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2019 Healthy Chicago 2.0 Community Seed Grants Awarded \$150,000 investment to improve community walkability and the built environment

Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and Public Health Institute of Metropolitan Chicago (PHIMC) announced the recipients of the 2019 Healthy Chicago 2.0 Community Seed Grants. A total of \$150,000 was awarded to six community-based organizations to support locally-driven activities and solutions aimed at improving the built environment to promote community walkability in connection to public transit.

“These Seed Grants support lasting and meaningful health equity, for communities by communities,” said Mayor Emanuel. “It is critical that, as a city, we work to systematically address the health challenges that each community may face. Together, we can support better health for everyone.”

The physical spaces where residents live, work, and play influence health by providing opportunities to be active, maintain social connections, and access resources. Funded projects align with Healthy Chicago 2.0, the citywide plan for health equity, by enabling community partners to lead projects that will help make areas around CTA transit stations safer, more accessible and welcoming.

“Access to transportation is one of the root causes of health,” said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. “We are proud to join forces with Elevated Chicago and community-based organizations to make sure that the routes to transit stations are walkable, so residents can enjoy the full benefits of having an ‘L’ stop in their neighborhood.”

CDPH and PHIMC collaborated with Elevated Chicago for this year’s Seed Grant awards. Elevated Chicago’s mission is to use equitable Transit Oriented Development (eTOD) to achieve racial equity in Chicago’s built environment in order to improve the health, climate resilience, and cultural vitality of people of color living and working near transit.

“By focusing funding around these CTA stations, the Seed Grants will help build community capacity to implement built environment improvements that leverage resources for lasting impact and can be replicated throughout the city,” said Karen A. Reitan, PHIMC Executive Director.

Successful applicants proposed or were guided by community-driven efforts to address barriers to walkability within the half-mile radius of selected CTA stops. Their projects address the experiences of community members who are at higher risk of experiencing displacement due to gentrification or disinvestment.

“CDPH has a keen understanding of the connections between public health and our built environment, particularly in communities of color. We think these grants will make the walk between CTA stations and other community assets more interesting and safe for residents. Ultimately, these grants are addressing inequities deeply rooted in our City, and elevating health indicators for residents by promoting active lifestyles and empowered communities,” said Roberto Requejo, Elevated Chicago Program Director.

A total of \$150,000 in Seed funding has been awarded for 2019. See the full list of grantees and project summaries below:

Organization	CTA Stop	Project Summary
Foundation for Homan Square	Blue Line Kedzie-Homan	Foundation for Homan Square will transform a vacant lot in Homan Square by beautifying the corner to improve walkability, encourage social connectedness, and add commercial activity to the Kedzie Corridor.
Garfield Park Community Council (GPCC)	Green Line Kedzie	GPCC’s People on Kedzie project will improve community walkability around the Green Line Kedzie CTA stop by designing and installing wayfinding signage at ten intersections, implementing tactical urbanism projects at two intersections, and activating a People’s Plaza.
Latinos Progresando	Pink Line – California	Latinos Progresando will validate findings from a completed community-driven walkability assessment and advance built environment interventions near the California Pink Line stop.
Logan Square Neighborhood Association (LSNA)	Blue Line – Logan Square	LSNA will engage ten youth to conduct a walkability study and create an action plan to inform Chicago Department of Transportation’s redesign of the Logan Square traffic circle, as well as foster walkability and a sense of belonging for families who live in close proximity to the Logan Square Blue Line Station.
North Lawndale Community Coordinating Council (NLCCC)	Blue Line Kedzie-Homan	NLCCC will engage high school students, cultural leaders, and North Lawndale residents to conduct a walkability assessment and to create a subsequent action plan to address existing barriers to walkability.
South East Chicago Commission (SECC)	Green line 51st, Garfield, and/or Cottage Grove	SECC will expand their Community Grant Program to fund at least one high-visibility project focused on neighborhood beautification and environmental improvement near the selected CTA stop(s).