**ChicagoRED FY2025 Policy Proposal for the City of Chicago**

**Presented to the Chicago City Council**

**Executive Summary**

This proposal from ChicagoRED outlines an eleven-point plan to improve the quality of life in Chicago through targeted investments and legislative reforms based on priorities in the FY2025 city budget. These policy recommendations focus on restoring safety, revitalizing communities, promoting civic responsibility, and prioritizing the needs of American citizens through equitable service delivery and public engagement.

Our goal is to improve the outcomes of American citizens in the City of Chicago through an America First agenda. This can be achieved through creating The Office of Generational Americans

Why This Office Should Be Created:

Opportunity in City Services: While the Office of New Americans provides resources to help recent immigrants, many lifelong residents—especially from historically marginalized communities—lack dedicated institutional support. This office would balance that scale.

**Preservation of Cultural Identity:** Ethnocentric groups rooted in Chicago for generations deserve tailored services that affirm their culture, history, and contributions to the city.

**Workforce Access & Fair Competition:** Many government-funded opportunities now prioritize bilingual or multicultural competencies, unintentionally disadvantages  monolingual native citizens. This office would advocate for workforce opportunities.

**Direct Advocacy & Policy Input:** Just as immigrant communities have a dedicated voice through the Office of New Americans, so too should generational Americans be represented in city planning and legislation.

**Community Resilience & Stability:** By investing in the needs of American families who have experienced economic, educational, and safety disinvestment for decades, the city can promote generational stability and reduce social unrest.

The Office of New Americans (ONA) defines a "New American" as:

“Any foreign-born individual who has become a citizen, permanent resident, refugee, asylee, or other immigrant residing in Chicago.”

According to ONA, this includes:

Naturalized citizens

Lawful permanent residents (green card holders)

Refugees and asylees

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders

Undocumented immigrants

DACA recipients (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)

The Office’s purpose is to support the integration of these individuals into the civic, economic, and cultural life of the city, often through policy advocacy, language access initiatives, legal assistance, and immigrant rights programming.

This is why creating an Office for Generational Americans would serve as a balance—supporting long-time Chicago residents who may not benefit from the specific programming or advocacy provided by the Office of New Americans.

**Proposed Placement in Government:**

Department: Office of the Mayor or Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS)

**Ordinance Title Proposal: Title 2, Chapter 2-137 – “Office for Generational Americans”**

**City Council Committee Responsible:**

**Committee on Committees and Rules**

This committee has jurisdiction over the creation and structure of new offices and citywide policy coordination.

Committee Chair:

Alderman Michelle Harris (8th Ward)

**Estimated Annual Budget for the Office for Generational Americans**

**Category Estimated Cost**

**Executive Director & Senior Staff (4 FTEs) $500,000**

**Program Staff (6 FTEs) $480,000**

**Administrative Support (2 FTEs) $160,000**

**Office Space, Utilities, Tech $150,000**

**Community Grants & Program Funds $500,000**

**Outreach, Marketing & Events $100,000**

**Total Estimated Annual Cost $1.89 million**

**Notes:**

This estimate is aligned with the budgets for similar offices such as the Office of New Americans and Office of Equity and Racial Justice.

If rolled out in phases or piloted in a limited number of wards first, the cost could be reduced by 30–40% initially.

Funding can be requested as part of the FY2026 city budget or proposed in a mid-year budget amendment in FY2025.

**ELEVEN POINT PLAN**

ChicagoRED FY2025 Policy Proposal for the City of Chicago

Presented to the Chicago City Council

Executive Summary

This proposal from ChicagoRED outlines a ten-point plan to improve the quality of life in Chicago through targeted investments and legislative reforms based on priorities in the FY2025 city budget. These policy recommendations focus on restoring safety, revitalizing communities, promoting civic responsibility, and prioritizing the needs of American citizens through equitable service delivery and public engagement.

**1. Safety**

Restore Public Safety Technology: Reinstate advanced gunfire detection systems to replace ShotSpotter, previously removed by the current administration. Since its removal, 122 people have been found shot in affected zones—highlighting the urgent need for rapid response tools.

