Chicago’s New Deal for ALL Women & Girls

Policies, Recommendations, and Action Plan for Reaching Gender Equity
DEAR FRIENDS,

Our City is home to First Lady Michelle Obama, Jane Addams, Ida B. Wells, Tina Fey, Vivian Maier, Shonda Rhimes and Oprah. In 1979, Chicagoans made history by electing our first woman mayor to lead one of our country’s largest cities. 40 years later, Chicago is poised to elect its first African American woman mayor.

In a City that has helped create some of the most impressive women in our nation, we still, however, have a way to go. Women, particularly women of color and transgender women, face a strong lack in representation across corporate and political leadership, high rates of gender-based violence, barriers to affordable housing and low living wage employment. Nationwide, women still only make 80 cents to the dollar of every man, and for women of color it is even worse: Black women will wait until 2119 for equal pay, while Latinas will have to wait until 2224 to get the same pay as their white male peers.

Yet, there’s hope. We live in a city that has so many incredible organizations that are focused on making our city a more equitable and inclusive place for women and girls; organizations that spend every day fighting for equal pay, the LGBTQ+ community, an end to violence against women, protections for families and affordable housing, empowering young girls, and economic equality. What if we brought them all into the same room to put our collective efforts together and magnify their impact? That’s exactly what we did.

These recommendations are the work of countless hours of hundreds of women – from union hotel workers to CEOs, from high school students to professors, activists and nonprofit leaders among many others. We took on hundreds of recommendations ranging from economic security to public safety and used an intersectional approach that looked at these issues through a gender lens to make policy recommendations. By the end, we narrowed our list to 20 recommendations that can help propel our city to be the best place in the country, if not the world, for all women and girls. In reading the pages that follow, you’ll see that we have identified the top four recommendations we hope to prioritize our efforts around, as well as additional recommendations that we hope to consider within the next few years.

Through this set of recommendations, we hope to honor all the women and girls who came before us, and we wish to lay the groundwork for those who will come after us. Through the implementation of these recommendations, we strive to make our City more equitable, inclusive, and safer for all of our residents.

City Clerk
Anna M. Valencia
THE CHICAGO STATUS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS WORKING GROUP

This report would not have been possible without the generous work of ALL of the following organizations:

1871
AAR Corp.
Ariel Investments
ACLU of Illinois
Affinity Community Services
AGG Consulting
American Muslim Health Professionals
Annie’s Little Angels Dance Group
Cabrini Green Legal Aid
Centers For New Horizons
Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance
Chicago Beyond
Chicago Business Affairs and Consumer Protection
Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center
Chicago Commission on Human Relations (CCHR)
Chicago Department of Aviation
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services
Chicago Department of Information and Technology
Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)

Chicago Federation of Labor
Chicago Housing Authority
Chicago Woman Magazine
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Chicago Police Department
Chicago Public Schools
Chicago Reader
Chicago Scholars
Chicago Women History Project
Chicago Women in Trade
Chicagoland Workforce Funders Alliance
Chinese Mutual Aid Association
City Colleges of Chicago
City of Chicago Mayor’s Office of People with Disabilities
City of Chicago Mayor’s Office
City Year Chicago
Coalition on Urban Girls Chicago
ComEd
Community Organizing and Family Issues
Cook County Board of Commissioners
Cook County State's Attorney’s Office
Covenant House Illinois
Enhance Chicago
Erikson Institute
Farpoint
Girls in The Game Forefront
Giving Others Dreams
HACE
HEART Women and Girls
Hustle Mommies
Illinois General Assembly
Illinois Say No More
Illinois Action for Children
Illinois Environmental Council
Illinois Medical District
Illinois Sierra Club
Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN)
Institute for Nonviolence Chicago
Instituto del Progreso Latino
INTREN
Iris Worldwide
Kareracter
KLEO Center
Ladies of Virtue
Leadership Greater Chicago
Little Village Education Collaborative
LiUNA Local 1001
Lyft
Metropolitan Water Reclamation Board
Mind + Matter Studio
Mikva Challenge
Mt. Pisgah
McDonalds
Northern Trust
Northwestern School of Medicine
Northwestern University Women’s Center
Obama Foundation
Office of Congresswoman Robin Kelly
Office of Senator Durbin
Office of Senator Duckworth
Planned Parenthood of Illinois
Polish American Association
Polished Pebbles
Pride Action Tank
Rise Strategy Group
ULTA
Unite Here Local 1
University of Chicago
University of Chicago Medicine
University of Chicago School of Law
University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration
University of Illinois Hospital
Vismed 3D Women Employed
Women’s Business Development Center
Women’s Justice Institute
Woods Fund
Young Chicago Authors
Youth Guidance - WOW

