



Habitat Chicago's Race + Housing Panel Series: The Cost of Inequity in Chicago Transcript

00:00:00 Jen Parks

Good evening everybody. My name is Jen Parks. I'm executive director for Habitat Humanity Chicago, and I'm very excited and grateful for each of you to come out tonight to join us as we talk about the housing inequity here in Chicago, Habitat for Humanity. Chicago's vision is a world in which everyone has a decent place to live.

We intentionally center our work in two South Side neighborhoods, West Pullman and Greater Grand Crossing, focusing on affordable homeownership and making healthy neighborhoods a reality for more Chicagoans.

I am thrilled and proud to be here this evening during Black History Month, both representing Habitat Chicago and as your moderator for tonight's panel discussion, *The Cost of Housing and Equity in Chicago*.

I'd like to thank, the DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center and its fantastic staff for hosting us tonight. Co-founded by Margaret T. Burroughs and activist, educator, writer, and artist, the DuSable Museum is an important institution in Chicago dedicated to the study and conservation of Black history, culture, and art. We're honored to share the space with you.

We also want to thank Lenore's Kitchen - they are providing our food and bar service tonight. And if you are seeking a caterer, contact Lenore's Kitchen. They are terrific.

Tonight's panel is a kickoff event of Habitat Chicago's Race + Housing Series. It's a three-year project generously sponsored by Baird and Warner, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, and BMO. This important project would not be possible without our sponsors. Incredible support, so please, let's also thank them.

The purpose of our Race + Housing Series is to educate and learn alongside the public about how discrimination against Black and Brown Chicagoans has caused gross disparities in housing access, affordability and choice, and how key community organizations and activists are making critical social change around housing inequity in Chicago communities.

During our panel this evening, we're going to be focusing on neighborhood disinvestments in Chicago and how Chicago's history of neighborhood redlining, land sale contracts, and displacement from gentrification not only impact the targeted neighborhoods, but also the quality of life for all residents of Chicago.

Before we get started, we want to recognize that while we are all gathered here today with a shared goal of learning and developing partnerships to break the cycle of disinvestment, all of us in this room varying our degree of being impacted by racism and racist housing practices.

Some of us here are just beginning to learn, while others have been directly targeted by these practices that we are discussing today, and we are grateful to have these perspectives in the room. We hope that tonight provides an open and safe space for all to process the discussion. With that I am honored to welcome our three distinguished panelists tonight.

We're going to start with Tonika Lewis Johnson right here to my left.

Tonika is a visual artist and photographer from Chicago's South Side Englewood neighborhood. Her ongoing project *Folded Map* visually investigates disparities among Chicago residents while bringing them together to have a conversation. Her current *Inequity for Sale* project highlights the living history of Greater Englewood Homes sold on discriminatory land sale contracts in the 1950s and 60s. She is also co-founder of the Englewood Arts Collective and the Resident Association of Greater Englewood. Welcome.

Immediately to her left is William "J.R." Fleming, who is a seasoned community leader and Human Rights Award winner and defender.

J.R. started organizing the with groups such as Chicago Coalition for to Protect Public Housing and the Chicago Anti Eviction Campaign, which he co-founded and currently serves as executive director. J.R. has also served as the President of the Chicago Owners Land Trust, led by the Chicago Community Land Loan Fund, which seeks to provide an alternative housing model that provides long-term affordability.

Welcome J.R.

And then to J.R.'s left is Commissioner Marisa Novara. Commissioner Novara is from the city of Chicago's Department of Housing appointed by Mayor Lori Lightfoot in May 2019. Believing that housing is a human right, Commissioner Novara directs the city's efforts to create equitably distributed affordable housing across Chicago's 77 community areas through policies, development, and legislation.

Commissioner Novara ensured the passage of eight bills in three years while leading the country's first racial equity impact assessment of low income housing tax credit

developments before joining the city. Commissioner Navarro was vice president of the Metropolitan Planning Council during her eight-year tenure at Metropolitan Planning Council. Commissioner Navarro designed and managed the Cost of Segregation project, a study that concluded how decades of old patterns of racial and economic segregation cost the Chicago region and estimated \$4.4 billion of additional income each year. Thank you, Commissioner Novara.

So with that, we are going to get started, and I am going to shift gears. [Leaves podium]

00:05:49 Jen Parks

[Takes seat on a kitchen island stool with other panelists] It's hard being short sometimes. [Light laughter] OK, so as we get started here, this is going to be our first question, open to all three of our panelists. And we are going to start with Commissioner Novara. Sorry, Marisa, on my far left here.

