



Office of Budget and Management

2021 Budget Public Engagement

On August 24, 2020, the Office of Budget and Management announced the framework for the public engagement phase of the 2021 budget process which included “Budget Week”, a weeklong series of virtual budget townhall meetings, livestreamed on Facebook, and the launch of a new interactive website where residents can submit questions for the townhall series and find multiple ways to provide feedback for the upcoming budget. To expand community input, this year the City introduced the Budget 2021 Community Round Table series, a grassroots effort to gather community feedback from residents on their budgetary spending priorities. To build on the framework for the public engagement phase of the 2021 budget, the City also launched an online survey which asked participants about City services they most value. The survey was also made available in paper format at Chicago Public Library locations.

Budget Survey

For the second year, the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) launched a public survey, made available at <http://chi.gov/budgetsurvey> in six languages. The purpose of the survey was to give residents a way to provide feedback to the City regarding budget priorities and values, as well as communicate the difficult choices to be made through the budget process, particularly as the City faces an historic deficit.

The survey opened on August 31, 2020 receiving 38,336 responses before closing on September 21, 2020. The survey was distributed on Survey Monkey across multiple channels, including social media and news outlets. The number of responses received in 2020 represented an increase of more than five times those received in 2019. In 2019, the survey received 7,347 responses.

Presented below is a discussion and static graphics of the survey outcomes. OBM also published an interactive dashboard of the survey results, available at Chicago.gov/2021budget.

Every residential ZIP code in the City was represented in the responses received. However, 45 percent of responses were from northside ZIP codes, an area that represents approximately 24 percent of the City’s total population. The chart below compares survey responses received with percent of population for each area.

Survey Responses Compared to Population

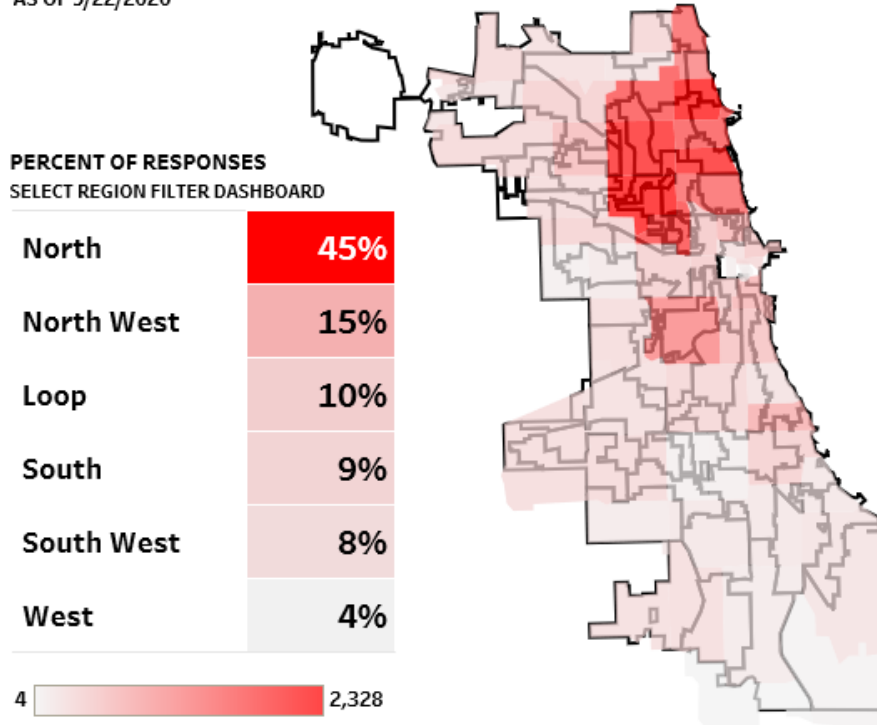
City Area	Percent of Survey Responses	Percent of Population ¹
North	45%	24.6%
North West	15%	17.2%
Loop	10%	6.9%
South	9%	24.0%
South West	8%	17.5%
West	4%	9.8%

Location of Survey Responses by Community Area:

34,481 Total Responses within the City

38,336 SURVEY RESPONSES **90%** ARE WITHIN THE CITY

AS OF 9/22/2020




¹ 2017 ACS 5-year estimates: Population by Zip Code

ALL CITY RESPONSES

Question 1: Rank these City services in order of most importance to you.

