press organizations to move beyond statement-making (after the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and other unarmed Black people by the police) to tangible action toward racial equity, racial justice and equitable investments. With a focus on Chicago philanthropic and nonprofit organizations, but a welcome sign for all, we invited people to join a long-term DEI journey.



Andrew Geer, Steering Committee member, during ETOD tour (June 2020)

- We held our third [symposium on ETOD](#) in July, broadcasting "live" from the CTA's 95th Street Red Line Terminal to a virtual audience of **more than 300 people**. Speakers included Dr. Allison Arwady of the Chicago Dept. of Public Health (and co-chair of our Leadership Council), Commissioners Novara and Cox of the City's Housing and Planning & Development departments (respectively), urban architect Andre Brumsfield of Gensler, community developers Asiaha Butler and Josh Wilcoth, community developer Melvin Thompson and activist and [poet Leslé Honoré](#).
- On September 14, our [ETOD policy plan recommendations](#) were unveiled, and during the 45-day public comment period supported by the Mayor's Office, MZ Strategies, JNJ Creative and [Rudd Resources](#), the policy's website tallied **more than 4,500 unique visitors**, the policy was downloaded more than 1,500 times, 66 formal comments were logged and #ETOD racked up 1,000 social media engagements.

- In November, **Roberto Requejo took our story to RailVolution 2020**, the national conference for urban and transit planners, as a member of the closing keynote panel on "Navigating the Future" moderated by Smart Growth America CEO Calvin Gladney.

### Community engagement and ownership

- In April, Elevated Chicago and the work of the ETOD Working Group were featured as a national model during a SPARCC **Virtual Learning Convening on [Engaging for Equity in a World with Covid-19](#)**, attended by 150+ people from across the country.
- We advanced work in support of a **Community Land Trust in Logan Square** led by LUCHA, LSNA and Spanish Coalition for Housing, funded through a \$133,000 grant.
- We made a \$25,000 grant to Garfield Park Community Council to explore **community ownership models** for affordable mixed-use development Garfield Green in Kedzie/Lake eHub.
- As part of the **Climate and Cultural Resilience 2.0** project, **Overton Business Incubator** installed rain gardens, painted a flood map and developed informational boards on the impact of flooding in the Bronzeville community. The flood map is being used as the basis of the green infrastructure plan for the Garfield station.
- In October, funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation launched **Walkability 2.0**, a study of the impact of COVID-19 on the walkability of our eHubs, including videos for Green Line South and Logan Square. Led by the Institute for Housing Studies at DePaul University and the Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago, with storytelling support from Rudd Resources.
- In December, we will launch the **pilot Equitable Ambassadors Development program**, an inter-generational initiative to equip residents from our eHubs with the knowledge and tools to advocate for more equitable development in the city, and to protest the lack of it. The Ambassadors program is managed by LSNA with support from the Systems Change Working Group, Duo Development and Rudd Resources.