Some see neighborhood disinvestment is only a South and West side issue. How does this actually affect all residents of Chicago?

00:06:16 Commissioner Marisa Novara

Thank you. Well, you kind of teed this up a little bit in the intro because we did do a little study at the Metropolitan Planning Council on what the ways that we are set up as a city and as a region to be separated so profoundly by race and by income.

The question that I had and I'll back this up to like 2015 was we were talking at that point about some interventions that the city was contemplating for changes to a housing policy and everything that we were suggesting, the response we got was well, that would be too expensive. It would be too expensive to the developers to do that. It would be too expensive for the city to do that, and the thought that I had in that was, "I think our status quo is really expensive." I just think we don't ever talk about that and we don't actually know what it costs us to be this separated and "could we actually quantify that?" was my question.

Fast forward a couple years and yes, we found a way to quantify it. We worked with a research partner, and I think it's really important to understand that our argument was fundamentally that I think, one, we talked about segregation still I think really incorrectly in a lot of ways. We often use this term as if it's shorthand for places that are majority Black and majority Brown only, but we have lots of majority White places and those are segregated too by choice, often.

And the end result, and Jen shared a little bit of this, it's actually \$8 billion in in regional GDP, it's it was it's \$4 billion for African American income, 30% more homicides, 83,000 less bachelor's degrees, etc. That those impacts accrue to all of

us, so no matter where you live, these are impacts to us all and our lives are, you know, cheapened accordingly when that is the setup.

So I think that's just an important thing to bear in mind. And the other thing that I want to say, because it's really important to me, to say this: whenever we're talking about especially racial segregation, to draw the attention of the negatives of segregation in this way is not to say that there is something wrong with majority Black or majority Brown spaces.

It is only to say that 1) people should have choices about where they live and right now we've got a lot of room to grow in, providing choices for people across the entire city and 2) it makes it easier and much more efficient to discriminate against Black and Brown people when we can draw a line around them and say that's where we'll target our predatory lending, right? Or that's where we will make less loans than we do anywhere else. That's the important distinction that I want to make on that topic.

00:09:12 Jen Parks

Thank you. J.R.?

00:09:14 J.R. Fleming

Wow, so how do it affect the whole city?

Let me start off by saying first off I'm from Cabrini Green, North Side of Chicago, right? So, I'm used to the North Side madness.

I think often when folks just think that these types of practices only affect the West and South Side, they're gravely mistaken. To the degree when public housing came down, a lot of people thought it wasn't their issue, right? As market rate renters or homeowners until public housing came down and we just displaced the poverty, right? We just displaced the crime to certain parts of the city. There's six zip codes with most public housing residents ended up in Chicago.

Well, the impact that has, has an impact on a rental market on the North Side Be it Edgewater, Rogers Park, Wrigleyville, the North Shore, Albany Park area. It has an impact on everybody, right?

It has an impact on your property taxation, right? Not having affordable housing, low-income housing has an impact on your property value and that property value has an impact on your taxes and that taxes have an impact on whether you have the capability of staying on the north side, you know.

When folks was talking about all of the issues that we was facing on the South and West side, I used the slogan just like I do in housing for the homeless, to the public housing, to the renter, to the homeowner: Me today, you tomorrow.

And as Chicago aspired to be a global city, we begin to see that displacement shift from just Black folks in public housing being pushed out to folks on the north side of Chicago. Being forced south, right? In come the techies moving into the city, big corporations who come to the city with their high-paid employees. Tend to want to frequent the North Side so you have people who traditionally thought they was rich being pushed out by the wealthy.

So when we look at the inequities that impact the South and West Side, I always tell people, “me today, you tomorrow”. Because as a human rights defender trying to take over foreclosed vacant homes and defend people homes. Often told people, right, how do we say it?

“You can't afford to live there no more.”

I remember when I heard that as a Black individual that you couldn't afford to live here. Even if I could afford, they had practices in place where they would discriminate from me renting. I was personally impacted, you know, growing up you know, I used to live on the north side, not just in Cabrini, on the far North Side. Now, you can't afford to live on the far north side. So it has an impact on everybody, not just poor folk, but mainly working-class people in the city of Chicago.

00:11:49 Jen Parks

Thanks. Tonika?

00:11:53 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Well, I guess the best way for me to explain what I think would be to show you all my project. I'm the artist on the panel and given my experience specifically from high school - I got one of my high school classmates here. [Gestures to an audience member]

Lane Tech in the 90s; it was very diverse. So, I feel like people who attended schools like that in the 90s when it was equal percentage of each race in that kind of school, we were able to be exposed to a kind of diversity that the city as a whole has not been able to enjoy, experience, and even practice how to be in relationship with each other. The relationship aspect and is really important to me and how segregation truly prevents us from the opportunity to have friendships and relationships. My project folded map was my way of kind of bringing that to the forefront and the conversation of how you get people to care about each other. And

so I would like to share with you all some media coverage of Folded Map so you can have a reference point for the rest of the conversation.