THANK YOU all for your dedication to bettering and improving the lives of all women and girls across Chicago.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October 2018, Chicago City Clerk Anna Valencia, along with more than 120 women from a variety of industries and backgrounds—including government, education, nonprofit, corporate, and service industry—announced the creation of the Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group. This Working Group sought to build upon the amazing efforts and organizations in the city, including the Chicago Foundation for Women (CFW) and their report tracking the region’s progress towards gender equity. The goal of the Working Group was to review existing research, reports, and best practices, as well as discuss lived experiences, in order to recommend citywide policies and initiatives to make Chicago a safer and more equitable place, and ultimately, the best city in the country for women and girls.

The work of the Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group was led by a Steering Committee, comprised of Committee Co-Chairs and Honorary Co-Chairs. Co-Chairs of the Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group led six Committees in total: Economic Security, Education, Health, Housing, Public Safety, and Youth.

The Working Group embraced decision-making processes and recommendations that were inclusive, collaborative, and framed from an intersectional lens. As a Working Group, the members ensured that race, class, gender, actual and perceived gender identity, and dis/ability, were at the forefront of the conversation. The Working Group challenged binary limitations to gender, and ensured that transgender women and girls, and those that identify as gender non-conforming were included throughout the committees. Committees were comprised of women and girls of all ages, backgrounds, areas of expertise, and diversity of geography.

The Steering Committee and full Working Group members met over the course of five months to develop a set of recommendations and also select the top four recommendations to prioritize the Working Group’s efforts, resources, and networks. The top four recommendations are discussed below and are also highlighted amongst the full list:

1. MAKE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS (CPS) THE NATIONAL MODEL FOR COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND SEXUAL EDUCATION. Strengthen Information, Resources and Support for Students around Gender-Based Violence.

CPS has a strong foundation in place with its existing sexual education policy and curriculum. The Working Group seeks to focus its efforts on implementation and ensuring all CPS schools have access to the same resources. In addition, the Working Group recommends CPS’ curriculum include increased resources and information about gender-based violence, as well as additional support services for student survivors.

2. ASSESS AND ACCELERATE SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE COLLECTION PRACTICES.

The Working Group recommends the next Mayor of Chicago, the Illinois General Assembly, the Attorney General, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Governor of Illinois commit to working together to assess sexual assault evidence collection practices with the goal of identifying opportunities to decrease testing time, eliminate backlogs, and improve support services for survivors.
3. SUPPORT A FAIR AND PREDICTABLE SCHEDULING ORDINANCE.

The Working Group recommends supporting legislation that provides for a family-sustaining workweek that means predictable schedules with notice families can count on, predictability of pay for scheduling changes, the right to decline extra hours, and access to more work hours for those workers preferring full-time work.


The Working Group recommends facilitated discussions with young women and girls across the city to discuss what makes young women and girls feel safe and unsafe, address what they worry about, and deliver a public message that creates greater safety for women and girls. These discussions will culminate in a Girls Summit in 2020 to further amplify the voices of girls and young women and provide an opportunity for advocates and allies to listen to and support young women.

The Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group recommends a broad array of policies, programs, and initiatives which are designed to improve the day-to-day lives of women and girls in the city. The 20 initiatives are grouped into three categories: Our Economic Security & Empowerment, Our Well-Being, and Our Future.

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**OUR ECONOMIC SECURITY & EMPOWERMENT**

1. Support a Fair and Predictable Scheduling Ordinance.
2. Create a task force to close the gender gap in industries where women are underrepresented.
3. Expand paid parental and family leave for City of Chicago employees.
4. Launch a multilingual public education campaign around tenants’ rights and evictions.
5. Promote greater government coordination on housing and create a central resource.
6. Improve Fair Housing enforcement.
7. Create a career-building pipeline for women from underrepresented communities.
8. Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) at the city and state levels.