Respondents were asked to rank services, with one being of highest priority and ten being lowest priority. Public health and community services both received the highest average rankings at 2.6 and 2.7. Infrastructure services, streets and sanitation and other public safety services received the next highest rankings, all receiving an average ranking of 5.0-5.4. Regulatory services received the second lowest average ranking at 7.5, with police services receiving the lowest ranking at 8.5.

	AVERAGE RANK
Community Services	2.6
Public Health	2.7
Infrastructure	5.0
Other Public Safety	5.2
Streets and Sanitation	5.4
Library	5.8
City Development	6.0
Cultural Affairs	6.3
Regulatory Services	7.5
Police Services	8.5

Question 2: You are given \$1,000 to spend across ten general categories in the City of Chicago budget. Assign how many dollars you would budget to each category. You can leave some categories unfunded and you do not need to spend the entire amount.

The survey provided residents an opportunity to participate in a budgeting exercise by allocating \$1,000 to ten general categories in the City’s budget. The \$1,000 budget did not have to be allocated to all ten categories and the entire amount did not have to be spent. For responses that totaled more than \$1,000, the City normalized those results to align with the requirements of the question by applying a percent to submissions totaling more than \$1,000. For responses that entered a negative number, the City normalized these to zero. Below is a summary of the total percent allocated from survey responses compared to the category’s 2020 budget allocation. The largest difference in the percent allocated by respondents in the survey compared to the budget allocation is for police services, followed by other public safety services and community services.

Total Survey Budget Allocation vs 2020 City Budget Allocation

Category	Survey Allocation	2020 Budget Allocation ²
Police Services	6%	34%
Other Public Safety Services (fire response, ambulances, 911 and 311)	10%	18%
Infrastructure Services (lighting, street resurfacing, bridges, water projects)	10%	16%
Public Health (services to persons living with or at risk for HIV/AIDS, food protection, communicable diseases surveillance, mental health, lead poisoning prevention)	21%	4%
Community Services (youth services, homelessness support services, services for People with Disabilities, violence prevention)	22%	14%
Streets and Sanitation (rodent control, tree trimming, garbage and recycling)	7%	6%
City Development (planning and development, housing)	7%	5%
Libraries	7%	2%
Regulatory Services (building permits and inspections, business licensing, animal care and control)	4%	1%
Cultural Affairs and Special Events (public art, city markets, Chicago Film Office, city festivals)	6%	<1%

Average Allocated³



Question 3: Which of the following general categories of City services do you believe require additional resources, if any? Such resources could include additional staff, more funding for contracts with community-based organizations, or other non-personnel expenses. (Select all that apply)

Community services and public health both received approximately 86 percent of the votes for City services that respondents believe require additional resources. 47 percent of votes for additional resources went to libraries. The fewest number of votes for requiring

² The budgeted amounts included in the survey and presented here represent approximate 2020 budget levels across all funds for the presented program areas, and do not reflect the entirety of the City’s budget. The percent displayed is a percent of the approximate budgets for the categories included here and are not a percent of the City overall budget.

³ The final category in grey is Regulatory services \$41

additional resources was for regulatory services at 12 percent, and police services at 9 percent.

Citywide Additional Resources⁴

WHAT CITY SERVICES ARE IN NEED OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES?

COMMUNITY SERVICES 32,804 VOTES	LIBRARIES 17,949 VOTES	INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES 13,027 VOTES	OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY 8,354 VOTES
PUBLIC HEALTH 32,557 VOTES	CULTURAL AFFAIRS 15,497 VOTES	CITY DEVELOPMENT 11,758 VOTES	
		STREETS AND SANITATION 11,153 VOTES	

The question also asked respondents to indicate what types of additional resources they believe are needed. 17,418 comments were received. Of these, more than 4,500 comments mentioned communities. These comments varied in content, ranging from community health workers, resources for seniors, services for disadvantaged communities, wider access to community services, training for police in community relations, funding for community based organizations, more police in underfunded communities, more businesses in communities, and additional community outreach and engagement programs, to name a few. Generally, these comments all reflected the need for more community-based services and engagement across all City services.

Nearly 5,000 comments were received that mentioned funding. These comments most often addressed the need for additional funding and staff for direct services provided to residents, ranging from mental health, community outreach, infrastructure improvements, community-based organizations, and affordable housing.