[TV in the middle of the panel starts playing a video]

00:13:18 News Reporter

Our Series, A More Perfect Union, aims to show that what unites us as Americans is far greater than what divides us. And this morning, we're showing you a new approach to bridging divides in Chicago neighborhoods from the cities, North and South Sides are banding together to take on some very deeply rooted issues.

The differences between these communities; they are stark. But as Adriana Diaz shows us together, they are tackling segregation and the inequity that comes with it.

[Two people sitting on benches with face masks on]

00:13:45 Wade Wilson

Do you have any of those posters left

00:13:47 Nanette Tucker

Yeah, I do.

00:13:48 Adriana Diaz

I know Chicago residents Nanette Tucker and Wade Wilson share a love of gardening and craft beer.

00:13:54 Nanette Tucker

That would be kind of cool.

00:13:54 Wade Wilson

That would be cool!

00:13:56 Adriana Diaz

They're like neighbors, sort of.

00:13:58 Speaker 9

Wade is called your "Map Twin". Why are you guys twins?

00:14:02 Nanette Tucker

We're twins. Because when you fold the map, we touch one another on the map, north and south.

00:14:09 Adriana Diaz

[Animation of a Chicago map, folding in half, revealing address of 6400 North Hermitage Ave. And 6400 S. Hermitage Ave.] Like many cities, Chicago's a grid with many streets spanning north to south. If you fold a map of the city in half, you can match addresses on the North Side with the same block on the South Side.

[Diaz interviewing Tucker and Wilson] You lived all your life never thinking you had a twin. And now?

00:14:22 Wade Wilson

Now I have one.

00:14:25 Adriana Diaz

[Side by side videos of two houses] They live about 15 miles apart, but Wilson and his wife, Jennifer, live in the majority White North Side neighborhood of Edgewater, while Tucker is in the mostly Black South Side neighborhood of Englewood.

00:14:37 Speaker 9

[Diaz interviewing Tucker and Wilson] How would you explain the differences between both of your neighborhoods, which are essentially equidistant from the center, but worlds apart in many ways.

00:14:45 Wade Wilson

It's very clear that neighborhoods primarily on the North Side have had more investment. Everything from the street lighting to grocery stores, restaurants, is plentiful on the North Side and it's not here.

00:14:59 Nanette Tucker

Here it's almost like you feel a light come on at a certain spot when you're going north. And when you're coming back south, you can feel the gloom that's upon us in Englewood.

00:15:15 Adriana Diaz

[Two women walking down a sidewalk] They met through Tonika Lewis Johnson, a social justice artist who grew up in Englewood, a community often in the news.

[Montage of past news segments] Two mass shootings... Shot in their head this after. Shooting claims the life of a 15 year old boy in West Englewood...

00:15:28 Adriana Diaz

[Photo of Lewise Johnson] Lewis Johnson created the folded map project, which includes this film, to change the conversation. She contrasts how the same street, like Ashland Ave...

00:15:37 Tonika Lewis Johnson

... they look very different...

00:15:38 Adriana Diaz

... looks on the north side...

00:15:40 Tonika Lewis Johnson

... The sidewalks...

00:15:41 Adriana Diaz

and the South side.

00:15:42 Tonika Lewis Johnson

... the maintenance of the building. None of which had anything to do with gun violence, only disinvestment.

00:15:51 Adriana Diaz

[Redlining map graphic] Chicago's segregation is due in part to racist policies like redlining, where banks would designate properties in minority areas delineated in red as too risky for mortgage lending, excluding Black Americans from a primary pathway of building wealth: homeownership.

00:16:08 Tonika Lewis Johnson

[Video of Lewis Johnson] You have neighborhoods that are predominantly Black that have low homeownership as a result of the discriminatory practices. Businesses left, so you don't have a business corridor, so therefore you don't have jobs. And now the schools are starting to fail because they aren't properly funded.

00:16:23 Adriana Diaz

[Photo of Folded Map participants] Her solution: bring the North and the South together with Map Twins.

00:16:29 Speaker 9 Adriana Diaz

[Video of Diaz] It can feel so overwhelming to try to take on systemic racism. But you have found a way to almost chip away at it one person at a time. One pair at a time.

00:16:38 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Yeah, let's use segregation as the actual thing that can connect us.