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**OUR WELL-BEING**

10. Assess and Accelerate Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Practices.
11. Pilot one of the nation’s first police “deflection” programs for women.
12. Recruit more women as first responders.
13. Work with Chicago Police Department (CPD) to assess the adoption of gender responsive training, policies and procedures.
14. Create free access to transportation for pregnancy treatment and other health services.
15. Create a series of mental health and first aid trainings to support at-risk adolescents.
16. Make Chicago Public Schools (CPS) the National Model for Comprehensive Health and Sexual Education.


18. Create an optional CPS financial education and entrepreneurship course and student group curriculum.

19. Expand early childhood education access for young mothers.

20. Train City employees on implicit bias.

**METHODOLOGY AND TIMELINE**

In October 2018, over 120 young women and girls came together to begin a dialogue on the greatest issues facing women and girls today in Chicago. The Status of Women and Girls Working Group was formed to develop policy and legislative recommendations and action plan to make Chicago a safer and more equitable place and the best city in the world for all women and girls.

The large group of over 120 women and girls was divided into six committees: economic security, education, healthcare, housing, public safety, and youth. Each committee was tasked to research within its respective field and develop a series of recommendations, supported by data and analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2018</td>
<td>Working Group Kick-Off</td>
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<tr>
<td>October - December</td>
<td>Committees met and began to flesh out ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2019</td>
<td>Recommendations were compiled, submitted, and voted upon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early February 2019</td>
<td>Entire Working Group met again and reviewed top recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late February 2019</td>
<td>Final edits were due on recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2019</td>
<td>Women’s Herstory Month and report is launched! Execution and Implementation starts!</td>
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The preliminary set of recommendations were due from the committees in January 2019. In late January 2019, the steering committee met to choose the top recommendations out of all the ones submitted. The top recommendations were further developed, with a focus on implementation in the near future. The goal was to pull together the network, resources and energy of the Working Group members from all across the city to make the top recommendations a reality.

The remaining recommendations are termed “additional recommendations.” While the top recommendations will remain the priority, Working Group members are committed to achieving the additional recommendations in the long-term.
RECOMMENDATION 1: Make CPS the National Model for Comprehensive Health and Sexual Education

A comprehensive and affirming health and sexual educational curriculum and program is important because it equips young people with the knowledge and skills to understand and appreciate their own health, body, well-being, and dignity and to develop respectful social and sexual relationships. Young people, especially young women and girls benefit from a high quality sexual and reproductive health education program because as they grow up they may receive mixed and incomplete information about relationships, sex, and their own bodies and sense of self. A sexual and reproductive health education curriculum should empower young people to be able to navigate a world “where gender-based violence, gender inequality, early and unintended pregnancies, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) still pose serious risks to their health and well-being.” Moreover, a comprehensive sexual education has been linked to improved academic outcomes and social and emotional competencies.

DID YOU KNOW...

The CPS Sexual Health Education Policy requires that schools teach sexual health education every year (300 minutes/year in K-4th grade and 675 minutes/year in 5th-12th grades).

The Policy also requires that every school have two trained instructors who have completed the district’s instructor training.

The CPS curriculum is medically accurate, age appropriate, and comprehensive. It is also aligned with the National Sexuality Education Standards.

Teen pregnancy is higher in those states that focused more on abstinence and less on a comprehensive sex education curriculum. Level 1 indicates a comprehensive curriculum, whereas level 3 indicates a focus on abstinence only. iv
In 2013, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) rolled out a Sexual Health Education Policy, which mandated a system-wide sexual health curriculum that aligned with the National Sexual Education Standards (NSE Standards) for Kindergarten through 12th grade. The NSE standards provide a set of performance indicators, including minimum skills and content for students to master at particular grades levels. The NSE standards also provide instructors with a sequential approach for teaching about relationships and sexuality, allowing teachers to build from content taught in previous years. The CPS Sexual Health Education Policy prioritizes professional training, requiring that every school have two trained instructors who have completed the district’s instructor training. Teachers may also partner with community-based organizations to provide supplemental educational support.

OTHER CITIES ALREADY LOOK TO CHICAGO AS A MODEL FOR COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL EDUCATION.¹ The Working Group noted that CPS created a strong foundation to build upon with its existing policy and curriculum. The Working Group seeks to focus its efforts on the implementation of this policy and curriculum, ensuring that all CPS schools have access to the same resources.

