



# Cook County Commission on Social Innovation

*Year Two Report*

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**JESÚS G. GARCÍA**  
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November 14, 2018

Honorable President Preckwinkle and Commissioners:

The Cook County Commission on Social Innovation was established in April 2016 to seek knowledge-based, innovation-driven solutions to social problems relating to unemployment and poverty.

Since July 2016, the Commission and its five standing committees have met on regular basis to learn about ongoing efforts in social innovation in Cook County and elsewhere and to develop and policies and programs for consideration by the Cook County Board of Commissioners. The five standing committee are on Human Capital, Social Capital, Public Capital, Intellectual Capital, and Financial Capital.

The accompanying report summarizes of the Commission's history and ongoing efforts and highlights its successes between late 2017 and 2018.

I encourage you to review this report. We welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Jesús "Chuy" García  
Chair, Commission on Social Innovation

Cc: Honorable Richard Boykin, 1<sup>st</sup> District  
Honorable Dennis Deer, 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Honorable Jerry Butler, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Honorable Stanley Moore, 4<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Deborah Sims, 5<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Ed Moody, 6<sup>th</sup> District  
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Honorable John Fritchey, 12<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Larry Suffredin, 13<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Gregg Goslin, 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Tim Schneider, 15<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Jeffrey Tobolski, 16<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Sean M. Morrison, 17<sup>th</sup> District

*Year Two Report*  
Cook County Commission on Social Innovation  
Cook County Commission on Social Innovation Members

**Jesús “Chuy” García**

Cook County Commissioner, 7<sup>th</sup> District, Chair of the Commission on Social Innovation

**Marc J. Lane**

Attorney at Law, Vice Chair of the Commission on Social Innovation

**Honorable Sue Sadlowski Garza**

Aldерwoman, 10<sup>th</sup> Ward, City of Chicago

**Jay Stewart** Co-Chair, Financial Capital

Chief, Cook County Bureau of Economic Development

**John Yonan** Co-Chair, Public Capital

Superintendent, Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways

**Maria Kim**, Former chair, Human Capital Committee

President and CEO, CARA

**Victor Dickson** Chair, Social Capital Committee

President and CEO, Safer Foundation

**Howard Males** Chair, Intellectual Capital Committee

President, Research Pros

**Wendy Raymer** Chair, Financial Capital Committee

Director of Community Relations, BMO Harris

**Reggie Greenwood** Chair, Public Capital Committee

South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association

**David Doig**

President, Chicago Neighborhood Initiatives (CNI)

**Marc Loveless**

Founding Executive Director, Coalition for Justice and Respect

**Valerie Leonard** Co-Chair, Social Capital  
Director of Nonprofit Utopia and North Lawndale Resident and Advocate

**Pam Rodriguez**  
President and CEO, Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC)

**Emile Cambry** Co-Chair, Intellectual Capital  
Founder, Blue | 1647

**Mark McHugh**  
President and CEO, Envision Unlimited

**Christyn Henson**  
Founder, Project Forward

**Ana Guajardo**  
Executive Director, Centro de Trabajadores Unidos

**Carrie Thomas** Chair, Human Capital  
Executive Director, Chicago Jobs Council

**Harold Rice**  
President and CEO, Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County (CEDA).

**Mike Hobbs**  
Retired President, EGP Glass

**Morgan Malone**  
Policy Analyst, Chicago Department of Aviation

**Xochitl Espinosa**  
Founder, The Co-op Ed Center

**Matthew Erickson**  
Executive Director, Digital Privacy Alliance

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*Year Two Report:*  
*Cook County Commission on Social Innovation*

**Introduction**

The Cook County Commission on Social Innovation focuses on the most economically challenged areas of Cook County. Its aim is to find innovative solutions to difficult social problems and recommends appropriate policies and programs to the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

The Cook County Commission on Social Innovation was established in April 2016 by the Cook County Board following approval of a proposed ordinance sponsored by Commissioner Jesús “Chuy” García. Section 14-91 of the enabling legislation defines *Social Innovation* to mean: (a) novel solutions to social problems which are more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just compared to current solutions, for which the value created accrues primarily to society rather than to private individuals, and (b) ideas that promote public, private, and philanthropic collaboration in order to create positive effects on areas with economic challenges.

