



**GREATER AUBURN GRESHAM
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

HEALTHY CHICAGO EQUITY ZONES NEAR SOUTH REGIONAL COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

20

22

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INTRODUCTION

The Healthy Chicago Equity Zones (HCEZ) Near South Region, led by Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation (GAGDC), has built regional capacity to conduct this Community Assessment for Chicago Department of Public Health. As the Regional Lead, GAGDC, managed the community assessment process through seven Community Lead organizations who collected and analyzed local data to assess the community needs of the Near South Region. This data was collected via interviews, focus groups, surveys and coalitions. There were three main community health priorities that were identified, and the priority issue of public safety has been decided upon for our region. Throughout this process, all organizations have developed and disseminated culturally responsive public health messages while creating educational opportunities for social determinants of health.

In this community assessment, you will learn about the grassroots outreach and engagement that took place to improve health awareness in the communities of the Near South Region—where the priority issue of public safety has been identified in direct relation to HCEZ and Healthy Chicago 2025 goals. Healthy Chicago 2025 is Chicago’s five-year community health improvement plan that focuses on racial and health equity to meet our goal of reducing the Black-white life expectancy gap. Healthy Chicago 2025's vision is for a city where all people and all communities have power, are free from oppression and are strengthened by equitable access to resources, environments and opportunities that promote optimal health and well-being.

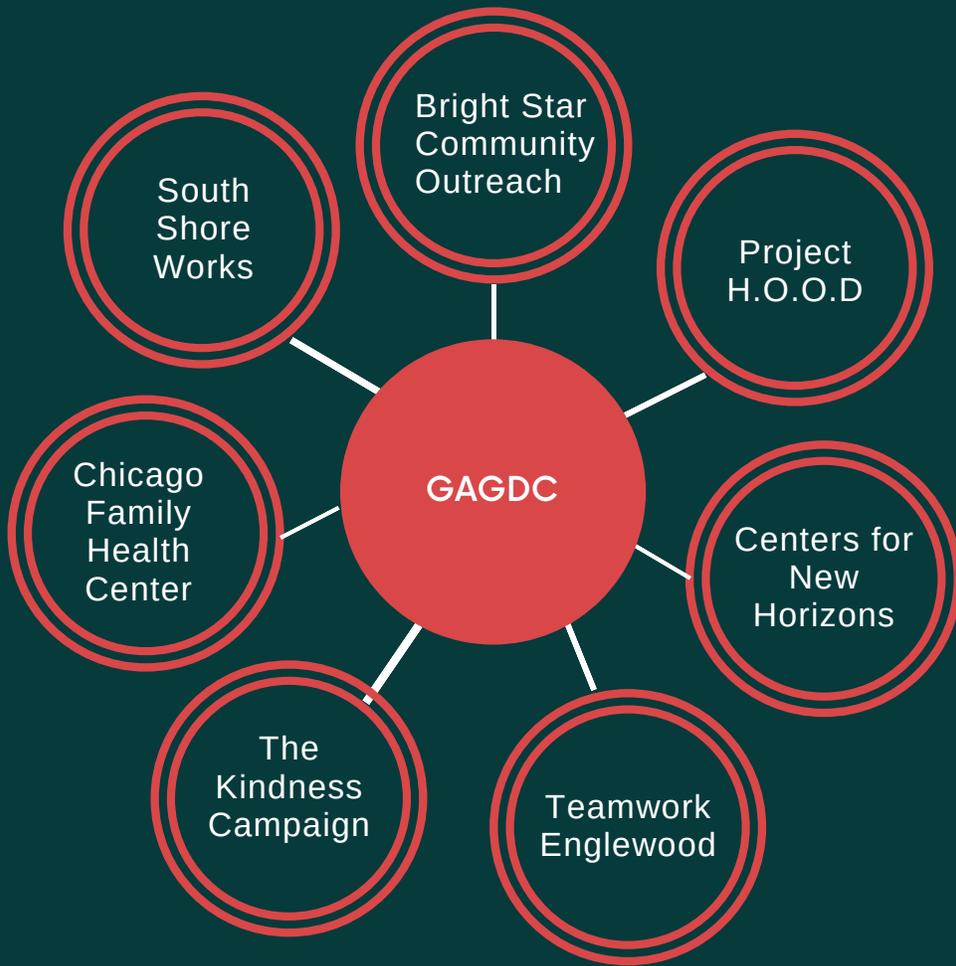
The Near South Region has fostered community-level resilience to address COVID-19 related health disparities. We used our organizational community influences to implement community-led solutions promoting public health. Community based participatory research was conducted to secure data that would help us all better understand local health concerns. This Community Assessment will provide details in reference to the phases, processes, and findings.

Execution of the Community Assessment has provided an evidence based analysis that the Near South Region's priority health concern is public safety and violence prevention. The number two health concern is mental health, and the community believes that this has a direct correlation with gun violence. It is our goal to address the root causes of health inequities and disparities, including structural and institutional racism.





"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." – Andrew Carnegie



HCEZ Near South Regional Structure

ECO MAP

The Healthy Chicago Equity Zones initiative deploys hyper-local strategies to confront the social and environmental factors that contribute to health and racial inequity – with the ultimate goal of closing Chicago’s racial life expectancy gap.

Efforts begun with the community leadership of COVID-19 vaccination campaigns. This included outreach and engagement during 2021 where there was a focus on increasing COVID-19 vaccination rates, and have now evolved to confront factors that contribute to health and racial disparities. This includes healthcare and social service access, food access, housing conditions, community safety, and the physical and built neighborhood environment.

Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation (GAGDC) is the regional lead for the HCEZ Near South Region. GAGDC has assigned a corresponding Community Lead for each neighborhood in the Near South Region, and we take pride in these cross community collaborations.



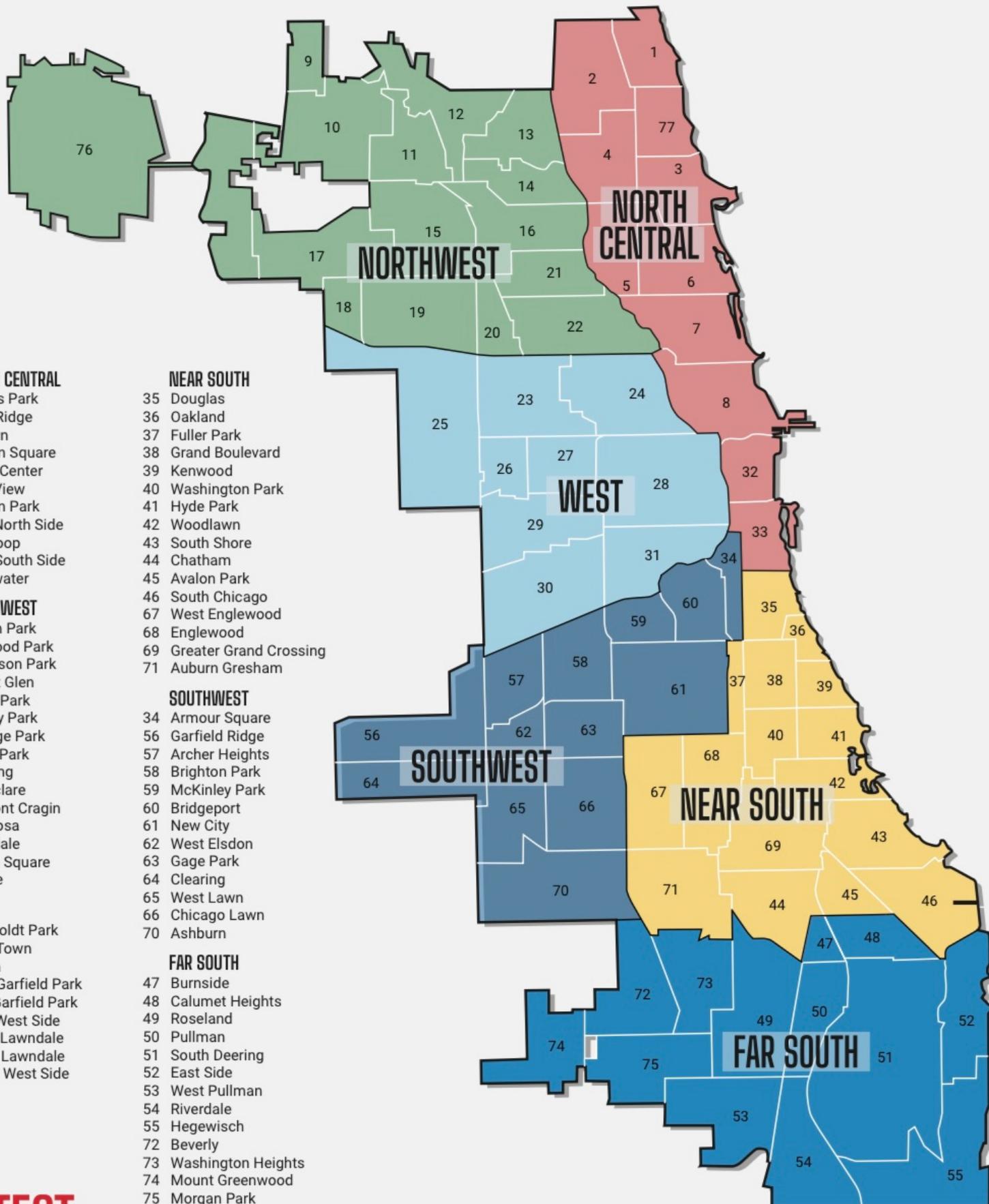
Near South Community Leads

NEAR SOUTH REGION COMMUNITIES & OUTREACH

COMMUNITY	HOUSEHOLDS	COMMUNITY LEAD
Auburn Gresham	16,967	GAGDC
Avalon Park	3,884	GAGDC
Chatham	13,693	The Kindness Campaign
Douglas	9,625	Centers for New Horizons
Englewood	9,101	Teamwork Englewood
Fuller Park	1,097	Centers for New Horizons
Grand Boulevard	10,383	Centers for New Horizons
Greater Grand Crossing	12,230	The Kindness Campaign
Oakland	3,096	Bright Star Community Outreach
South Chicago	10,491	Chicago Family Health Center
South Shore	23,078	South Shore Works
Washington Park	4,538	Bright Star Community Outreach
West Englewood	9,521	Teamwork Englewood
Woodlawn	9,213	Project H.O.O.D
Kenwood	21,613	Bright Star Community Outreach
Hyde Park	6,031	Bright Star Community Outreach