In order to strengthen the implementation of the CPS sexual education policies and curriculum, the Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group recommends providing CPS with the resources and support to:

- Review and track how and where CPS sexual education curriculum is being implemented in order to collect overall data to see trends in certain schools or across geographies or demographics;
- Create a space for sharing of best practices between schools and community organizations that provide supplemental educational support;
- Examine best practices in other districts and municipalities across the country; and,
- Identify ways to improve methods of public reporting.

The collection of this information and data should be used to identify where support and resources are needed to increase resources for staff and students and develop tools to measure the impact of success. These collaborative efforts will help guarantee that every CPS student is receiving the same, quality information regarding sexual education and consent/healthy relationships across the board.

THE CHICAGO STATUS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS WORKING GROUP ALSO RECOMMENDS THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND SEXUAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM INCLUDE INCREASED RESOURCES AND INFORMATION ABOUT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENT SURVIVORS. The consequences of gender-based violence, including domestic and sexual violence for students in elementary and secondary school can be devastating, far-reaching, and long-lasting. In addition to suffering mental, physical, economic, and social consequences of violence, student survivors often experience a decline in their academic performance. ²
Gender-based violence is violence against a person because of their gender and is rooted in exploiting unequal power relationships between genders. This includes gender norms and role expectations specific to a society. The majority of victims are women and girls, but it also includes violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ+) individuals, and young boys.

The Centers for Disease Control estimates that “nearly 1.5 million high school students are affected by dating violence annually.”

As the comprehensive health and sexual education curriculum is rolled out across schools, the Working Group recommends launching a collaboration between community partners and CPS to incorporate more information and resources around healthy relationships, consent, and gender-based violence. Additionally, this collaboration can work together to strengthen existing policies and protocols, staff trainings, and support services for student survivors of gender-based violence.

Possible Deliverables:

- Expand the number of CPS high schools that provide a peer-to-peer health education model. Peer-to-peer health programs have shown to be an effective evidence-based intervention in schools to teach sexual education.
- Expand the number of CPS schools that provide the option of STI testing, and make protective products, like condoms, available. This would be done in partnership with Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Planned Parenthood of Illinois and other service providers.
- Implement or strengthen Wellness Councils. Cities such as Boston have councils that consist of student advisors, school staff, parents, and community members to review and provide recommendations on performance metrics on the implementation of the sexual education curriculum and support services. The Department of Education used to provide grants that ranged between $1,000 - $2,500 to implement or strengthen councils.
- Craft a staff training curriculum on gender-based violence in partnership with community based organizations, young people, and service providers. This training would be developed with organizations that can connect staff and students with referrals, support services, and counseling.
- Create an evaluation to measure outcomes. Conducting a study in partnership with a university or other research entity could help measure performance on how increasing funding or other resources in specific areas of sexual education impacts grades, test scores, and educational attainment.
May 2019: Convene a coalition of government agencies, community partners, philanthropic partners and students to begin a review of data and identify areas to increase resources.

June 2019-December 2019:  
- Hold meetings once a month with the coalition;  
- Identify potential funders, pro bono services, or grant opportunities;  
- Identify potential university or other research partners to conduct an evaluation of the impacts of the implementation of the sexual education curriculum and support services;  
- Conduct a review of best practices between schools and in other districts;  
- Craft a staff training curriculum on gender-based violence;

January 2019-February 2020: Compile a list of short-term, medium-term, and long-term interventions, policy changes, or recommendations.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES OR DEPARTMENTS:  
- Chicago Public Schools  
  - Office of Student Health and Wellness (OSHW)  
  - Office of Equity  
  - Office of Student Protections and Title IX (OSP)  
  - CPS Network Chiefs

- Chicago Department of Public Health
- Illinois Department of Public Health
- Illinois State Board of Education
- Cook County Hospitals

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:  
- Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center
- Mikva Challenge
- CAASE/Resilience
- Planned Parenthood of Illinois
- Other Federal Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)

For the work relating to expanding student support, resources, and information on gender-based violence, the Ensuring Success in School Coalition should be engaged: A Long Walk Home, Between Friends, Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Assault, Chicago Children’s Advocacy Center, Illinois Accountability Initiative, Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence, LAF, Life Span, Northwest Center Against Sexual Assault, Project IRENE, Resilience, Sarah’s Inn, Shriver Center, HEART Women and Girls, and the Voices and Faces Project.

Parents, students, local school councils, and philanthropic partners should also be engaged.

Grants to expand the number of schools that provide a peer-to-peer health model.