00:16:44 Jen Parks1

With her project, she doesn't shy away from uncomfortable truths.

00:16:47 Tonika Lewis Johnson

[Interview another pair of Map Twins] How much was your home?

00:16:49 Nanette Tucker

It was \$61,000.

00:16:50 Tonika Lewis Johnson

And how much was your home?

00:16:51 Wade Wilson

\$535,000.

00:16:54 Adriana Diaz

You asked Wade and Nanette what they each paid house. You know, it felt a little awkward.

00:16:58 Tonika Lewis Johnson

I think the awkwardness helps people understand how we're all participating in this system that was created before us, and it doesn't truly reflect. How we want to connect with each other today.

00:17:09 Wade Wilson

Frankly, we're privileged. And it's hard to sit next to a friend who hasn't enjoyed that privilege. We realize that there is an opportunity to actually do something.

00:17:23 Adriana Diaz

Wilson and Tucker are doing something together three years after they met through the Folded Map Project with others, they created Englewood Renaissance. Which is helping beautify parts of Englewood and is now focusing on increasing homeownership here.

00:17:40 Nanette Tucker

Creating a community together, but economics might be different. The neighborhoods might be different, but the core of who I am is pretty much the same as Wade and Jennifer. I want the same things they want.

00:17:53 Adriana Diaz

For CBS This Morning, Adriana Diaz, Chicago.

00:17:59 Jen Parks

[Applause for the video] Powerful, very powerful. So you know to build on that, you know clearly you're working the Folded Map Project and now the Inequity for Sale looks very closely at racist housing policies and their impact. So can you dive a little deeper here and you know, share with us how some of those past and present policies and practices are impacting us today?

00:18:22 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Yeah, I like to focus on relationships and how segregation and racism is perpetuated today, but also our relationship to the built environment. My work especially Folded Map was deeply inspired by the MPC report and the one thing that the report left out that I was like, "oh, my project would help bring this all together" is the personal aspect. How it really is represented and how these historic inequities are still with us today, not only through the relationships we don't have with each other, but also the values of the homes.

The homeownership value or rate and the values of homes in predominantly Black neighborhoods are the actual legacy of these discriminatory practices. And so my project and Equity for Sale is actually creating landmarks for a collection of homes still in Greater Englewood, whether they're demolished, vacant lots, or abandoned to show people that this home, this building has a history. We are literally walking around evidence of this discriminatory practice.

When people, you know in Chicago, we classify people based off of "where are you from? What high school did you go to?" Helping people understand that, what we think about a neighborhood is oftentimes what we think about people.

It was really important for me to do a project to explain the abandoned homes, the vacant lots and the deterioration that people see in my neighborhood, because sometimes people just think, "oh, it's the residents' fault. They don't take care of their homes. Why, why don't they do something? Why don't they care?"

But this project highlights homes that were connected to that discriminatory past, which is land sale contracts. That was one of the financial tools that was used to

really prevent aspiring Black homeowners from becoming homeowners in the neighborhoods they were redlined into.

[Gesture to a map on the TV screen] This is a map of all of the documented homes that were sold to Black people on land sale contracts, and it is by no coincidence that the neighborhoods that were deeply impacted by this history are the neighborhoods that we hear on the news today, that are struggling with a lot of the issues. There's also another photo of the homes that were sold on land sale contract in Greater Englewood in the 50s and 60s. And this is all documented.

What I wanted to help people understand that that this history is with us and to offer a way to imagine. If these aspiring Black people who came to Chicago through the Great Migration, with money, if all of these people were actually homeowners in the 50s and 60s, instead of being swindled out of home ownership, what would Greater Englewood be today? Because the homeownership rate is what about 30%? If all of these people had actual ownership of their homes in the 50s and 60s, what with the homeownership rates to be today?

So to help people think about this alternative reality that not only Black people were robbed of, but the City of Chicago. That's why I really love the report that MPC did because it helped kind of quantify what we're all missing out on. It's hard for people to believe that it's profitable to be equitable.

You know, if you make homeownership more accessible to all, you create more neighborhoods for people to have options to live in and it creates an option for those diverse neighborhoods that Marisa was talking about.

In Chicago, we have the perfect ingredients, the racial makeup here to have beautiful neighborhoods like that and we don't.

So that's a Equity for Sale. Helping people connect that history to today.

00:23:10 Commissioner Marisa Novara

Can I just say one thing? Because I think I'm sure, for folks who self-selected to an event like this are the folks who've probably read the Case for Reparations, maybe read Family Properties, right?

