

February 10, 2023
Chicago Plan Commission
City Hall, 121 N. LaSalle St.
Chicago, IL 60602

Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) submits this written testimony in support of the resolution for We Will Chicago and urges Commissioners to adopt the framework plan.

We Will Chicago is the first citywide plan the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has undertaken since the 1960s. When the last citywide plan was created, many communities were excluded from fully participating in civic life and planning. MPC believes that the We Will Chicago planning process has included some of the most robust and creative engagement strategies that DPD has employed. The impact of that public participation is apparent in the fact that the framework plan before us today positions Equity and Resiliency as its two core principles, has a pillar dedicated to Civic and Community Engagement. It also includes an acknowledgement of the role city planning has played in past and ongoing harms.

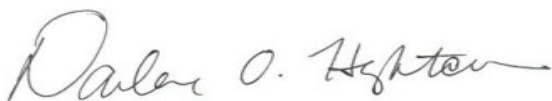
For too long, Chicago has lacked a unifying vision for what we want this city to be, and the values we want to drive public decisions. We Will Chicago captures this vision through its guiding principles, themes, goals, and objectives. This plan will serve as a critical guiding document for Chicago moving forward, and through implementation can shape future decisions related to programming, policy, investments, budgets, land use, infrastructure, and capital planning.

MPC has been a partner, advisor, and participant in We Will Chicago on various aspects of the planning process. We co-developed the pre-planning workshops that helped shape the themes and structure of the planning process, participated on the Advisory and Public Health and Safety Research Teams, created a meeting in a box toolkit to strengthen public engagement, and facilitated working groups to provide recommendations on historical reckoning and implementation. Through our participation and support, we have seen first-hand the effort and intention put into the planning process by staff within DPD, the Mayor's Office, and other city agencies.

The City has committed to several actions to advance We Will Chicago. The Mayor's Office plans to create an implementation steering committee and require city departments to create action plans to implement objectives from the plan. Departments will also be expected to show how We Will Chicago fits in with their newly required Racial Equity Action Plans and their annual budgets. DPD will align future neighborhood planning with We Will Chicago, beginning with the upcoming Central Area Plan. These implementation steps are consistent with the plan's principles, and it is encouraging to see these public commitments.

Chicago Plan Commission approval will signal to Chicago residents that their public servants value their vision for the City. It will also empower departments and staff to implement the plan and integrate its guiding principles of Equity and Resiliency into their own projects and decisions. MPC urges the commissioners to vote in support of the We Will Chicago Framework Plan.

Sincerely,



Darlene Oliver Hightower
President and CEO
Metropolitan Planning Council

Board of Governors

Chair

Paul C. Carlisle •

Vice Chair Development

Kyle Barnett •

Vice Chair Development

Ellen Carnahan •

Vice Chair Development

Janet Chess •

Treasurer

Ramiro J. Atristain-Carrión •

General Counsel

David Williams •

Immediate Past Chair

Melissa Washington •

Erica Marquez Avitia

Carol Ross Barney

Meena Beyers •

Ciere Boatright

Matthew Brewer •

Todd C. Brown

Christopher B. Burke

Eileen Chin

Lester Crown

Zena Diggs

Polly Eldringhoff

Nedra Sims Fears

Manuel Flores •

Alejandra Garza

Janet R. González Tudor

Linda Goodman

Laritza Lopez

Bernard Loyd

Mary K. Ludgin

James E. Mann

Lee M. Mitchell

David Mook

Daryl Newell

Jim O'Leary

Sameer Patel

Frank D. Pellicori

Julian G. Posada •

Elle Ramel

George A. Ranney, Jr.

Matthew R. Reilein •

Robert G. Reiter, Jr.

Alana Ward Robinson

Unmi Song

Bruce W. Taylor

Michael A. Thomas

Jessica Droste Yagan •

Executive Advisors

Carol L. Bernick

Polished Nickel Capital Management LLC

John Bucksbaum

Bucksbaum Retail Properties, LLC

Jonathan C. Bunge

Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, LLP

David Casper

BMO Financial Group

Robert M. Chapman

CenterPoint Properties

Keating Crown

Sterling Bay

Marsha Cruzan

U.S. Bank

J. Michael Drew

Structured Development, LLC

Robert Frentzel

CIBC U.S.

John S. Gates, Jr.

TradeLane Properties, LLC

Nancy S. Gerrie

Ari F. Glass

Mansueto Office Inc.

Steven N. Miller

Origin Ventures

Charles J. Moore

The Banc Funds

J. Marshall Peck

InterPark Holdings LLC

Joan Rockey

The Mather Group

Mark G. Sander

Old National Bancorp

Katherine M. Scherer

Deloitte LLP

Scott Swanson

PNC Illinois

Stephan B. Tanda

AptarGroup, Inc.

Edward J. Wehmer

Wintrust Financial Corp.

Theodore Weldon

Lendlease

President & CEO

Darlene Oliver Hightower •

Executive Committee •