Funding or stipends for student participation and facilitation.

Funding or pro bono services from a consulting or technology firm to develop data collection tools.
RECOMMENDATION 2: Assess and Accelerate Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Practices

According to the Illinois State Police’s (ISP) 2015 Index Crime and Crime Rate Data Report, 4,606 rapes were reported to law enforcement, but only 933 arrests were made (roughly 20% of those reported). In 2016, this percentage dropped even more (to 17%) with 4,765 rapes reported to law enforcement and only 856 arrests made in that same year.

One of best tools in helping to identify, arrest, and prosecute rapists is the Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit (also referred to as a “rape kit”). Unfortunately, there is a considerable backlog in the testing of these kits. Human Rights Watch has reported that there is a backlog of 400,000 untested rape kits nationwide.

In 2010, Illinois became the first state in the nation to pass legislation requiring local police to submit every kit to the state crime lab for testing within 10 days. However, the necessary systems improvements and resources were not appropriated or mandated in order to test them in a timely manner. Backlogs allow dangerous sexual predators to roam communities with impunity, but we can utilize and bolster our practices around testing of rape kits to bring justice.

The Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group recommends the next Mayor of the City of Chicago, the Illinois General Assembly, the Attorney General, the Lieutenant Governor, and Governor of Illinois commit to working together to assess sexual assault evidence collection practices. The goal in reviewing existing practices will be to identify opportunities to decrease testing time, eliminate backlogs, and improve support services for survivors.

Possible Deliverables:

• Update existing policies. Changes should require all Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits to be tested and have results shared back with local law enforcement authorities within 30 days.
• Conduct a cost analysis on existing processes. The analysis should consider various scenarios, including providing the ISP with the resources needed to address shortages of forensic scientists, as well as shortage of physical space.
• Implement a modernized, automated Tracking & Survivor Notification System. This System would: Allow survivors to monitor the status of their kit on their own terms (as they so choose or do not choose); and Facilitate more timely communication and coordination on kit location, test status and results among local law enforcement (i.e. Chicago Police Department), prosecutors and the ISP in such a way that helps to advance investigations.
May 2019-February 2020: New Mayor, Governor and Lt. Governor establish and convene a Task Force assigned to overseeing, planning and implementing a review of existing processes and development of new tools, including:
- Initiating an analysis of the efficiency of the Illinois State Police (ISP) Crime Lab;
- Completing a national and international scan of the most high tech processes and tools available to facilitate faster, more efficient testing, tracking and justice for survivors; and
- Developing a series of actionable recommendations to achieve the goals of faster testing and tracking.

March 2020: Upon receipt of the Task Force’s recommendations, take aggressive actions to implement a plan and commit to timelines for reform within 12 months (or less).

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES OR DEPARTMENTS:
- State of Illinois
  - Governor and Lt. Governor’s Office
  - Illinois State Police (ISP)
  - Attorney General
- City of Chicago
  - Mayor’s Office
  - Chicago Policy Department (CPD)
  - Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA)
- Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:
- Women’s Justice Task Force
- Resilience
- American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- Human Rights Watch

Forensic scientists and survivors should also be engaged.

RECOMMENDATION 3:
Support a Fair and Predictable Scheduling Ordinance.

Chicago’s economy is growing and diversifying, yet too many jobs require workers to endure unpredictable, last minute, fluctuating work schedules over which they have no control. These practices have caused profound insecurity for working families-particularly for those who engage in low-wage service work-making it difficult to predict their income from week to week, make time to attend education and training programs that would increase their economic prospects, or care for their children. Moreover, the majority of low-wage workers are women, and disproportionately they are women of color.

Following in the footsteps of cities like New York City, Philadelphia and San Francisco, Chicago’s Status of Women and Girls Working Group recommends supporting and advocating for a fair and predictable scheduling ordinance.
The Working Group recommends the new Mayor and incoming City Council work with stakeholders to pass a Fair and Predictable Scheduling Ordinance.