These are all really like the important works on this topic. What I love about Tonika's work, and this is true for Folded Map, it is a less cerebral and more of a human connection to these topics, and all of it is important, right? It all has its place, but too often we stay in the factual data part and not in the relational part.

So I just want to salute you for bringing that to the table. [applause]

00:23:50 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Oh, thank you. Thank you so much.

00:23:54 Jen Parks

Perfect segue. J.R., this work is deeply personal for you. And so as a community organizer and human rights defender for over 20 years, mostly in housing, how has housing inequity affected you?

00:24:11 J.R. Fleming

Wow. how hasn't it? Like I said, you know, I grew up in Cabrini Green. I was fortunate enough to move from Chicago for some years and go to the South Suburbs, play sports, achieve or excel academically, let me say it that way, with a better institution for education than I could have possibly in Chicago.

I'm a product of McCorkle on the South Side and Beasley Elementary, the gifted school. Got to put that in there. [laughter; gestures to Lewis Johnson] Shooting out the Lane Tech, you know what I'm saying? South Side got some great institutions.

My mom worked under Harold Washington administration. She always believed in Black on Black love community, love and support. I thought [inaudible]. I ended up back up in Cabrini Green, maybe 1990... 10 years before the plan for transformation kicked in. One of the biggest displacement of Black folks since the Great Migration public housing across the country.

I got to see a lot of folks in my community not just lose their housing and get displaced. I got to see them lose their social network that gave them the ability to thrive and survive in the city that was racially segregated.

The goal was to build these mixed income communities, not being an antagonist, and I do want to credit that Marissa is the first person at the Department of Housing I have never had to protest [laughter] in my 20 years. You hear why now, I didn't sell out! You know I ain't sell out! Lori and they did that when they grabbed her.

00:25:54 Tonika Lewis Johnson

She's special. They were lucky to get her.

00:25:56 J.R. Fleming

Like they were lucky. Called the dogs off, right? That's why I ain't been in the news protesting. She's been doing a lot of great work. I ain't sold out, but I watch it hit different communities. So we talked about how public housing people were displaced.

Watch how this works: We're talking early 2000. Demolition of public housing has happened. Section 8 is the new biggest ticket. Landlords are able to, although you

don't think you're impacted by the demolition of public housing, where you pay for a one bedroom back in 2000, maybe \$1000 on the North Side. Studio Apartments right 750 still at that time jumped. Studios jumped like \$1,300 1-bedroom jumped 12, 13, \$1400 two-bed because the voucher would pay more for that unit.

This is the kick-off of what we call the condo conversions. The demolition of the public housing spurred condo conversions. Folks get more money for condos.

Watching this happen, it was like the working-class folks in my family started being impacted by this. I'm talking folks work for the Police Department, the Sheriff Department, city workers, like the working folks. They started to be impacted.

Then we fast forward 10 years, maybe eight years. The foreclosure crisis '07, '08, '09. And for the first time, not to make a joke out of it, but for someone who did a lot of human rights work around race, I was like, "damn America some equal opportunity oppressors."

They're putting White folks out there at home. They're putting police officers out their homes, teachers out their homes. Like I'm not accustomed to this, I'm accustomed to doing my struggle and activism. The only Black folks being impacted by things.

So when the foreclosure crisis hit, we thought it was an opportunity to organize from the homeless person to the homeowner. People often hear you a paycheck away from being homeless. Didn't know what it means to COVID hit. I always thought COVID was the great equalizer for a housing activist, right?

Because for the first time we was able to show. Just how important housing is. And to her credit [gestures to Novara], she brags about housing being a human rights. I had to protest almost 100 times to get that to become a household name.

Housing is a human right. Education is a human right. Healthcare is a human right because we're in a country that only believe in civil rights. And the civil rights of people like us are always oppressed or stepped on, so when these opportunities started to present itself.

You know, I went back to my childhood, to my days in Cabrini, and it was like, this is a protractive struggle, right? This is going to be around for a while until the people right -

You know, I went back to my childhood, to my days in Cabrini, and it was like, this is a protractive struggle, right? This is going to be around for a while until the people- I realize it's the people that makes the system change. It's the people that makes the bank change.

Growing up during racist times in the suburbs, then fast forward into today, where you look at the housing inequalities. You go, “what would it take for folks to wake up?”

We as a people as to because they are so isolated, caught up in our own world. We call them “-ism”, whether it's classism, sexism, whatever the “ism” is. Whether I'm upper, middle-class or middle-class or poor - we all didn't realize just how vulnerable we were to becoming homeless.

