What if all Chicago neighborhoods worked for all residents—not for us, not around us, but with us? Chicago can, Chicago must.

We can and must be a place where our transit assets—that's stations and stops, buses and trains—are tools for neighborhood vitality. We can and must commit to developing buildings, homes and public spaces in every neighborhood in ways that address residents' needs and wants. We can and must be a city and region that embraces and models equitable transit-oriented development, or ETOD.

With ETOD, businesses, homes and public spaces near transit:

- Are owned locally, generating wealth for Black, Brown and Indigenous people;
- Remain affordable and accessible, ensuring that they can be appreciated by all residents, without displacing people, particularly people of color who have lived in communities for decades;
- Have access to high-quality transportation to jobs, amenities and other opportunities;
- Attract respectful investors and visitors, who help to sustain and vitalize communities;
- Are walkable, encouraging community engagement, health and safety;
- Incorporate sustainable practices to address climate change;
- Include spaces to display and perform art reflective of communities.

ETOD means that people of all incomes can benefit from dense, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development near transit hubs. It's a solution to the equitable recovery our city needs after COVID-19. It's a strategy that centers racial equity in the policies that shape our neighborhoods and lives. ETOD ensures that we all live in healthy, equitable, and climate-resilient communities.

Collaboration

We at Elevated Chicago are residents, community orgs, artists, developers, regional nonprofits, community development financial institutions, city officials, policymakers and philanthropists. Collaboration is who we are and a measure of our work.

Crossing communities and sectors, we seek to erase boundaries, shift power, and de-center elements of white supremacy culture (such as perfectionism, conflict avoidance and competitive individualism) that harm community development.

Join us in advancing ETOD. Meet us at ElevatedChicago.org and learn how you can help neighborhoods be equitable for all.
Elevated Chicago is a multi-sector collaborative that promotes more equitable development of new public space and buildings and vacant land around Chicago’s public transit infrastructure. We focus our work on people—especially Black and Brown South Side residents—in places affected by displacement and other forms of adversity in the built environment, and in places that are not currently well-served, create opportunities, spark development and strengthen communities.

**Our Steering Committee Members**

**Our Funders**
Building Chicago, Chicago Community Trust, Convergence Partners, MHMGIEC Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Pilsen, Foundation, Square One Fund, Strong Prosperous and Resilient Communities Challenge (SPARC) and Walker Foundation.

To learn more about our leadership staff and funders, visit here or scan the code to the right.

**Our Priorities**

**Community Collaboration**
Neighborhood-based community tables bring together diverse residents and community professionals, including scholars, developers, church, schools and health professionals, to share ideas and priorities for equitable solutions. We have used Elevated Chicago’s capital programs, policies, narratives, data insights, and more to achieve these goals for our city. For example, the Logan Square Table is working on creating affordable housing units, public art and gathering spaces.

**Resilient Power**
Knowledge is power. Besides supporting community tables, we will continue working with the Chicago Department of Public Health, the Regional Transit Authority to include community engagement partners in our Logan Square and Washington Park eHubs. By building on the Elevated Development Adventurers program, we will identify low-cost places that we can use for logistics and due diligence in near future neighborhood development.

**Community Development**
Elevated Chicago is working to move the needle on equitable development. For example, our efforts such as the Community Tables’ Terra Firma project to establish, deploy, and monitor environmental remediation vacant lots, using sunflowers and other plants. We will continue helping the Kedzie-Lake Community Tables work with the City to build out the Gerstld Park Eco-Orchard, which will include fruit and nut trees, a gathering space, and will divert 90,000 gallons of stormwater from local streets, sewers, and basements. And we will support new nature-based solutions in our 490 neighborhood eHubs. We’re working to protect our environment and improve our communities.