Health was mentioned more than 4,500 times in the comments received, most of which referred to mental health. Fewer comments were received related to public health more generally.

Question 4: If you selected City services above that you believe need additional resources, in order to provide those additional resources, revenue sources must be increased or added, and/or resources must be reallocated from other existing programs or services. To provide those additional resources, which of the following would you choose? (Can select more than one)

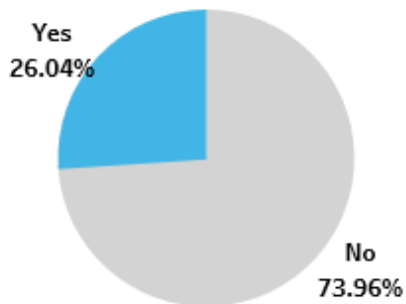
⁴ The two grey boxes represent Regulatory Services 4,544 votes, Police Services 3,351 votes

Of total selections, more than 90 percent of responses indicated that they prefer the City to reallocate existing funds, while 26 percent selected increase existing or introduce new revenue sources, and 22 percent selected “Other”. Respondents were able to select more than one option.

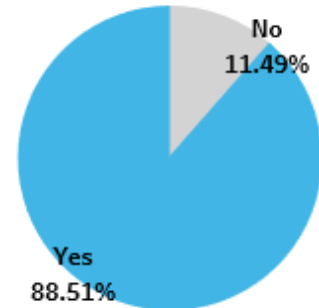
For the “Other” option, respondents were able to provide additional information. More than 8,200 comments were received, of which 7,282 mentioned the police. Nearly all of these comments referenced defunding the police, reallocating funding from the police budget, or reducing the police budget. Defund was mentioned in comments 3,102 times, almost entirely in reference to the police.

HOW SHOULD THE CITY MEET THIS NEED?

INCREASE REVENUE SOURCES?
(HOVER FOR VOTE OPTIONS)



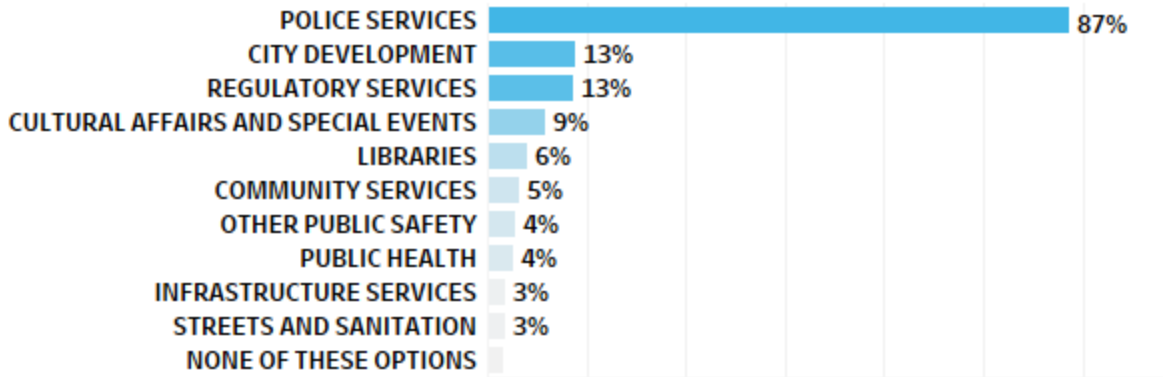
REALLOCATE EXISTING FUNDS?
(HOVER FOR VOTE OPTIONS)



Question 5: If you selected reallocate funding above in order to provide funding for other priority programs or services, which of these areas would you reallocate funding from? (Select all that apply)

Of the 37,679 responses received for this question, 87 percent selected police as the area they want the City to reallocate funding from, while 13 percent chose city development and regulatory services. Approximately 3 percent each selected infrastructure services, streets and sanitation, or none of the above.