For me being able to organize around that not only change my life, but change the life for a lot of people around me. For those who don't know, I got famous and our organization got famous for taking over vacant houses during the foreclosure crisis. Fixing it up and moving homeless women and children in it. Our motto was, “if rats, roaches and raccoons can live rent free, why can't humans?” I'm not an activist or organizer. I'm a matchmaker.

I'm taking homeless people and matching them up with people-less buildings. That's the impact we wanted to have.

00:29:56 Jen Parks

Did you want to say something?

00:29:57 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Oh, no, just a lot of things that you were saying really struck home, and I really wanted to kind of help, remind people and to Marisa's point about the human connection - the relational part. How important that is to all movements and to helping people expand their circle of who they care about, because the more you are engaging with people or find friendships the then you care about them.

And what I found is that creating pathways for people to understand relationships that they're missing out on and how it prevents them from having a more broad worldview really does impact all of us. Because all of the important movements for civil rights, hell, I even tell people the Underground Railroad that was a multiracial movement because it was people who cared about each other.

The civil rights movement was a multiracial movement. If Fred Hampton, who believed in beautiful Black neighborhoods and people. If he had the wherewithal to understand the solidarity that was needed to partner with poor White people in order to make civil rights understandable to all, then that's kind of what we have to do.

And housing is a huge part of that, you know, because we're all very vulnerable and helping people see that is really important.

00:31:47 Jen Parks

So let's look forward a little bit. Both for Marisa and Tonika like to hear a little bit more about what you're doing now to move the needle on creating more equitable Chicago.

00:32:02 Tonika Lewis Johnson

[laughter] What are you doing, Marisa?

00:32:05 J.R. Fleming

A lot.

00:32:08 Commissioner Marisa Novara

Well, I'll actually start where the Cost of Segregation left off, but I promise I'm going to answer your question. The follow up to that report on was ended up being what was called the Road Map for Racial Equity. But it's worth just taking a moment to say how we got there. When we started, and I deliberately set this up as a process of inquiry, I was trying to calm everybody on our staff's nerves who needed more structure. We don't know what the end result is going to be.

We have a path, we have a plan. We're going to do all these things, but we don't know exactly what we're going to say at the end. But I still think that it, I will admit, that part of what I was thinking was, "of course we need to become a more integrated region. I mean if we're segregated then that's bad. We should become more integrated."

But in the process that we set up, I learned and we learned some really important things. Ultimately what that road map resulted in was that our goal first and foremost is to have a racially equitable region and racially equitable outcomes for people.

And integration- we all know integrated places that aren't equitable, right? We can think about schools. Where we if we actually pull apart, suspension/expulsion rates, who's in AP classes? They might be diverse, that doesn't mean they're equitable. They're two different things.

Integration isn't the goal. Equitable outcomes are.

When you center that first, I do think we'll end up with more racially and economically segregated places, but we're not starting with that as the end goal. We're starting with equitable outcomes as our end goal.

So that was what we came to in that process. We really set forth a vision for what all sectors- what it would look like if all sectors embrace this, including government, including private sector and nonprofits.

And at the time, I would say I got no love from the administration at that time. And so it was really pretty mind blowing to have someone win as a long shot win the mayoral election and say, “hey, all that stuff you wrote about I'm open throwing the door open when I come in want to come in and do it?”

And so I really want to give credit there because we have our a first office of equity and racial justice. Candace Moore is partnering with Tonika on a bunch of her work.

I was able to do, as Jen said, the first racial equity impact assessment of our own low income housing tax credit program, the main way that this country funds affordable housing.

And what that is truly is an examination of our work and pointing out where we are falling short and what we need to do to change it.

And we, you know, we're able to do that. We were able to be very public and say here's the ways that we think we are falling short, and here's what we're going to do about it.

I'll share one example, and then I I'll stop talking. One example from that analysis was that we realized that- low income, housing tax credit programs been around since 1987. But we had probably about 20 years of data that were reliable that we could work with.

What we realized was that we had been silent on the question of, “who was actually developing affordable housing through our funding rounds?” And well, one thing we know about racism in this country is that “race silence” is never “race neutral”.

We're not going to get racially equitable results if we have race neutral language. We just know plenty of evidence. So it was like, “whoops, that's on us and we have got to change that.”

Why? Because we know that we have profound wealth gaps by race in this country. So it's not only a question of this as a resource that benefit people to live affordably, people also make a developer fee by developing affordable housing. And I want people to also build wealth through the creation of affordable housing.

So in our next funding round that was 2021, we were explicit about that. We said we preference developments that are led by Black and Brown developers or in a partnership because low income tax credits. If you're early on in your process, you really should be partnered with somebody to do that.