The Working Group recommends supporting legislation that offers a family-sustaining workweek that means predictable schedules families can count on, predictable pay for scheduling changes, the right to decline extra hours added on short notice, estimated weekly hours, and access to more hours for those workers preferring full-time work. This will lead to healthy workweeks that are sustainable and the flexibility workers need to balance work with their life outside of work without the fear of termination, reduction in hours, or other retaliation. In addition to women from the Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group, there is an active Fair Workweek Coalition:

Credit: Economic Policy Institute


Possible Deliverables:

- Support the passage of a fair and predictable scheduling ordinance in City Council created by all stakeholders involved.
- Create policies and public engagement materials to support implementation and enforcement efforts (e.g. the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection created a new public education effort, materials, and enforcement protocols when the Minimum Wage was raised in Chicago).
- Members of the Working Group will help disseminate public education materials.

We live in a world where violence against women and violence in our communities is too often seen as the norm. Moreover, this environment impacts young men and young women equally, albeit in different ways. We seek to challenge the status quo and challenge our young women and girls to claim safe space as leaders in their communities. We recognize that culture change is difficult and must be undertaken with a long-term approach.

This requires having a discussion about what makes young women and girls feel safe and unsafe, address what they worry about, and deliver a public message that creates greater safety for women and girls.

We want to empower and amplify the voices of girls and young women from across Chicago; creating a space where they are listened to through facilitated discussions will allow them to explore and express their ideas and send a message to the world.

As part of understanding the safety needs within the many diverse communities of Chicago—to empower girls from within each community—the Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group offers a set of recommendations that include:

1. Messaging and Branding  
2. Outreach and Engagement  
3. a 2020 Chicago Girls Summit and  
4. a Public Campaign

The above four parts of this Citywide Initiative will build on each other to catalyze a culture shift that will bring female youth voices to the center-stage, as the expert voice, in shaping policies that lift female leaders of tomorrow by addressing issues of safety.

Phase 1 of the Citywide Initiative:

MESSAGING AND BRANDING: In order to build awareness for facilitated conversations, we will need clear branding, through both visual and verbal messaging. Pre-planning must be co-created with young women, thus helping to build capacity and leadership. In addition, the messaging must be flexible and responsive to the diverse communities in Chicago and it must be consistent enough to achieve comparable outcomes.

Phase 2 of the Citywide Initiative:

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT: To achieve diversity, the goal is to target a facilitated conversation in 77 communities. Operationally we would prioritize training female facilitators who have background in community engagement and facilitation that then partner at the local level with trusted community allies. Through this partnership, there is a stronger likelihood of engaging as many voices as possible.

The Chicago Status of Women and Girls Public Safety Committee test ran some questions themselves. On
January 17, 2019, this Committee also facilitated a discussion with a group of young women from varied neighborhoods in the City of Chicago. These questions can be considered as discussion topics moving forward:

1. What do you consider to be your community/neighborhood?
2. Where do you feel most safe? What/who supports you feeling safe?
3. What would it take for the women and girls in your community to feel safe (or safer)?
4. Who are the people in your life who inspire you?
5. What kinds of images would empower young women in your community?

Phase 3 of the Citywide Initiative:

2020 GIRLS SUMMIT: The citywide facilitated conversations will culminate in a Girls Summit that will further amplify the voices of girls and young women and provide an opportunity for advocates and allies to listen to and support young women. This 2020 convening will reflect the voice, identity and strength of our City’s girls and young women and inform a citywide public messaging campaign. Working groups will be formed at the summit to inform and guide policies, legislative reforms and a public media campaign based on the issues that are most urgent and relevant to them.

Phase 4 of the Citywide Initiative:

PUBLIC CAMPAIGN: This will be shaped by the resolutions and working groups that emerged from the 2020 Girls Summit.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

Our Economic Security & Empowerment.

5. Create a task force to close the gender gap in industries where women are underrepresented - Many industries today are still male-dominated and oftentimes reinforce masculine stereotypes hindering women from excelling professionally. We want to collaborate with industry partners in Information Technology, Finance, Business, and Engineering to begin a dialogue on the following issues: a) the lack of women and girls exposed to these fields and programs; b) the large number of Chicago Public School high school graduates ending up in remedial education in college, and c) work environments that curtail women, especially mothers.

In collaboration with private-public partners, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced in February 2019 a new pilot program to train women considering pursuing a career in the cybersecurity field. The pilot will provide free cybersecurity training for 25 women and then measure outcomes by looking at what educational or employment opportunities the women seek and obtain afterwards.