Pursuant to the provisions of the ordinance, the Chair of the Committee on Business and Economic Development, Commissioner García, was named Chair of the Commission. Marc J. Lane, attorney, author of the treatise on Social Enterprise and the Low-Profitability Limited Liability Company (L3C) law in Illinois, was appointed Vice-chair of the Commission by Chair García.

The work of the committee is conducted predominantly by five committees.

- Public Capital – Reggie Greenwood, Chair; John Yonan, Co-chair
- Human Capital –Carrie Thomas, Acting Chair
- Social Capital – Victor Dickson, Chair; Valerie Leonard, Co-chair
- Financial Capital – Wendy Raymer, Chair; Jay Stewart, Co-chair
- Intellectual Capital – Howard Males, Chair; Emile Cambry, Co-chair

During the second year of the commission, Chair García appointed the following to the body: Morgan Malone, Ana Guajardo, Xochitl Espinosa, Christyn Henson, and Matthew Erickson. They bring collectively broad expertise on community and economic development, worker cooperatives, labor rights and organizing, and data and technology.

With few exceptions, the Commission meets monthly. Each meeting includes at least one guest speaker who shares their knowledge about innovative initiatives, offers new data or other research, and frequently lends their direct support to Commission initiatives.

Two legislative items were offered by the Commission were approved by the Cook County Board in 2018. One is a resolution to Adopt the Good Food Purchasing Policy

(Item #18-1650). The other is a resolution that establishes Supporting the Development of Worker Cooperatives in Cook County, IL (Item #18-6145). Both resolutions will expand opportunities for local businesses owned by people of color and enhance fair working conditions for all residents. These actions will help to improve public health overall, expand opportunities for social mobility, as well as environmental conditions in the region.

This report will outline the Commission's work and will propose some new directions for the current year and beyond.



Public turnout at the introduction of the worker cooperative resolution in August 2018.

## **Committees**

### Human Capital

Carrie Thomas, President and CEO of the Chicago Jobs Council serves as the Acting Chair. Maria Kim, President and CEO of CARA resigned as Chair of Human Capital Committee in July 2018.

This Committee established the following goal: To stimulate policy or practice that connects residents affected by poverty to jobs inside nodes of economic development in Cook County.

### *Inclusive Employment*

The above-mentioned goal led the Committee to focus on Inclusive Employment with the following objectives: 1) incentivize the private industry to hire from disinvested communities; 2) enable minority and women-owned sub-contractors to do business with the County.

The Committee is drafting an Inclusive Employment Rubric that will be tested first with the assistance of focus groups that are representative of businesses by industry, size, and interest in social impact. The Rubric is intended to help assess and measure the progress of businesses on the basis of their commitment to aggressively hire from disinvested communities, to adhere to fair wages and benefits for entry-level positions, to provide advancement opportunities for people from disinvested communities, to adopt hiring policies that “ban the box” and do not indiscriminately require higher education. Similarly, an Inclusive Investment Rubric is also being drafted that will assess and measure the progress of businesses to engage or sponsor small businesses from disinvested communities as vendors; and, to facilitate access to capital, resources, technical assistance, and other support services.

The Committee is working with partners such as World Business Chicago, the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, and LISC to identify businesses for the testing phase by April 2019.

### Social Capital

Victor Dickson, President and CEO of the Safer Foundation, is the Chair of the Social Capital Committee. Valerie Leonard, who self-employed in Community and Organizational Development, serves as Co-Chair.