**HCEZ Near South Region Has Serviced More
Than 155,000 Households Since June 2021
through our Community Leads.**

HEALTHY CHICAGO EQUITY ZONES



NORTH CENTRAL

- 1 Rogers Park
- 2 West Ridge
- 3 Uptown
- 4 Lincoln Square
- 5 North Center
- 6 Lake View
- 7 Lincoln Park
- 8 Near North Side
- 32 The Loop
- 33 Near South Side
- 77 Edgewater

NORTHWEST

- 9 Edison Park
- 10 Norwood Park
- 11 Jefferson Park
- 12 Forest Glen
- 13 North Park
- 14 Albany Park
- 15 Portage Park
- 16 Irving Park
- 17 Dunning
- 18 Montclare
- 19 Belmont Cragin
- 20 Hermosa
- 21 Avondale
- 22 Logan Square
- 76 O'Hare

WEST

- 23 Humboldt Park
- 24 West Town
- 25 Austin
- 26 West Garfield Park
- 27 East Garfield Park
- 28 Near West Side
- 29 North Lawndale
- 30 South Lawndale
- 31 Lower West Side

NEAR SOUTH

- 35 Douglas
- 36 Oakland
- 37 Fuller Park
- 38 Grand Boulevard
- 39 Kenwood
- 40 Washington Park
- 41 Hyde Park
- 42 Woodlawn
- 43 South Shore
- 44 Chatham
- 45 Avalon Park
- 46 South Chicago
- 67 West Englewood
- 68 Englewood
- 69 Greater Grand Crossing
- 71 Auburn Gresham

SOUTHWEST

- 34 Armour Square
- 56 Garfield Ridge
- 57 Archer Heights
- 58 Brighton Park
- 59 McKinley Park
- 60 Bridgeport
- 61 New City
- 62 West Elsdon
- 63 Gage Park
- 64 Clearing
- 65 West Lawn
- 66 Chicago Lawn
- 70 Ashburn

FAR SOUTH

- 47 Burnside
- 48 Calumet Heights
- 49 Roseland
- 50 Pullman
- 51 South Deering
- 52 East Side
- 53 West Pullman
- 54 Riverdale
- 55 Hegewisch
- 72 Beverly
- 73 Washington Heights
- 74 Mount Greenwood
- 75 Morgan Park

NEAR SOUTH COMMUNITY LEADS



BRIGHT STAR
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our mission is to empower residents to share in the responsibility of building community through resource development and collaborative partnerships. We envision today's underserved communities becoming self-sufficient livable communities for individuals, families and organizations.

To ignite in people the pure quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate by leading with acts of kindness. We envision a future where compassion is at the core of all human interaction.



Founded in 1971, Centers for New Horizons, Inc. (Centers) is a nonprofit organization that assists children, youth, and families in becoming self-reliant, improving the quality of their lives, and participating in rebuilding their community.

The South Shore Works Planning and Preservation Coalition (hereinafter referred to as South Shore Works) is an emerging 501(C)(3) community-based organization dedicated to the revitalization and restoration of the South Shore community.



Our mission is to improve the quality of life of the residents and stakeholders of Englewood by facilitating economic, educational and social opportunities. We build community capacity by collaborating with local and potential stakeholders to create an environment that fosters the tenants for a healthy and vibrant Englewood.

At Project H.O.O.D., we provide mentorship, training, and community for residents of Woodlawn and Englewood. We care for our neighbors through services that empower.



The UChicago Medicine mission is to provide superior health care in a compassionate manner, ever mindful of each patient's dignity and individuality.

Chicago Family Health Center promotes health while working to prevent disease and provide treatment, through the delivery of quality and accessible primary healthcare, that is culturally sensitive, affordable, and responsive to community and individual needs.



VISION & VALUES

The vision for the Near South Regional Community Assessment is to create a safe space for communicating health concerns that will lead to a greater understanding of the individual needs of residents, with the goal of achieving the healthy communities model provided by Healthy Chicago 2025.

We are guided by the themes of Healthy Chicago 2025:

- Transform policies and processes to foster anti-racist, multicultural systems
- Strengthen community capacity and youth leadership
- Improve systems of care for populations most affected by inequities
- Further the health and vibrancy of neighborhoods

CORE VALUES

- Community
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Learning



DECISION MAKING PROCESS

- Robert's Rules of Order
- Anonymous Voting
- Coalition Agreement

We join with CDPH and partners to meet our vision of promoting optimal health, and well-being by adhering to the Healthy Chicago 2025 Guiding Principles:

- We actively challenge and redress racist systems through our process and strategies.
- We highlight community strengths as we tell our stories.
- We recognize that trauma affects all individuals, communities, organizations and systems, and we support resilience and healing.
- We consider who benefits and who is burdened by our proposed solutions.
- We promote equitable wealth building, affordability and belonging.
- We make sure that community members, including youth, have power in decision-making.

HCEZ NEAR SOUTH REGION

DATA COLLECTION

PHASES & PROCESS

01

Coalitions

There were 8 coalitions formed across the Near South Region, and our Community Leads also joined pre-existing coalitions to ensure that all community partners were aware of the vision and values of this Community Assessment.



02

Surveys

Surveys were disseminated through Community Lead outreach programs, partners that were identified through resource mapping, and additional online outreach efforts via social media.



03

Focus Groups

There were more than 20 focus groups that were led by Community Leads to have candid conversations about healthy communities.



04

Interviews

Community Leads in the Near South Region have conducted hundreds of interviews in regards to this Community Assessment, whereas some are recorded videos and others are verbal testimonials.