REALLOCATE RESOURCES FROM

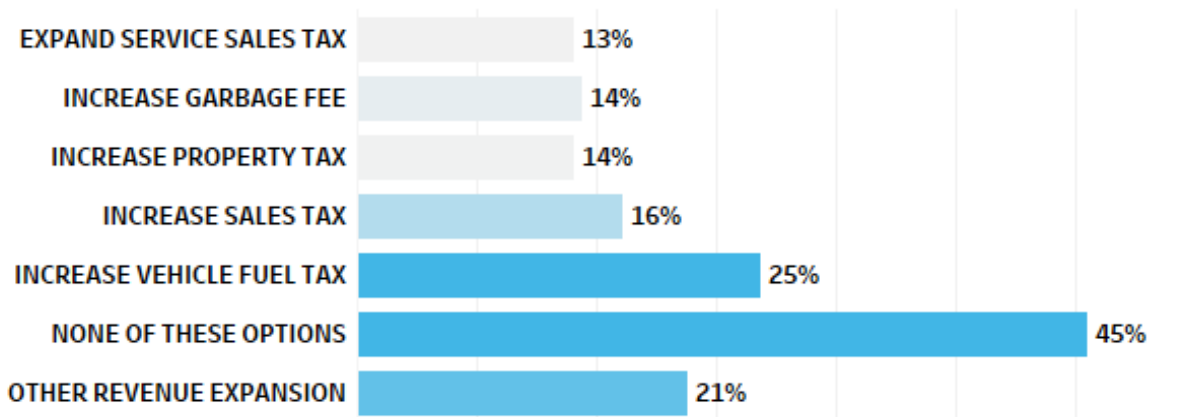


Question 6: If you selected increase existing revenue or introduce new revenue sources, which of the following examples of revenue options would you choose in order to provide additional resources? (Select all that apply)

This question presented a variety of different revenue options, as well as described the estimated impact of each option. This list was in no way intended to be a comprehensive list of all available options, nor representative of the revenue changes being considered by the City for the 2021 budget. 45 percent selected that they would select none of these options. Of the revenue ideas presented, 25 percent chose increase vehicle fuel tax in order to provide additional resources. Expansion of the service sales tax, increasing garbage fee, and increasing property tax each received approximately 13-14 percent of the selections made by respondents.

An “other” option was also made available for respondents to provide other ideas. Of the 6,741 comments received for “other”, there were 4,489 mentions of tax. These comments were primarily to indicate no new taxes should be considered, but also included comments indicating an interest in taxing the wealthy and increasing sin taxes (including marijuana and gambling).

OPTIONS FOR INCREASING REVENUE



Question 7: Optional: Keeping in mind that the City budget DOES NOT include the budgets for Sister Agencies including Chicago Public Schools, City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago Park District, Chicago Housing Authority, and the Chicago Transit Agency, what other concerns or revenue ideas related to the 2021 City budget would you like to add?

19,650 comments we received for this question, of which 18,608 mentioned the police. The comments ranged from defunding the police, to indicating the need for more police accountability and reform, to reallocating police funding to community services that reduce crime. It is worth noting that comments were received that expressed an interest in increasing the police budget or supporting the police, however these are in the minority. 8,168 comments mentioned defund, in reference to defunding the police.

Responses by City Area

The North Side was disproportionately represented in the responses received, at 45 percent of total responses. When results are filtered by city area, there are slight changes in the overall responses, however, generally the responses are similar across areas. All city areas ranked community services as the highest priority, with police services as the lowest priority. All areas also indicated community services has the highest need for additional resources, while four city areas indicated police services had the lowest need for additional resources, and two areas (loop and southwest) indicated regulatory services had the lowest need for additional resources. For respondents who indicated a reallocation of resources should be leveraged to provide additional resources, all city areas selected police services as where those resources should be reallocated from. For the city services selected the least for reallocation of resources, streets and sanitation was the lowest in three city areas (north west, south, south west), infrastructure was the lowest in two city areas (north and loop), and one city area selected none of these options the least (west). While the highest priority of all city areas was no revenue increase or new revenue introduced, this preference was strongest from the south and west areas of the city. Revenue options selected the least include property taxes (lowest in four areas), increase garbage fee (lowest in three areas), and expansion of service sales tax (one area).

For the \$1,000 budget allocation question, the average amount allocated for all areas was highest in community services, with the second highest average allocation for public health. The lowest average allocations for all areas were for regulatory services. However, while police frequently ranked last in many other questions, for the budget allocation question, police ranked 3rd highest allocation in the south west, 5th highest/lowest in the north west and loop, 4th lowest in the south, 3rd lowest in the west, and 2nd to lowest in the north.