Credit: ISACA - New Cybersecurity Program
6. Expand paid parental and family leave for City of Chicago employees - in 2011, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced the city’s first maternity leave policy. We want to build upon this work to decrease the anxiety and stress working mothers and fathers face when starting or raising a new family or caring for their loved ones. Right now, women who give birth by cesarean receive six weeks of paid leave, and four weeks of paid leave for natural birth mothers. Fathers and adopting parents receive two weeks of paid leave. New York City provides its employees six paid weeks for maternity, paternity and adoption. We want to work with City Council to create a more uniform, gender-neutral policy to benefit all parents by increasing paid leave time to 12 weeks for the primary caretaker and 4 weeks for the secondary caretaker. The City of Chicago should model the type of leadership we seek from private businesses, so the City can pilot this with its workforce.

7. Launch a multilingual public education campaign around tenants’ rights and evictions - In communities where populations are limited English proficient, knowledge about a tenant’s rights and responsibilities might be hard to come by. We want to work with the proper city agencies to design and execute a public campaign which educates predominately limited English proficient communities about their housing and rental rights and responsibilities.

8. Promoting greater government coordination on housing and creating a central resource - Opportunity exists for sister agencies across municipal government to coordinate their service delivery to create a faster, more targeted response. For example, the Chicago Housing Authority might find it helpful to strengthen coordination with the Department of Family and Support Services and vice-versa. A “211” (modeled after the city’s “311”) for housing matters may be beneficial in being a one-stop shop for all housing resources. The housing environment (such as renting, affordable housing, home ownership, etc) is incredibly complex.

Having greater coordination among housing sister agencies, as well as a one stop shop for all resident questions and concerns, will help residents receive faster, and more efficient service.

9. Improve enforcement of Fair Housing Ordinance and law - Federal guidelines around fair housing have been limiting to the LGBTQ+ community since they are not considered a protected class under the federal Fair Housing Act. Illinois is one of the few states where the law protects property owners, tenants, and renters from discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Alongside the proper city agencies, we
What is EITC? - The EITC is a tax credit for low-income and working individuals and families. The tax credit is given out with no strings attached and is only dependent on income, marital status, and number of children. The tax credit actually increases when individuals work more hours, up to a maximum point.

Here’s an example of how EITC works: The vertical axis shows the amount of tax credit an individual receives. The horizontal axis shows the amount an individual makes. The different colored lines represent how many children one has. The credit increases as you make more money, but up to a certain point, at which it begins to phase out.
12. Strengthen the Women-Owned/Disadvantaged business designation - As women-owned businesses grow in size, some might lose their women-owned business designation, thereby allowing others the option to take over their business. The Chicago City Council and the Illinois General Assembly can work together to ensure that women-owned businesses do not lose their business designation as woman-owned as they become larger.

OUR WELL-BEING:

13. Pilot one of the nation’s first police “deflection” programs for women - Police often interact with individuals with drug and mental health concerns on their day-to-day jobs. These individuals end up going through jail and the court system which does not aid their existing health concerns at all. However, what might improve their conditions are referrals to treatment services. A collaboration between the Chicago Police Department, a group of city, county, and state health care and social service agencies, the Chicago Department of Family & Support Services and the Cook County State’s Attorney can work to design a police deflection program. This program will have trained police officers be the primary referral source to community-based drug treatment and mental health services for individuals who show a need for these services, and who otherwise might have been booked and detained.

14. Recruit more women as first responders - Witnessing female first responders may embolden more girls and young women to also consider joining law enforcement. In addition, more women as first responders may build greater awareness of women’s needs among law enforcement. We want to collaborate with first responder and law enforcement agencies to assess current retention practices.

15. Work with the Chicago Police Department to assess the adoption of gender-responsive training, policies and procedures - We want to collaborate with the Chicago Police Department to review all current arrest practices and procedures to determine if they are aligned with best practices in reducing harm to women and children. In addition, assess if all CPD officers can receive evidence-based, gender responsive training to increase skills in interacting with all genders.

16. Create free access to transportation for pregnancy treatment and other health services - One should not be prevented from receiving vital health care just because they cannot afford the transportation to reach those services. We want to work with the Chicago Transit Authority, ridesharing companies, and cab companies to assess if free access can be provided to those in certain health situations, such as pregnancy and wellness visits.