Mayor Lori Lightfoot participated in a Violence Prevention focus group on October 10, 2022. The Mayor and her staff took time to understand the experiences and testimonies of Target Area Development, St. Sabina's Strong Future's/SCAN, True Believers/Stay L.I.T, GAGDC, 79th St Corridor Ambassadors and WVON.

NEAR SOUTH REGION PARTNERS & COALITION MEMBERS

- University of Illinois at Chicago
- Saint Sabina Faith Community
- Chicago Department of Public Health
- Target Area Development Corp
- Walgreens
- Leo High School
- ComEd
- JP Morgan Chase Bank
- United Way
- CDC Foundation
- Chicago Family Health Center
- CORE
- Friend Health
- U of C Pritzker School of Medicine
- Howard Brown Health
- Salaam Wellness Center
- Near North Health
- Chicago Park District
- Illinois State Rep. Lamont Robinson
- Progressive Community Church
- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance - Greater Chicago
- The Village Project Collective
- Northeastern Illinois University
- UI Health Mile Square Health Center
- WellCare
- Equal Hope
- Institute for Healthy Communities
- New Community Outreach
- Komed Holman Health Center
- University of Chicago Office of Civic Engagement
- Northwestern Medicine
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Chicago Public Schools
- St. James Church
- Heartland Alliance
- United Way of Metro Chicago
- Bears Care
- Oakstreet Health
- Englewood Food Sovereignty Network
- Mays Elementary School
- Chicago Police Department
- Raise Your Hand
- Englewood CAC
- Chicago Department of Planning E.G. Woode
- Chicago Foundation for Women
- Gary Comer
- Lawrence Hall
- Black United Fund of Illinois
- South Shore Chamber
- South Shore Hospital
- Jackson Park Hospital & Medical Center
- South Side YMCA
- Ignite
- Cigna
- Centers for Higher Development
- EES Employment & Employer Services
- Home for Good Re-Entry Program
- Ladies of Virtue
- Chatham Business Association
- YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

The macro level of outreach within the Near South Region is massive, so we strategically chose partners that have programs and initiatives directly affecting the community at large. While resource mapping, we focused on both current partners and new opportunities for partnerships. This group is comprised of faith based organizations, health and human services, elected officials, youth and education, financial institutions, city departments and corporations.