The committee is guided by the following principles:

*As a Commission, we seek to build sustainable centers of economic development, employment and engagement that provide socio-economic advancement to the most disinvested residents & communities in Cook County. We will prioritize our efforts and support, where appropriate, the efforts of others on opportunities which hit on at least one, if not multiple, of the following levers to help accelerate progress:*

- 1. Redeveloping large-scale untapped assets like the Port of Chicago and activating anchor institutions in the county (like the Illinois Medical District, local universities and hospitals and the Obama Library) for local business stimulation & job creation.*



2. *Looking at community benefits agreements and first source hiring practices that would require private sector companies who benefit from development opportunities the provision of up-skill training and hiring of individuals affected by poverty.*
3. *Revitalizing and making accessible affordable transit and long term sustainable affordable housing to these new centers of development and other surrounding economic/employment opportunities.*
4. *Ensuring the residents and leading community organizations impacted by these activities are engaged in the planning processes.*

In May 2018, the Cook County Board of Commissioners approved the Good Food Purchasing Policy that was proposed by the Social Capital Committee. This ordinance establishes a framework that will give County agencies the option and flexibility to adopt standards that encompass five core values that strengthen our food system such as prioritizing environmental sustainability, local economies, a valued workforce, animal welfare, and nutrition. The Cook County Department of Public Health is currently leading efforts to implement the ordinance with guidance from the Center for Good Food Purchasing which will measure agency outcomes. Members of the Committee found this to be a natural fit because it ties sustainable economic development and the creation of opportunities for local producers. Committee Chair Victor Dickson reflected: "It was interesting to learn from the process of negotiating with various departments to create a policy that was efficient and not administratively burdensome."

In addition, the Social Capital Committee explored ways to address equity in Cook County with a focus on how to mitigate unintended consequences of economic development initiatives and other proposals. Furthermore, the Committee also drafted a proposal for a Cook County Office of Returning Citizen Affairs that would address the needs of justice-involved individuals. Other conversations within this Committee included worker cooperatives and manufacturing conversion ownership.



Chairman García and Vice-Chair Lane acknowledge Rodger Cooley of the Chicago Food Policy Action Council for his contributions to the Cook County Good Food Purchasing Policy at the June 2018 meeting.

### Intellectual Capital

Co-Chairs are Howard Males, President and CEO of ResearchPros, and Emile Cambry, Founder of Blue | 1647.

This Committee established a framework from which the commission may operate:

1. *Determine existing ideas, research, and trends that can inform county policy re: social innovation. Focus on the sources of these ideas and research.*
2. *Recommend specific research, ideas, data processes that the Commission might pursue.*
3. *Identify how the Commission can leverage the recommended research, ideas and data processes and to what end.*
4. *Framework should be used with a focus on County policy, community revitalization (for distressed communities) and social innovation.*

After a January 2018 presentation from Professor Stefaan G. Verhulst, Co-founder and Chief Research and Development Officer of GovLab at New York University, the Committee discussed how to make government data more accessible and useful for public life. The Committee continues to explore ways to measure the impact of the Commission and design comparative standards between it and other County entities.

## Financial Capital

Wendy Raymer, Director of Community Affairs, U.S., BMO Harris, chairs the Financial Capital Committee. Jay Stewart, Chief of the Bureau of Economic Development, is Co-Chair.

The Financial Capital Committee is currently focused on two major efforts: 1) Worker Cooperatives; 2) the South Suburban Economic Growth Initiative.

A subcommittee focused on worker cooperatives was established as a result of a presentation from Professors Stacey Sutton and Renee Hatcher in early 2018. The subcommittee worked closely with the Bureau of Economic Development to draft a Proposed Resolution that would establish support for Worker Cooperatives in Cook County. The resolution was passed by the Board of Commissioners in October 2018.

Overall, the Committee seeks to find ways to be a partner with the Bureau of Economic Development as a platform for efforts that aim to maximize opportunities for enhancing economic empowerment throughout Cook County.



David Robinson of Manufacturing Renaissance presents to the Commission in July 2018.

## Public Capital

Reggie Greenwood, Deputy Executive Director for Economic Development, South Suburban Mayors and Managers Associations, chairs the Public Capital Committee. John Yonan, Superintendent of Transportation and Highways serves as Co-Chair.