17. Create a series of mental health and first aid trainings to support at-risk adolescents - The preservation of the health and lives of our young Chicagoans, specifically girls, is of utmost importance. We want to work with social service agencies, and relevant city and county agencies to design and implement trainings to aid and help adolescents showcasing mental and emotional risk factors and warning signs.
18. Create an optional CPS financial education and entrepreneurship course and student group curriculum - The working group recommends collaborating with Chicago Public Schools to develop a curriculum for a course or student group around financial education and entrepreneurship. The curriculum can include information on how to uplift women’s Emotional Financial Security (EFS) so that they feel more empowered to access and leverage financial resources, as well as reduce emotional barriers for female entrepreneurs and funders. The curriculum can also cover information on salary disparity based on gender and how young women and girls can negotiate their salaries.

19. Expand early childhood education access for young mothers - Young mothers should not be prevented from furthering their education nor their careers. We should provide young mothers options for affordable and high-quality care for their children, and allow them to either continue their education or continue their professional development. Work with the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development, the Illinois Early Learning Council, and the local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency to close the gap of child care deserts and also increase high quality services across all communities in Chicago. Additionally, work to increase child care subsidies for recent moms to ensure that the cost of child care is not a barrier. We need to ensure that our youngest residents have a high-quality start.

20. Administer trainings on implicit bias for City of Chicago and all sister Agencies workforce - Work with the Office of the Mayor and Human Resources for each Sister Agency to ensure that all employees are able to participate in a training on implicit bias. The training will help continue to strengthen the relationship between public service workers and Chicago’s diverse communities. This will also help ensure that all Chicago residents receive the appropriate support when reaching out for help.
MEASURING SUCCESS:

To achieve gender parity in Chicago and make the city the best in the country for women and girls, we must effectively manage the implementation and success of these initiatives. The Office of the City Clerk will monitor the progress and work with women and girls, ensuring their lived experiences help shape the development of these ideas. With 20 interdependent initiatives and dozens of stakeholders, the implementation of the Chicago Status of Women and Girls Working Group recommendations requires tracking progress, monitoring the success of initiatives, and even comparing efforts of peer cities in comparison to Chicago’s progress. The following can serve as example metrics that can be used:

OUR ECONOMIC SECURITY & EMPOWERMENT

- Percentage increase of women in fields where women are currently underrepresented.
- Passage of a fair and predictable scheduling ordinance in City Council.
- Expansion of a paid parental and family leave program at the City of Chicago.
- Percentage increase of the number of eligible Chicagoans claiming the EITC.
- Number of women from underrepresented communities in higher education, labor force and professional/technical careers.
- Number of visitors to a central housing resource or portal.

OUR WELL-BEING

- Percentage decrease of processing and testing times for sexual assault evidence collections.
- Creation of an automated Tracking & Survivor Notification System.
- Percentage increase of women first responders.
- Number of mental health and first aid trainings held.

OUR FUTURE

- Number of CPS high schools that provide peer-to-peer health education programs or services.
- Number of CPS schools that provide the option of STI testing.
- Number of schools with Wellness Councils.
- Number of schools that have implemented a financial education and entrepreneurship course or student group.
- Percentage of City departments and sister agencies that have implemented trainings on implicit bias.

CONCLUSION:

Over 120 women and girls from different organizations, across the City, came together to collaborate and develop this set of recommendations. Changing these words into action will require the same degree of collaboration and dedication.

We can make Chicago the best place in the country and world for women and girls, but it starts with all of us. The fruits of our labor will be seen as future generations of women and girls are brought into a more inclusive, more equitable, and safer Chicago. Let’s get started.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The Office of the City Clerk thanks the Steering Committee and members of the full Working Group for their contributions and leadership. We look forward to continued engagement during the implementation of the recommendations.

We also want to thank our facilitators who helped the Working Group build out a roadmap for implementation: Jamila Trimuel, Lisa Kim, Choua Vue, Margaret Smith, Monica Gutierrez, and Mona Noriega.

We want to thank the Office of the City Clerk staff that worked with the Steering Committee, Co-Chairs and Committees over a period of five months: Marlene Variali, Kate Le Furgy, Helena Wright, Dana O’Leary, Kathryn O’Connell, Natashee Scott, Stacy Howlett, Amada Fitzsimmons, Jose Sanchez, and Luis Roman.
Tonantzin Carmona and Danish Murtaza managed the operations of the working group, conducted in-depth analysis, and served as report authors. Thank you to Diana Wnek for designing the final report.

And finally, we give our sincerest thanks to the girls who participated and provided us keen insights about their lived experiences. They are our inspiration and our future.
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