**Community Policing & School Officers:** Invite trained officers back into schools to build rapport and foster trust with students and families.

**Citizens Police Council: Create ward-based councils where community members partner with CPD to co-develop safety strategies.**

**Neighborhood Crime App:** Launch a user-friendly app that empowers residents to document and report crimes in real time—photos, videos, audio, and location data go directly to detectives.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Amend Municipal Code § 2-78-120 to authorize Citizens Police Councils.

Enact new ordinance (Title 8, Chapter 8-4) establishing protocol and protections for citizen crime-reporting technology.

Responsible Committee: Committee on Public Safety

Chair: Alderman Chris Taliaferro (29th Ward)

2. Housing

Put Residents First: Ensure affordable housing prioritizes American citizens—particularly long-time residents—following the merger of migrant shelters with city housing.

**Revitalize Vacant Properties:** Transform abandoned homes into safe, livable spaces using local tradespeople and student apprenticeships—creating jobs while reducing blight.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Amend Municipal Code § 2-45-110 regarding city housing preferences.

Enact new ordinance creating the "Rehab for Jobs" program under the Department of Housing (Title 5, Housing Code).

Responsible Committee: Committee on Housing and Real Estate

Chair: Alderman Byron Sigcho-Lopez (25th Ward)

**3. Mental Health & Drug Treatment**

**Ward-Based Recovery Centers:** Restore the $51M opioid settlement funds and allocate $1M to each ward to build drug treatment centers.

**Mandatory Rehab for Nonviolent Drug Offenses:** Collaborate with state lawmakers to redirect nonviolent offenders into court-mandated rehab.

**Expand Mental Health Access:** Establish new neighborhood mental health clinics under the Chicago Department of Public Health.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Amend FY2025 Budget Ordinance to reallocate opioid settlement funds (Title 8, Chapter 8-4).

**Amend Municipal Code § 2-112 to expand CDPH responsibilities.**

**Responsible Committee:** Committee on Health and Human Relations

Chair: Alderman Roderick Sawyer (6th Ward)

**4. Education**

**Bring Back Civic Education:** Require civics classes in all CPS high schools so students graduate ready to lead and engage.

**Declare English as the Official Language:** Promote language equity by designating English as the City of Chicago’s official language, affirming opportunities for monolingual English speakers in hiring and services.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Enact ordinance (Title 2, Chapter 2-88) declaring English the official language of the City of Chicago.

**Introduce resolution to CPS Board reinstating civics curriculum.**

**Responsible Committee: Committee on Education and Child Development**

**Chair: Alderman Jeanette Taylor (20th Ward)**

**5. Transportation**

**Fix Traffic Flow: Remove poorly placed bike lanes from busy commercial corridors to improve safety and traffic access.**

**Make CTA Safe Again:** Use the $74M in the FY2025 CTA budget to hire more security personnel and place conductors on trains to improve rider experience and reduce incidents.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Amend Municipal Code § 9-52 to reevaluate and adjust bike lane placements.

Amend CTA Board policy (Title 9, Chapter 9-103) to prioritize safety and staffing.

Responsible Committee: Committee on Transportation and Public Way

Chair: Alderman Daniel La Spata (1st Ward)

6. Youth Development

Busy Kids 365 Program: Launch a year-round teen employment and training initiative offering after-school and weekend opportunities for young people to learn, earn, and grow. From paid internships and apprenticeships to financial literacy and career mentoring, this program will help teens stay engaged and build pathways to success.

**Safe Spaces for Teens:** Develop city-operated teen centers in every ward—welcoming spaces where youth can gather safely after school and on weekends. These centers will offer structured activities, recreation, and mentorship, serving as anchors of positive energy and connection in our communities.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Enact ordinance establishing "Busy Kids 365" under the Department of Family and Support Services (Title 2, Chapter 2-133).

Amend Park District ordinances to authorize city-sponsored teen centers adjacent to or within park property.