Questions 1, 3-6: Comparison by City Area

Location	Highest Selected Priority	Lowest Selected Priority	Highest Selected in Need of Additional Resources	Lowest Selected in Need of Additional Resources	Most Frequently Selected Reallocation Area	Least Frequently Selected Reallocation Area	Most Frequently Selected Revenue Idea	Least Frequently Selected Revenue Idea
North	Community Services (2.4)	Police Services (9.0)	Community Services (15,456 votes)	Police Services (749 votes)	Police Services (67%)	Infrastructure (1%)	None of these options (28%)	Expansion of service sales tax (9%) & increase garbage fee (9%)
North West	Community Services (2.7)	Police Services (8.4)	Community Services (4,862 votes)	Police Services (657 votes)	Police Services (57%)	Streets and Sanitation (1%)	None of these options (32%)	Increase property tax (7%)
Loop	Community Services (3.1)	Regulatory Services (7.4)	Community Services (2,948 votes)	Regulatory Services (419 votes)	Police Services (47%)	Infrastructure (1%)	None of these options (29%)	Increase property tax (8%)
South	Community Services (2.7)	Police Services (8.2)	Community Services (2,926 votes)	Police Services (307 votes)	Police Services (55%)	Streets and Sanitation (1%)	None of these options (31%)	Increase garbage fee (9%)
South West	Community Services (3.1)	Police Services (7.7)	Community Services (2,300 votes)	Regulatory Services (383 votes)	Police Services (46%)	Streets and Sanitation (2%)	None of these options (36%)	Increase property tax (7%)
West	Community Services (2.4)	Police Services (8.6)	Community Services (1,186 votes)	Police Services (118)	Police Services (57%)	None of these options (1%)	None of these options (36%)	Increase garbage fee (8%), increase property tax (8%)

Average Survey Allocation by City Location

GIVEN \$1000 OF CITY FUNDING, HOW WOULD YOU ALLOCATE RESOURCES?

	Loop	North	North West	Outside City	South	South West	West
REGULATORY SERVICES MOD	\$39	\$41	\$40	\$41	\$41	\$38	\$39
CULTURAL AFFAIRS	\$57	\$65	\$61	\$59	\$57	\$53	\$61
POLICE	\$104	\$41	\$74	\$83	\$66	\$110	\$61
DEVELOPMENT	\$64	\$65	\$61	\$65	\$73	\$59	\$65
LIBRARY	\$57	\$70	\$67	\$62	\$66	\$66	\$72
STREETS/SANITATION	\$75	\$72	\$74	\$69	\$72	\$72	\$73
INFRASTRUCTURE	\$104	\$97	\$99	\$95	\$97	\$96	\$96
OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY	\$112	\$96	\$103	\$102	\$98	\$108	\$91
PUBLIC HEALTH	\$190	\$217	\$202	\$207	\$206	\$191	\$214
COMMUNITY SERVICES	\$198	\$237	\$219	\$217	\$223	\$206	\$227

The City has also posted individual survey responses on the City’s Data Portal at <https://data.cityofchicago.org/d/h6r6-h5c9>.

Virtual Budget Town Halls

The five Virtual Budget Town Halls included:

- Monday, 8/31: **State of the Budget** with Susie Park, Budget Director, Jennie Bennett, Chief Financial Officer and Alderman Pat Dowell, Chairman of the City Council Committee on Budget and Government Operations
- Tuesday, 9/1: **Public Safety** with Susan Lee, Deputy Mayor of Public Safety, Susie Park, Budget Director
- Wednesday, 9/2: **Human Services** with First Deputy Commissioner Brandie Knazze, Department of Family and Support Services; Dr. Allison Arwady, Department of Public Health; and Commissioner Rachel Arfa, Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities, Susie Park, Budget Director
- Thursday, 9/3: **Infrastructure** with Commissioner Randy Conner, Department of Water Management; Commissioner John Tully, Department of Streets and Sanitation; and Commissioner Gia Biagi, Department of Transportation, Susie Park, Budget Director
- Friday, 9/4: **Neighborhood and Economic Development** with Commissioner Maurice Cox, Department of Planning and Development; Commissioner Marisa Novara, Department of Housing; and Commissioner Rosa Escareno, Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, Susie Park, Budget Director

More than 51,900 views were recorded for the Virtual Budget Town Halls. The Virtual Town Halls were broadcasted on Facebook and Twitter with ASL interpretation, and English and Spanish subtitles.