Near South Region Data Overview

Collection & Analyzation

1,719

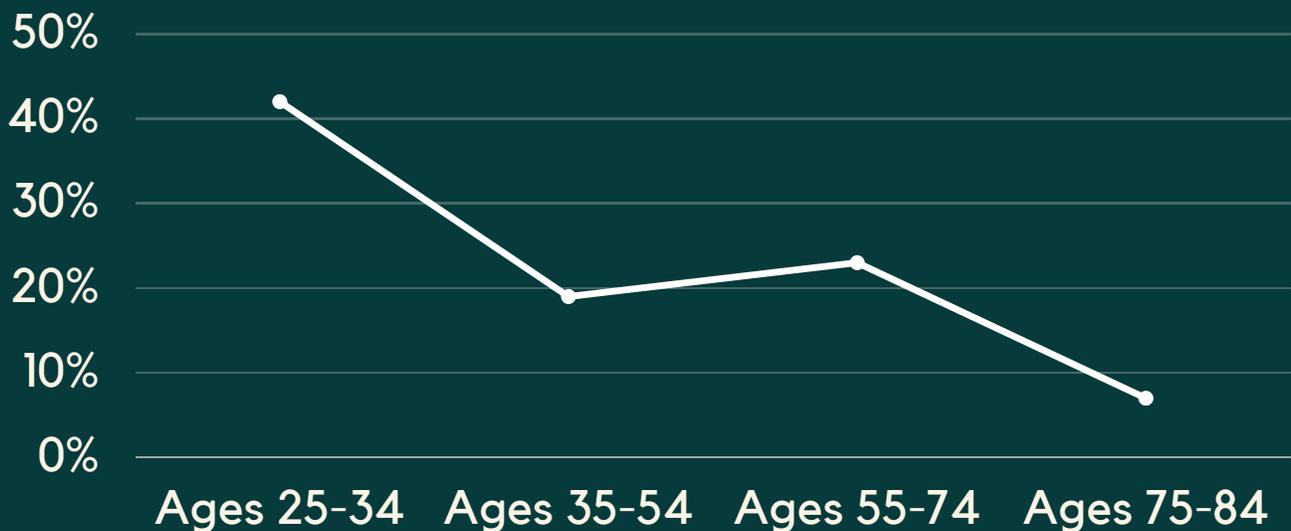
Survey
Respondents

20+

Focus Groups

100+

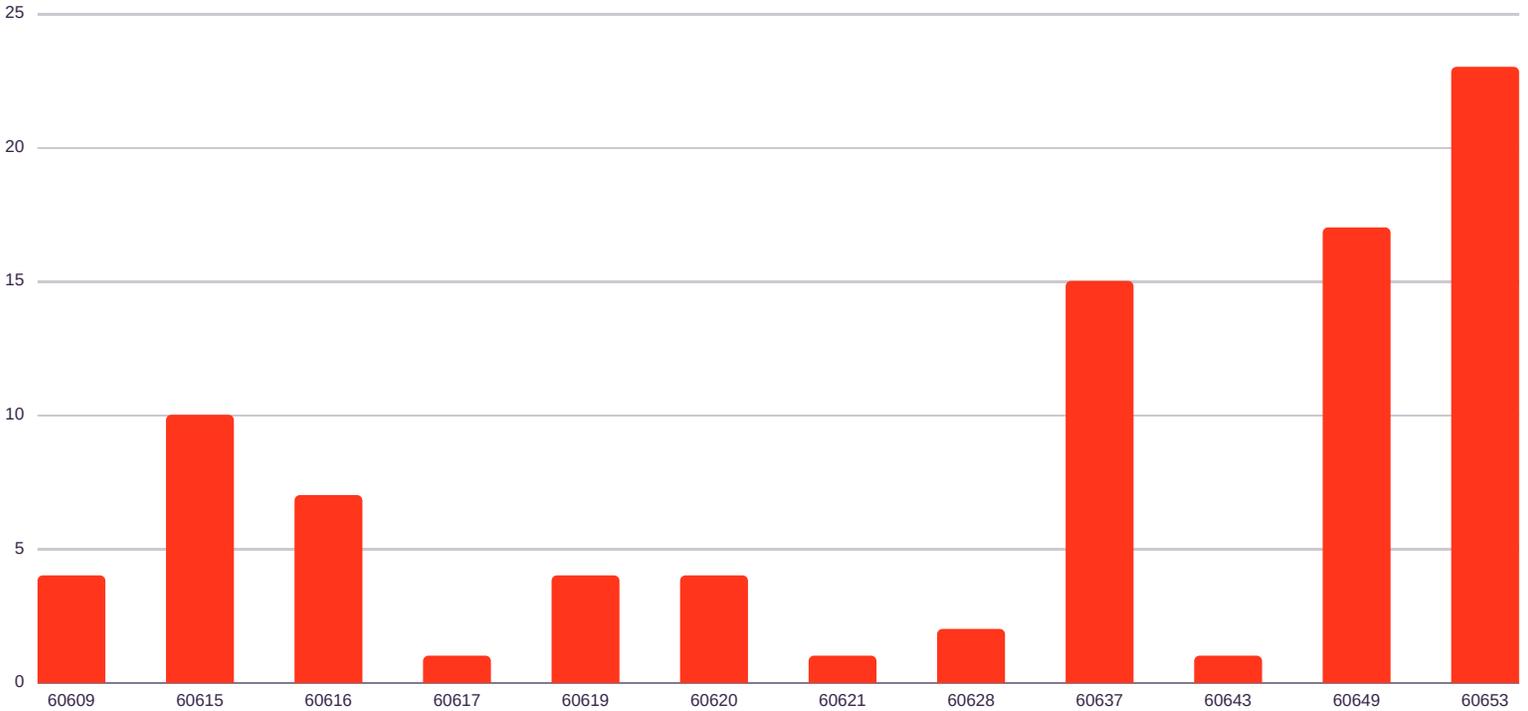
Interviews



THE NEAR SOUTH REGION OF CHICAGO'S HEALTHY EQUITY ZONES SERVES OVER FIFTEEN ZIP CODES ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO. HERE IS A BREAKDOWN OF OUR SURVEY RESPONDENTS ACROSS COMMUNITIES.



SURVEY RESULTS BY ZIP CODE



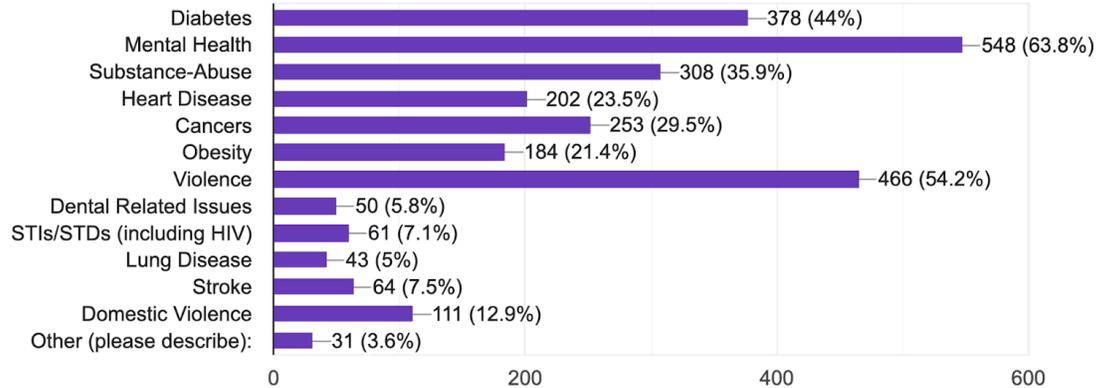
Majority of our survey results were from the community zip codes of Bronzeville, South Shore, Greater Grand Crossing, Kenwood, Douglas, Chatham and Auburn Gresham.

SURVEY RESULTS

HEALTH ISSUES

What do you think are the three most important health problems in your community? (Choose top 3):

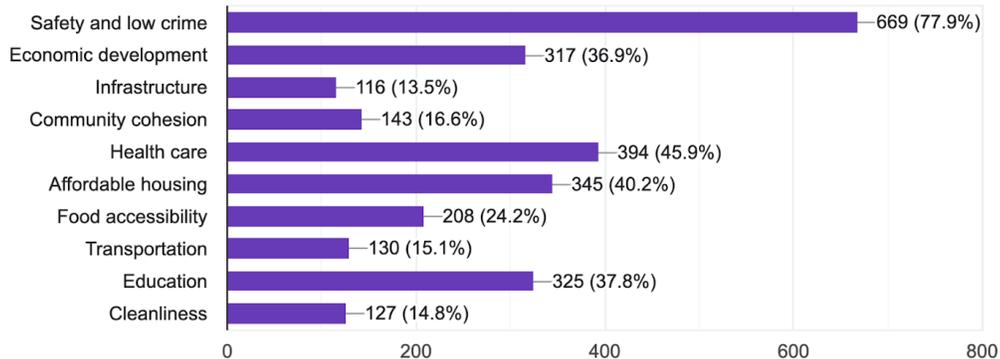
859 responses



COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS

What are the top three things that you would like to see improved in your community?