This Committee adopted the following work plan:

Work with the Illinois International Port District to facilitate its impact on sustainable Economic Development

*Seek to expand the use of Foreign Trade Zone designations for projects in the region, potentially seeking a special FTZ designation for the Growth Zones recently defined by the City of Chicago and Cook County. This would become another tool to support new industrial development.*

*Seek to work with the Indiana Harbor Beltway, Norfolk Southern, OmniTRAX to develop innovative ways of connecting rail to the Port operations, which would result in support of new industrial development.*

Work to further the sustainable economic impact of the rail freight industry in the Southland as described in Connecting Cook County 2040 Long Range Transportation.

*Seek to work with the upcoming Lincoln Highway Logistics study and the overall Cook County Freight plan to maximize the use on new innovative technologies such as autonomous trucks in this region to support the redevelopment of vacant land into rail served industrial properties.*

Work with the Coalition for a Modern Metra Electric

*Seek to improve the speed and number of stops on the Metra electric line that will bring substantial new transportation services to the Chicago Southland and South Chicago*

The Public Capital Committee continued its work on assessing the feasibility of expanding services of the Metra Electric. The previous work done by the Committee, as well action by the County Board in this area in 2017 prompted Metra itself to develop its own study on ridership, fare systems, and current objectives.

In May 2018, The Department of Transportation and Highways kicked off its South Cook County Mobility Study, which includes recommendations for the Metra Electric and other transit options serving the region. Among the many objectives for the Department's current research, the study addresses the possibility of reduced fees for City of Chicago residents, issues of accessibility to Metra stations, and intermodal connections between PACE buses and Metra stations. These advancements will enhance accessibility of Southland residents to jobs and other opportunities throughout the region.

## **Outlook**

The Commission originated several important efforts that are at different stages of growth from ideation and research to implementation. Further collaboration with Cook County agencies and external partners is essential to carrying this work forward.

The Human Capital Committee's work on creating Inclusive Employment and Inclusive Investment Rubrics will result in tools that can open opportunities and build bridges between established companies and talent in disinvested communities. Integrating hiring guidelines within the private industry that intentionally target these communities is a direct way to increase equity in our region.

On April 19, 2018, The Commission heard from guest speaker Niketa Brar of the organization Chicago United for Equity, who spoke about Racial Equity Impact Assessment tools and the opportunities for government in adopting this practice. This presentation sparked conversation among commissioners and has led the Social Capital Committee to take this topic into consideration.

2018-2019 will focus on the implementation of policies that were pushed forward by the Commission in 2018. The Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) is leading the efforts to implement this initiative. In October 2018, CCDPH held a Food Summit at Loyola University in Maywood, IL which highlighted this Resolution as an innovative effort to improve public health in the County. Similarly, the Bureau of Economic Development is encouraged to lead efforts to strengthen partnerships and resource-exchange with worker-owned cooperatives in the region.

The Commission on Social Innovation will seek to strengthen its external partnerships with universities and other organizations to enhance its data and research capabilities, as well as create diverse learning opportunities for both members and the public.

## **Acknowledgments**

Cook County Commissioner Jesús "Chuy" Garcia and Vice-Chairman Marc J. Lane assembled this report, with committee contributions from Maria Kim, Victor Dickson, David Doig, Matthew Erickson, John Yonan, Wendy Raymer and Howard Males.

Commission Staff: Victoria Moreno, Director of Legislation for Commissioner García  
Lilian Jimenez, Chief of Staff for Commissioner García

Peter Creticos, President and CEO of the Institute for Work & Economy supported the efforts of the Commission and served in an advisory capacity.

The following individuals have presented in Commission meetings:  
Dr. Stefaan Verhulst, Rodger Cooley, Dr. Stacey Sutton, Renee Hatcher, Mollie Dowling,  
Niketa Brar, Richard C. "Dick" May, David Robinson, Eric Rodriguez, Xochitl Espinosa,  
Mark Armstrong, Rujanee Mahakanjana, Nedra Sims Fear, Eiran Feldman

We thank the public who have attended and participated in our meetings and  
Committee volunteers for their contributions.



Chairman Garcia and members of the Cook County Commission on Social  
Innovation in October 2018.

An archive of the Commission's agendas and minutes can be found at:  
[www.cookcountymission.com](http://www.cookcountymission.com)