The City created a form for residents to submit questions to be answered during the Virtual Budget Town Hall sessions. Through this form, 416 questions were received. Some residents submitted multiple questions, representing 54 additional questions, for an unduplicated total of 362 residents who submitted questions, based on name provided through the form.

Below is a summary of the questions received by topic.

Topic	Total Questions Received⁵	% of Total
General City budget	126	30%
Human Services	70	17%
Infrastructure	18	4%
Neighborhood and Economic Development	44	11%
Public Safety	158	38%
Grand Total	416	

During the Virtual Town Halls, the City also received 622 comments and questions via Facebook. In total, the Budget Director and Department Commissioners responded to 99 questions over the week-long Virtual Town Hall series.

Community Round Table Series

The City announced the creation of the Community Round Table series on August 24, 2020, a grassroots effort to solicit feedback for the 2021 budget. Residents interested in hosting a round table session could sign-up to become a Budget Ambassador to organize and facilitate one-hour virtual or in-person conversations about the 2021 budget from September 7th through September 20th to gather feedback about the needs and values most important to communities. The City provided a training and toolkit to give Budget Ambassadors the framework and information necessary to structure the conversation and subsequently provide this feedback back to the City to compile and present to City leaders.

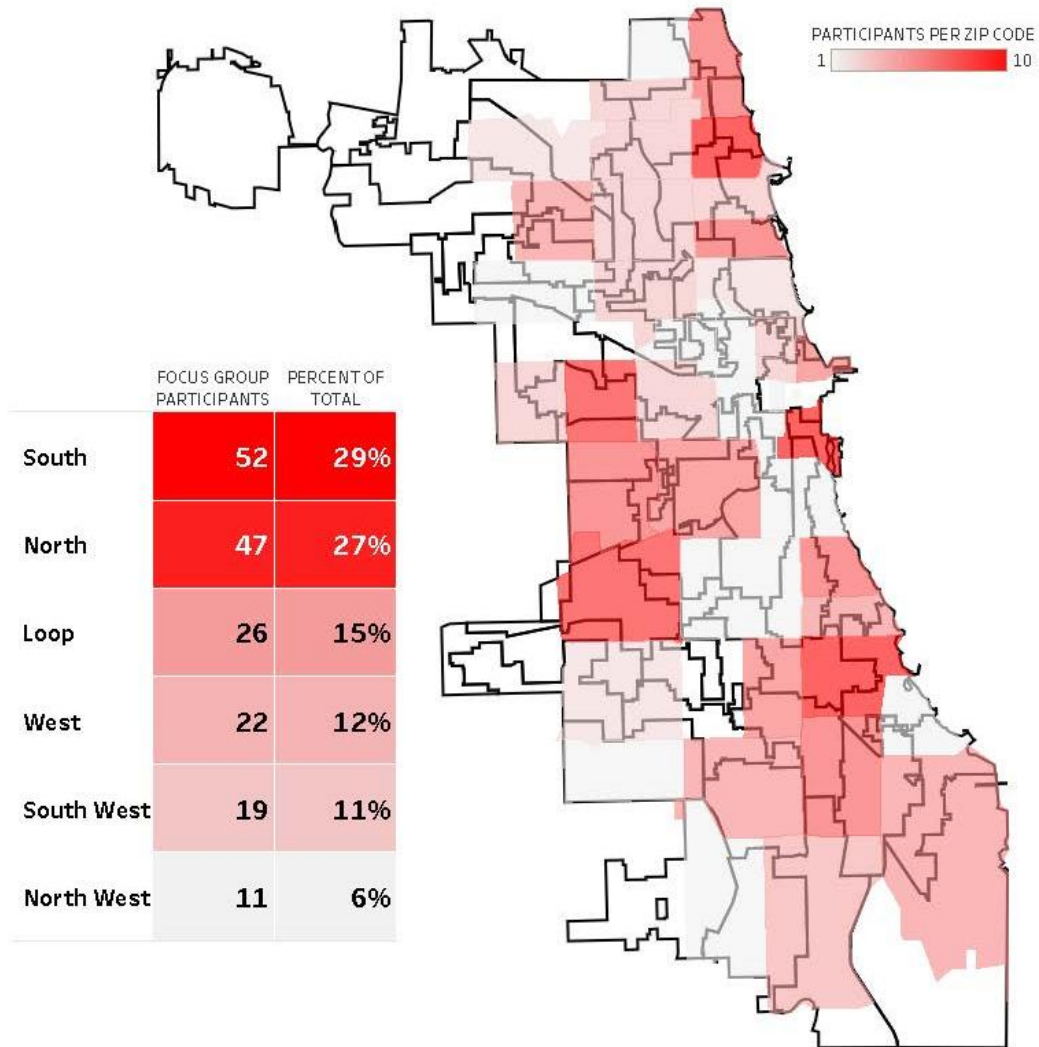
The City received 141 Budget Ambassador sign-ups, of which 52 hosted a total of 66 community round tables, which yielded 722 testimonies from more than 205 participants⁶. Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot also hosted a series of Budget Ambassador round tables to hear