Responsible Committee: Committee on Youth Services

Chair: Alderman Walter Burnett Jr. (27th Ward)

**7. Economic Development**

Reopen Dawson Technical Institute: Restore the South Side’s legendary trade school to provide hands-on education in high-demand fields.

**Bring Job Training Back to the City:** Reestablish workforce development centers in city neighborhoods—not just the suburbs—to ensure access to good jobs.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Enact ordinance (Title 2, Chapter 2-134) to reestablish city-operated workforce training centers.

Responsible Committee: Committee on Economic, Capital and Technology Development

Chair: Alderman Gilbert Villegas (36th Ward)

8. Faith & Family Engagement

Uplift Families through Faith: Fund partnerships with churches, mosques, and community organizations providing marriage counseling, parent support, and youth mentorship.

**Family Strengthening Grants:** Launch a small grants program that supports initiatives focused on healing and rebuilding families in crisis.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Enact ordinance creating a Faith & Family Services grant program administered by DFSS (Title 2, Chapter 2-135).

Responsible Committee: Committee on Committees and Rules

Chair: Alderman Michelle Harris (8th Ward)

**9. Civic Awareness**

Civic Knowledge is Power: Lead a citywide campaign about local government, voting, and how to make change at every level.

**Neighborhood Town Halls:** Require quarterly public forums in every ward where residents can voice concerns and co-create policy.

**Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:**

Enact ordinance (Title 2, Chapter 2-136) requiring quarterly town halls per ward under the Office of Public Engagement.

Responsible Committee: Committee on Ethics and Government Oversight

Chair: Alderman Matt Martin (47th Ward)

  10. Legislative Reform

Put Residents First Again: Sunset Sanctuary/Welcoming City policies that have strained resources and reprioritize serving American citizens.

**SAFE CITY Initiative:** Replace the controversial SAFE-T Act with a commonsense safety plan built on accountability, enforcement, and community support.

Relevant Ordinances to Amend or Introduce:

Repeal Municipal Code § 2-173 (Welcoming City Ordinance).

Pass City Council resolution calling for repeal of SAFE-T Act at the state level.

Responsible Committee: Committee on Public Safety

Chair: Alderman Chris Taliaferro (29th Ward)

11. Office of Generational Americans

Level the Playing Field: Establish a new Office of Generational Americans to advocate for descendants of legacy Chicagoans and multi-generational U.S. citizens. The office will provide support services, workforce guidance, and policy advocacy similar to what is offered to newcomers through the Office of New Americans.

**Why This Matters:**

As city resources increasingly flow toward newly arrived populations, many long-standing Chicago families feel left behind. This office ensures that ethnocentric and cultural legacy groups also have access to opportunity, protection, and representation.

Relevant Ordinance to Enact:

Enact new ordinance (Title 2, Chapter 2-137) establishing the Office of Generational Americans.

Responsible Committee: Committee on Committees and Rules

Chair: Alderman Michelle Harris (8th Ward)

Conclusion ChicagoRED’s FY2025 proposal is a roadmap to restoring public trust, ensuring equitable access to services, and creating a safer, more prosperous city for all residents. By advancing these eleven priorities, the City of Chicago can refocus its mission on protecting and uplifting the citizens who call it home.

**Sources**

*FY2025 City of Chicago Budget Overview: https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/obm/provdrs/city\_budg.html*

*Municipal Code of Chicago: https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/chicago/latest/chicago\_il/0-0-0-1*

*Chicago Transit Authority FY2025 Budget: https://www.transitchicago.com/financebudget/*

*Chicago Police Department Reports & Safety Data: https://home.chicagopolice.org/statistics-data/*

*Office of the Mayor Press Releases (ShotSpotter, Housing, Opioids): https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor.html*

*Chicago Public Schools Curriculum Resources: https://www.cps.edu/academics/curriculum/*

*Illinois General Assembly - SAFE-T Act: https://www.ilga.gov/*

*Dawson Technical Institute Historical Reference: https://www.ccc.edu/colleges/kennedy/departments/Pages/Dawson-Technical-Institute.aspx*

*City Council Committees & Chairpersons: https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/about/wards/city-council-committee-assignments.html*