But that's OK. So let's partner and let's get folks in and get them comfortable. As a result of saying that that was a preference. We had a massive jump in the developments in the proposals we received because people were like, "ohh, I'd better go out and partner if I wasn't going to already."

We're seeing a real shift now in that because we've named it. Then we went through the process again for the funding round that we're doing right now. We have a draft out right now. So for me that's an example of how we can all be operating, which is it is a constant reflection. It is a constant iteration of how are the systems that I- whatever your sphere of influence is- How do I examine the systems I have any control over? How do I switch the gears toward better outcomes than what they're doing on their own?

00:37:46 Jen Parks

Thank you. Tonika?

00:37:51 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Well, one of the most immediate things that I am doing, Marisa made mention of it, is a partnership with the City of Chicago's Equity office.

And really, you know, it's individuals who make up and impact systems. I don't even view it as just a partnership with the equity office. It really is a partnership with Candace Moore.

I knew her prior to her current position and she wanted to take the idea of my folded map action kit that I did create as a way for people to continue their journey of experiencing the Folded Map Project, but on their own. Because I kind of released this folding map action kit at the beginning of the pandemic

What it really is, it's a little worksheet that is an invite for people to run errands in a neighborhood that's racially and economically. Different and the errands kind of speak to the ways in which different industries invest differently.

So an example is go buy lotion in a neighborhood that's racially and economically different. Go take out \$20.00 at an ATM. Go buy an organic apple. So people can feel as much as possible what it's like to be a resident in that neighborhood and can understand, through an experiential way, systemic disinvestment and racism.

And so we decided to partner to create a special edition version of this Folded Map Action kit with the Equity office. So that is something that is going to debut in a month or so. I brought copies, hard copies of it for you all to have.

It's really just a way to help Chicagoans get out of their bubble, as well as to learn about our city's inequities. I also use the action kit as a way to help people

understand how segregation forces us to have these different realities that's hard to break out of because even when I talk about the action kit, some people, White and Black, actually have said, "oh, you know, I would feel uncomfortable doing this because it sounds like you just want people from the North Side to go visit the South Side."

When I get that question or comment. I share with them, "that's exactly why you need to do it, because segregation has made you not even consider the benefit or the fact that someone from the South Side would gain by visiting and experiencing the conveniences that are offered in North Side neighborhood."

You didn't even imagine how beneficial it would be for them to understand what they're being denied in their own neighborhoods and how it gives them a frame of reference. So that is what the action kit, even if it's just in concept alone, aims to do, is to just help people think about another way to engage in a neighborhood that exists in a segregated city.

Because a lot of the Black neighborhoods in Chicago, because of disinvestment, are residential. You kind of almost have to get invited to it unless you know you try to find a restaurant or a festival, but sometimes people feel uncomfortable because of all of the ways in which we talk about the South and West Side

Also the North Side. There's Black kids who won't think to go to the North Side, because they've heard it's racist, that they'll get harassed and racially profiled. But there is also some benefit to experiencing the North Side, like you need to know what your city is denying you.

So that's the action kit and then also to kind of extend it into schools, because I think schools is such a bedrock of all communities and is one of the ways in which people decide where they want to live.

So I am creating a folding map curriculum for elementary school kids and high schoolers. Starting their journey to understanding these systemic issues by examining their own life, what they like about their neighborhood, what they don't like, what they want to see.

I know I wasn't introduced to a lot of these systemic issues as a high schooler by way of my own experience. We were taught about it just from the top down. This is the Constitution, this is what happened in history, and you really don't have any connection to it.

So the folder map curriculum aims to center youth and their experience and then get them to understanding that. Those are a couple of the ways I'm hoping to help expand people's understanding about all of these issues that would lead to them

understanding the benefit of like equal opportunity housing, homeownership. Even though, I am opposed to housing being a commodity, but... [laughs] I live in a country where that is existing, so I have to just, you know, create ways.

00:43:24 Jen Parks

Keep working on it.

Yeah, we can keep working on that discussion. Yeah, that that could maybe Part 2.

00:43:29 Tonika Lewis Johnson

I mean [housing] it's a right.

00:43:34 J.R. Fleming

Article 25, United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

00:43:39 Jen Parks

So on this front, you brought something, you brought your action kit here tonight, so please do take one, and it would be great for people to take use that as a way to take action coming through this. So we're going to wrap up this panel with just one more question for everybody. And then we're going to open it up to questions from you all. [gestures to audience] If you've got something, raise your hand and we will take it after just a couple of minutes.

00:44:07 Jen Parks

We're going to end on this part of it, what recommendations do you have for all who are interested in getting more involved in this work? Maybe J.R., could you kick us off?