⁵ Totals based on selection made by the person entering the question. May not necessarily reflect the content of the question asked.

⁶ Budget Ambassadors were not required to report participant names. This number represents known participants.

directly from Budget Ambassadors about the feedback received during their community round tables.

The map below shows known focus group participant location. Not all participants reported a ZIP code and some participants remained anonymous.



Many of the Budget Ambassadors represented various organizations across the city, including the Chicago Community Trust, Chicago Urban League, YWCA Chicago, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, Chicago Children’s Choir, Downtown Islamic Center, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, Urban Growers, and the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, to name a few.

The structure of the round tables was framed around the online survey launched by the City. The goal was to identify the reasons, values and motivations behind why residents responded to the questions.

Question 1: In the budget survey, you were asked to divide \$1,000 among the City's various departments. Which department(s) did you give the most money to? What priorities or values led you to make your decision?

Many focus group participants expressed that their allocations reflected a need for more services and programs in communities. Investments in participants' communities were frequently noted as a key priority, which resulted in many selecting community services and public health as the areas they allocated most of their \$1,000 budget. Having access to services, ensuring services received are equitable, and services promoting health and safety were frequent themes. Examples of comments received:

"Public health is the most important issue in the city. Gave \$500 to this followed by \$350 for Community Services. We need to fund clinics all around the city, as well as hospitals. Especially in underserved areas."

"My priorities and values lie in reflecting on the state of the most underserved communities, seeing downtown flourish when we have gun violence and poverty is simply despicable. My priorities to divest from police came from caring for the communities that they target and harass every day. I was at the train stop on Howard when someone was shot on the platform above me, it was absolutely terrifying and traumatizing to hear, but what was most devastating is seeing a young woman, who knew him, screaming and crying and not one officer helped her or went to her, she was screaming and crying until her friend showed up to hold her. The police didn't prevent that, and they did not relieve the aftermath of the trauma that came after."

"Public health and community services at the top. Has to start with the individual and it builds out. Grew up in North Lawndale, Auburn Gresham, see's similar reactions across neighborhoods to black men with mental health issues. building a whole person. Nothing else on this list can be successful without that. Once you have mentally healthy people they can be involved in conversations like this. A lot of attention needs to be paid to community services."

Question 2. Which City services or programs listed in the survey do you think require additional resources? What do you hope can be accomplished with the additional resources? Please be specific.

Comments reflected a need for more investment in providing tools for communities to grow and thrive, including more staff and services for mental health, infrastructure improvements, and workforce development. Feedback also reflected the need for the City to provide services more efficiently and effectively to better address needs in a timely manner that also met the needs of the communities served. Examples of comments received:

“More funding towards community services, specifically violence prevention (education in schools, focusing on teaching everybody including teachers/students restorative/transformational justice skills, deescalation, conflict resolution, what to do in an emergency--who you can call besides police, alternatives to the police for conflicts). For too many people in the city, calling police heightens violence and even death for those who call. We need to put funding toward creating alternatives, concrete, sustainable, sensible alternatives powered by people and well-managed, with clear system and operations as well as transparency. Believes city of Chicago has the capacity to do this!!”

“Participant agreed with the infrastructure services, but wanted to qualify only those relating to infrastructure services in the neighborhoods. South and West sides have infrastructure in need of some repair. “Downtown is looking pretty good. Let's take care of our neighborhoods.”