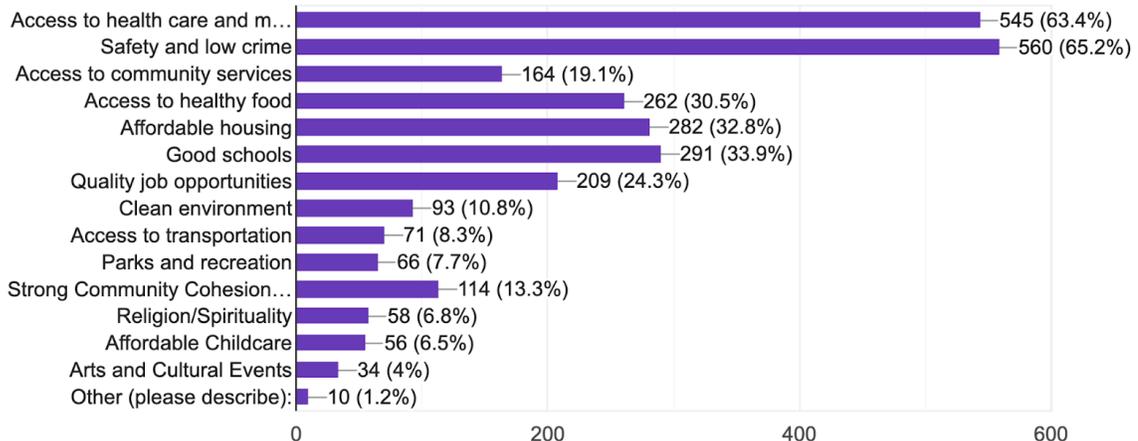
859 responses



HEALTHY COMMUNITY NEEDS

What do you think are the three most important concerns that are necessary for a healthy community? (Choose top 3):

859 responses



SURVEY FINDINGS

With more than 1,700 surveys completed by the Community Leads in the Near South Region, we were able to assess that 90% of the respondents were African American with over 40% being between the ages of 25-34. Surveys were circulated online through eblasts and social media, at events, at focus groups, and during general community canvassing outreach by Community Leads.

The survey results allowed us to assess the residents current view of whether or not they live in a health community, and provide insight on what they acknowledged as the needs to achieve a healthy community. That main need is for safer communities, and improved public safety. 44% of our participants determined that violence prevention is a concern that needs the most attention in their communities.

The survey responses with the largest percentages were for violence, safety and low crime. Our residents want a safe community with low crime, and they identified violence as the most important health problem. Public safety in a neighborhood is an important determinant of health, and we now understand the importance for it to become a priority in the Near South Region.



Survey results also revealed that 49% of residents in the Near South Region do not feel as though they have healthy eating options, and only 33% believe that they do have healthy eating options in their local communities. Many respondents associated gas stations and convenient stores as access to food instabilities.

40% of participants confirmed that they or someone they know needs mental health services. In reference to the barriers to receiving the healthcare services they need, 48% identified costs as the barrier with 37% deciding transportation was the main barrier.

On a positive note, 44% of residents agreed that they have good access to local healthcare through hospitals, urgent cares, and doctor offices. We are also pleased to report that 53% of participants said that no one in their household had a serious health condition, and only 25% has someone in the household with a serious health condition.

FOCUS GROUPS

A focus group is a group interview involving a small number of demographically similar people or participants who have other common traits/experiences.

With more than 20 focus groups hosted across the Near South Region, we were allowed the opportunity to better understand the residents of the communities we serve. There were focus groups hosted around healthy communities, diabetes, public safety, mental health, men's health, food instability, and so much more. Each Community Lead hosted a minimum of two focus groups and presented the outcomes to their coalitions. Through these conversations and safe spaces, there were discussions of the current health status of our communities, as well as the future implementation of healthy community goals that will benefit the generations to come.

Bright Star

Men's Focus Groups

It was identified that numerous men wanted to have a focus group about how to create more healthy communities in Chicago, so Bright Star hosted one focus group that led to two additional ones. This allowed a safe place for minority men of color to discuss building healthier communities.



Mental Health Focus Groups

The survey results revealed the importance of mental health in the Near South Region, therefore many of our Community Leads hosted focus groups directly discussing the effects of mental health. These focus groups helped our organizations have a better understanding on how mental illness is plaguing our communities, and the belief that it is directly related to gun violence.