**Healthy and climate-resilient spaces**
Black and brown communities are harder hit by climate change and face more extreme weather events. We are working to protect our environment and improve our communities. For example, we will continue helping the Kedzie-Lake Community Tables work with the City to build out the Gerstld Park Eco-Orchard, which will include fruit and nut trees, a gathering space, and will divert 90,000 gallons of stormwater from local streets, sewers, and basements. And we will support new nature-based solutions in our 490 neighborhood eHubs. We’re working to protect our environment and improve our communities.

**Where we work**
The City of Chicago has incentivized development near transit. Since 2013, 60% of tax credits have been placed in the North and Northwest sides of the Loop, and of that 60%, 35% has been on the North side, bringing new homes, art venues, small businesses: you name it. Across the city, we have used Elevated Chicago’s 2020 Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) Policy Plan and the 2022 Connected Communities ordinance to re-center Elevated Chicago and the City to address these shortcomings.

Our work began in 2017 with advocacy on the 1/4 mile radius of eleven CTA stations located in Woodlawn, Washington Park, Bronzeville, Logan Square, Homan Square, Cermak Park and Logan Square. We called these areas “equitable opportunity zones,” or eHubs. Since then, our work has expanded to 26+ eHubs where residents use ETOD as a lens for community development and recovery, from Rogers Park to Washington Heights. We call this expanded network Elevated Chicago Plus.

**Our ETOD Leaks**
- Affordable homes
- Web-based action
- Business
- Incubators
- Murals and sculptures
- Urban agriculture
- Gathering spaces
- Grocery stores

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**What Is, What Was**

We have lived in an apartheid city. The time for change is now. We can use collaboration, policy, and investments toward healing and change on a deeply divided and car-oriented city, to reconnect people to service delivery and engagement, transform toward regenerative, to build wealth rather than extract it, and to use infrastructure to connect, not to separate, to communities. Our rezoning is now.

Chicago’s Black, Brown and Indigenous residents face two forms of displacement. The first form consists of communities that may face in stabilized real estate markets, long-time residents are displaced by new developments that causes voids and liability values to rise. For instance, between 2000 and 2009, Logan Square lost more than 20,000 Latinx households, a 10% decline. The second form of displacement is disinvestment, with a nearly 29% decline in our city’s Black population between 2000 and 2011, as Chicago’s Black residents moved away in search of greater safety and access to opportunities and services not available in neighbor or to effectively long-standing patterns of rooted disinvestment. Our communities have numerous strengths and assets (including transit access) with these assets combining power and resilience. Collaborating across neighborhoods, issues and sectors, we will transform the City.

Since 2017, Elevated Chicago has been at work to advance this work. Our values are adaptability, inclusion, innovation and transparency. Our lenses—the approach to everything we do—are race equity, health, climate change, arts and culture.

**What we are asking you to do**

- Supporting the work we do and your impact in your communities.
- Sign up for our newsletter.
- Visit our website for more information.
- Join our social media communities.
- Donate to support our work.
- Join our volunteer corps.
- Create opportunities, spark development and strengthen communities.

**People at Elevated Chicago**
From the Elevated Chicago Community Trust to community-based organizations, we are changing the way Chicago builds. We will continue advocating for more accountable, transparent and inclusive decision-making in public, private and civic organizations responsible for major investments in the built environment and infrastructure.

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**What we Work Together to Achieve...**

- Increased collaboration and cohesion in/among communities
- Improved resident participation and advocacy in built environment decision-making
- Increased ownership of homes, businesses, land, and other assets by people of color
- Improved health and economic outcomes for residents of color
- Improved and affordable development near transit hubs

**process**

- More meaningful community engagement/ ownership in built environment decisions
- More transparent decision making and implementation processes
- Greater availability of capital for low income communities/communities of color
- Greater prioritization of affordability and retention in polices and practices

**Case Study:**

- The Elevate Chicago Community Trust is one of the nation’s leaders for the City of Chicago ETOD Policy Plan. This authentic public school has already become a place for organizing, engaging, and activating community through arts, walls, and green infrastructure. For complete, just visit our center for community and economic development to slowdown displacement and community harm.

**Work & plan with us at ElevatedChicago.org**