“Mental health and wellness resources and education on the South Side in particular. The number of students who may need mental health services is vast. Mental health services and how it relates to education (PTSD in particular). Time, labor and space need necessary resources (staff members to adequately serve students, staff members need a living wage). Allocation matters and WHERE and WHO the money is going to is important in the discussion of systemic racism. Disparities between the South and North sides. The budget framing does not need to be an equal distribution, but it needs to be equitable. A social safety net to support those communities that do not receive that much support, those who have can give to those who have not. People in marginalized communities should have the same as others.”

Question 3. Would you take funding from one department to give to another? If so, from where? Why did you make that decision? When thinking about the impacts of taking funding from a department, how did you consider these impacts in your decision?

Police services represent the most selected area to reallocate funding from. Comments reflecting the reasons behind this choice included underfunding of community and public health services, lack of accountability of police (overspending on settlements and judgments, not enough reform), ineffectiveness of police to reduce crime or solve crime, sense of over-policing and underfunding key services. Participants mentioned that they do not feel the City should address violence with more police. Examples of comments received:

“Policing. Taking the funding away because increased police presence has not deterred crime. We need to invest in the root causes of crime. Community violence intervention programs have proven effective, and I am tired of wasting my taxpayer money for having incompetent police officers settling lawsuits with families who have to deal with harm from police.”

“I agree with reducing the police budget. We should then put that money into mental health services and community services so that way there are resources available to

constituents so that they perhaps can take care of these issues and create less of a burden for the police to deal with. The police shouldn't be handling a lot of calls that they receive if other services would have been in place.”

“I think we should defund the police. If we reduce police funding we can direct funding to community services that can reduce the need for police. Too often police are called to the scene of situations that they aren't equipped to handle.”

Question 4. Would you increase revenues or create new revenues (like taxes and fees)? Did you select examples on the survey or do you have other suggestions?

Many different suggestions were provided on revenue sources, ranging from cannabis tax, city income tax, real estate transfer tax, taxing the wealthy, fuel tax and boat taxes. Multiple comments were received in regard to TIF districts. Examples of comments received:

“What about TIF money? Where is the money to reinvest in the community? If you have that money, it should reinvest in the community. There is money sitting out there to do things. Worried about justice: marijuana tax, Black people buying marijuana, then if there are reparations for those who were imprisoned because of marijuana, they are essentially paying for their own reparations. Money in cannabis, though.”

“Increasing taxes on those who can't make ends meet doesn't seem to make sense, but I think that taxing according to how much people make, makes sense. I should not be paying more in taxes like someone like a Jeff Bezo but we see Amazon doesn't pay taxes. I feel like we should tax those that hold most of the means.”

“Yes, increase fuel and tax. Those that continue to use fuel will pay the luxury tax.”

Conclusion

Based on feedback received in the survey, through focus group discussions and online comments, the general sentiment is that the City should invest more in communities across a variety of public service area from mental health to human services to infrastructure. Participants expressed a desire for more neighborhood-focused investments and services, as well as outreach and engagement.

In addition, most residents who provided feedback voiced concerns related to the size of the police budget and suggested that police services are not an investment that residents receive value for. Further, an analysis of the responses and data collected throughout the public engagement process indicates that residents view investments in policing as an ineffective violence prevention strategy given that crime levels have increased. While tax dollars are spent on police, including protected pay, benefits and pension, as well as taxpayer funded lawsuits, residents expressed concerns over the lack of police reform and accountability. In absence of these, resident feedback suggests that the City could realize

a greater return on investment by bolstering other types of community-based services such as affordable housing, mental health, and workforce development.

Particularly given the current state of the economy, many residents had concerns about increasing taxes while also wanting to receive high quality services. Participating respondents expressed interest in the City doing more with available resources and focusing on effectiveness and efficiency through all services.

More than 90,800 people participated through the City's online survey, Virtual Town Halls or Community Round Table Series. The community feedback strategy as part of the 2021 budget process is one part of Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot's extensive community engagement process to provide residents with an opportunity to discuss various issues facing the City in an open and transparent way.

Mayor Lightfoot deeply values all of the feedback she received from the City's residents and her team will be using these findings as guiding principles as the City moves forward with the development of the 2021 City of Chicago budget.