Violence Prevention

Focus Group with

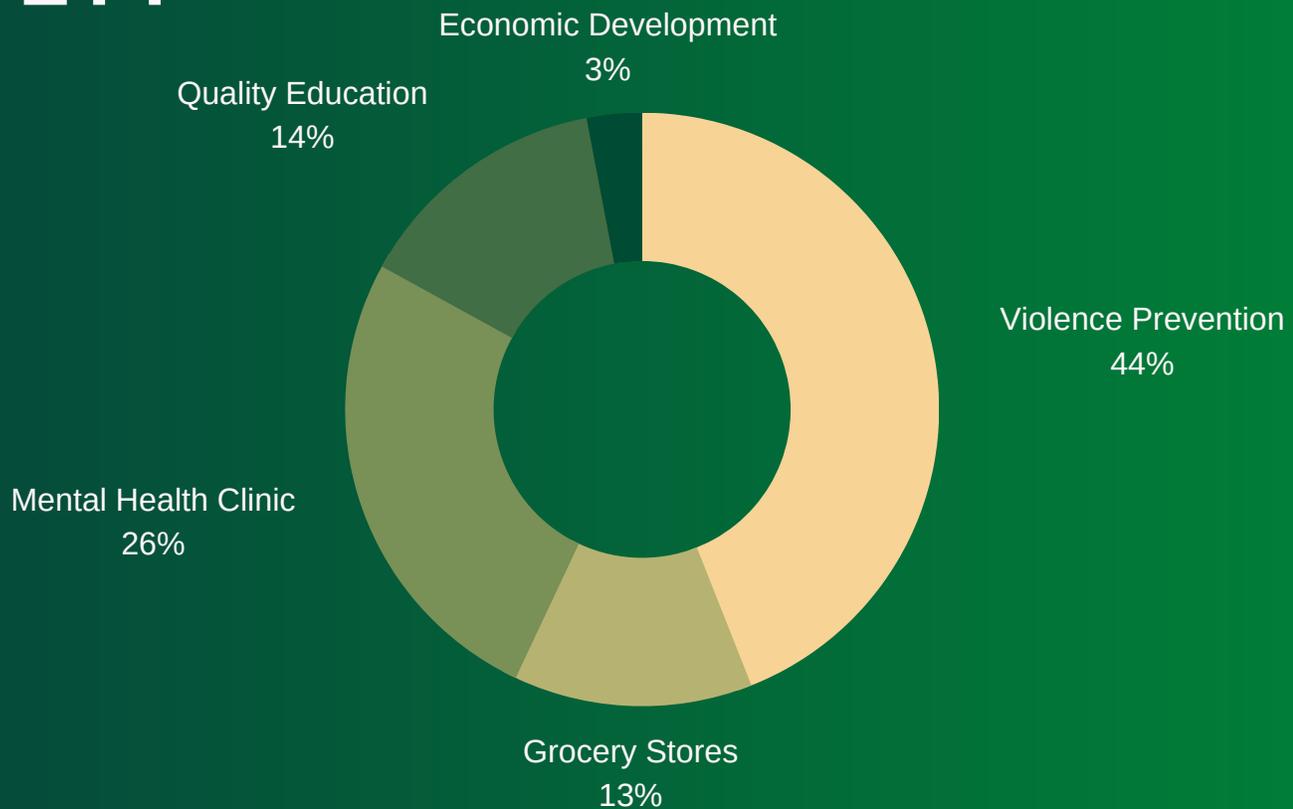
Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot

Mayor Lori Lightfoot participated in a violence prevention focus group with GAGDC and Auburn Gresham Neighborhood Network partners to discuss how the social determinants of health are directly impacted in the communities where they live, work, and serve. These SDOH have a direct correlation to the levels of violence that we find to be all too familiar citywide, particularly on the South Side.



THERE IS A NEED FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

"Public health and safety are essential for residents to feel protected and cared for as individuals- and as a cohesive community. Every year thousands of Chicagoans die earlier than they would if there were no health inequities. The inequities continue to persist and are more common for violence-related deaths, especially involving the city's pervasive gun violence. Thousands of violent incidents every year result in hundreds of deaths and injuries, as well as trauma for individuals and communities." - GAGDC



QUESTION

Of the options provided- which do you feel needs the most attention in your community?

**HCEZ Near South Regional
Community Assessment**

TOP PRIORITY- PUBLIC SAFETY

HEAR FROM OUR COMMUNITY LEADS WHY...

"The most prevalent thing mentioned is how violence plagues the community. People in the community see it not only as an issue, but a health concern. In the focus groups, one of the issues brought up was how being a victim of gun violence has become a mental issue as well. Gun violence affects the mental health of the entire community". - Project H.O.O.D

"22.9% of survey respondents ranked violence as one of the top three most important health problems in the communities we served."
- Centers for New Horizons

"The assessment, through surveys, focus group and interviews supported decades old empirical data: public safety is a health problem. In fact, "safety and low crime" is the highest concern identified by responding community members as one as the most important area for community improvement. Public safety is a priority. We must adopt a new approach to public safety that will save lives and build systems of care that are rooted in improving the well-being of all communities." -The Kindness Campaign

"Residents expressed that violent crime was the most prioritized health need for both children and adults. This was supported by survey results, focus group responses and secondary data."-UChicago Medicine

"We envision South Shore as a thriving community, where all residents can live in a healthy and safe environment. During our focus groups and interviews with community members, situations that contribute to trauma like abuse and crime were noted. Much of our future work will be focused on violence prevention and mental health." - South Shore Works

"Violence is an urgent public health problem from infants to the elderly. It affects people in all stages of life and can lead to a lifetime of physical, emotional, and economic problems. Bright Star is committed to collaborating with the community as part of crime prevention, through effective social controls, participation in other community efforts, and individual accountability." -Bright Star Community Outreach

PUBLIC SAFETY

Our coalitions developed a consensus to decide public safety as our regional priority issue after our analyst assessed the data, and it was apparent that violence prevention was the most vocalized need for a healthy community. This decision was hard because the second most vocalized concern was mental health, but after further assessment of the data it was noticed that the communities whole-heartedly believe that gun violence has a correlation with mental health issues. Therefore we decided to focus on the direct impact of public safety on the macro level, with the goal of developing a trauma resiliency approach that will address both public safety and mental health.

Exposure to crime and violence can truly take a burden on families and neighborhoods. This is the most pertinent issue to address, particularly due to the relationship it has with the life expectancy gap. Residents of all ages are being affected by gun violence, and are seeking violence prevention efforts that will make a real difference in their communities.

“To close the racial life expectancy gap, people affected by inequities must have power to decide how we measure and monitor our city’s progress.” - Chicago Department of Public Health

KEY INDICATOR	GENERAL CONSENSUS	DATA
Survey Results	A safe community is necessary for a healthy community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 77% believe that safety and low crime is a top priority.• 44% believe that violence prevention needs the most attention.
Focus Groups	Residents believe that gun violence causes longterm trauma.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Men, women, and youth were vocal about the fear for violence in their communities. There is a need to have a healthy community with low crime.
Interviews	Youth and adults fear for their lives daily while trying to navigate the communities where they live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The consistent theme in all interviews were violence prevention requests, and the continuous rise in crime potentially being related to unaddressed mental health issues.

NEXT STEPS

True public safety requires a collaboration between law enforcement and the community.
-Betsy Hodges

During a youth focus group hosted by UChicago Medicine, participants described their neighborhoods as "risky, divided, dangerous, toxic, wild and unpredictable." They talked about how "it is impossible to exercise or spend time outside because of the violence and crime." This is a perfect example of why public safety must be the focal point because all communities deserve to feel safe, and we must begin to implement the necessary strategies to shift the paradigm.

The life expectancy gap is evidently unbalanced when it comes to residents of the Near South Region, due to an abundance of our population dying from gun violence before age thirty. There is research that discusses how gun violence is also a mental health issue. Therefore although public safety has been identified as our priority issue, we will also work diligently with partners to address the mental health aspect of it.



01 — Better Relations with Police

There is a lack of trust and reliability within communities with the Chicago Police Department that needs to be rectified. We must implement opportunities for collaboration between the community and local police officers to build better relations that result in residents feeling safe to contact the police in any event of their public safety being compromised.



02 — Community Accountability

Creating public safety initiatives that will last for decades has to be rooted in community outreach, and everyone taking accountability when violence takes place. We have to hold our fellow residents accountable, and uphold standards of safety. We all have to be an investor, and play the role of stakeholder in order to achieve low crime communities.



03 — Action & Commitment

Once we have identified the best options to increase our public safety footprint and ways to deter gun violence in our individual communities, it is imperative that we put those solutions into action with the police department and local community organizations. There are a vast majority of individuals implementing violence prevention initiatives, but we must work together to create the change we want to see.



CONCLUSION



The issue of public safety in Chicago has been consistent for decades as our urban communities continue to grow in population. Today, the South Side of Chicago suffers among the worst economic, health, social, and violence disparities in the United States. This Community Assessment has provided the empirical data to prove just how much violence and public safety have a direct impact on developing healthy communities.

This Regional Community Assessment has determined that the priority issue in achieving healthy south side Chicagoland communities is public safety. We will work diligently with our Community Leads to develop a trauma resiliency approach that has a focus on violence prevention and mental health. We have to truly focus our efforts on preventing gun violence and trauma across all zip codes that serve the Near South region.

Social determinants of health are social, economic, and physical conditions in which people are born, live, and work that affect health and well-being. Public safety is within each of these categories and truly affects the overall health of our communities. Addressing social determinants of health is critically important for improving overall health, but also for reducing health disparities that are often rooted in social and economic disadvantages.

The Near South Region successfully led local strategies that confronted the social and environmental factors contributing to health and racial equity through the Healthy Chicago Equity Zones program. There will be continued cross community collaborations as we develop an action plan to focus on our public safety priority issue.

This data has allowed the Near South Region a comprehensive understanding of the life expectancy gap in the City of Chicago, as our young south side residents are losing their lives to gun violence on a daily basis due to the lack of public safety. It is now our role to ensure that we implement initiatives targeting violence prevention, and develop tangible programs to address public safety concerns that will cultivate the healthy communities we deserve.

"Public safety comes in many different forms. It's on all of us to double down on our all-hands-on-deck public safety efforts with police officers, street outreach teams, trauma support workers, community and faith-based partners." -Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We have been able to accomplish this great work through our partners and coalition members who assisted with surveys, focus groups, interviews and events. Most importantly, we were able to complete this Community Assessment because of the residents of HCEZ's Near South Region who participated in the focus groups, surveys, and interviews. We thank you for your honest responses, dedication to community, and resiliency to strive towards developing healthy communities.

Special thanks to the Community Leads for your hard work and effort to execute the 2022 Near South Regional Community Assessment.

We appreciate CDPH for the opportunity to assess the needs of our Near South Region, and achieve this measurable goal of developing healthy south side communities.



Regional Lead

**Greater Auburn Gresham
Development Corporation**

Allyson Scrutchens
Regional Director

www.gagdc.org