00:44:18 J.R. Fleming

They say charity starts at home. Take care of home first, so I would encourage people like to they could say go visit other neighborhoods cause Chicago is your home, right? Not just your neighborhood, but little things like beautifying your block is real, particularly with me, right? Cutting the neighbors, grass. Helping out around your community, right?

Volunteering some time is key to me. I think we begin to address all of these issues as a collective of people. Not putting the burden and the responsibility on government and private corporations all the time. I think Chicago really has to become a city of residents and the city of people again.

And we got to get out that fear factor, you know, change is only going to start within. I encourage people to get more active in the community. Don't let the

violence or the fear of violence push you away. Because when people come together as a collective in the community, it's almost impossible for crime and violence to have a presence.

00:45:18 Jen Parks

Thank you. Marisa?

00:45:21 Commissioner Marisa Novara

So I said I was on a panel yesterday talking about a version of this, but I'll say it again. I got a letter maybe a year ago from my alderperson saying we're going to have a community meeting about an affordable housing development. It happened that I was funding the affordable housing development [laughter], but I'm also a resident. I had my husband on Zoom in the other room as a resident and I was presenting in the other room.

But the point is, it occurred to me, people all over get these letters all the time. And what I think most likely happens, it is human nature that if you hate something, if you fear something, you rush out to tell people all about it.

And if you're like, "that's cool that sounds great. I'm all for it. I don't need to go to this meeting. I'm fine with it."

00:46:11 Commissioner Marisa Novara

The thing I want to say is you absolutely need to go to the meeting. You need to go more than anyone else because the people who think that this is the worst thing ever and the sky is going to fall will be there in droves and will be - it'll be biblical. They'll be, you know, tearing their clothes and all kinds of things.

If we don't help give our elected officials some cover to say, "hey, there's actually a roomful of opinions here that are all quite different, and I'm hearing some people love this. So I'm going to have to go back and make a decision, but I've heard lots of opinions here tonight."

If we don't do that, it makes it all that much, all that much harder for people to do the right thing. And some people do want to, but we make it hard for them when we don't give them anything to go on.

And so please, if you see something, say something. If you see something that's like this sounds important and I'm for it, take the time to say so, because the people who aren't for it will be loud and in charge.

00:47:16 Tonika Lewis Johnson

To the point that was made earlier about you have to explicitly address racism, especially in a city that is segregated. You have to learn how to use the language like, say White, say Black, say Latino. Say these things and then also be willing to be corrected if someone wants you to say something different.

And we have to learn how to speak about race. And the only way you can do that is by practice. To help people do so, and specifically in my work, I've come across a lot of young White professionals who are transplants to Chicago or some who are from here that have taken the advice that they receive to not go to the South or West side.

00:48:17 Tonika Lewis Johnson

And so, since we don't want the burden of all of this to be-

[gestures to people off camera] Oh, those are all the lovely people going to the play, I think. We were told about them that they would be coming through.

00:48:28 Tonika Lewis Johnson

One of the things that I really wanted to help to have my work and my projects do is to make this conversation about segregation and race more inclusive because it doesn't just impact the Black and Brown neighborhoods. White neighborhoods are also segregated.

And to help bring White people into this conversation to not just only listen, but to contribute their reality to this conversation by way of being honest and transparent about how early you've experienced or have been programmed to think anti-Black anything.

I have a project called Don't Go that offers an opportunity for this particular population to share their personal history of being told to not go to the South or West Side. What happened when they actually did, what they learned, and then their reflections on them being programmed to believe racist things that they didn't know, and that advice to not go to the South and West Side is one of them.

I did a presentation to a room full of northwestern freshmen. Most of them happen to be obviously 18 and 19. Most of them happen to be White, from from other Midwest cities. And I asked them the question, "how many of you all have been told to not go to the South and West Side?"

All of them. Every single one of them raised their hand. I'm a mother of an 18 year old, and I just saw, the innocence I'm like, "wow, they're being taught something that is very racist, and they don't even know it."

So what is their journey going to be like?

To get to the heart aspect again is to bring White people into this conversation for them to learn that you have something to offer which is honesty and transparency. Because that's the only way we're going to know at which point we need to interrupt and disrupt racist ideology is if we know how it begins and how it's perpetuated in your family.

For you all to be advocates within your social network, because those are the spaces that Black people and people of color aren't Privy to. So just to include them in the conversation, just to justify everything that we've been talking about that it impacts all of us.

00:51:17 Commissioner Marisa Novara

Can I add one thing to that? Because this is a plea to fellow White people in the room.

We are privy to these kinds of comments a lot that aren't blatantly racist but are [tilts head and makes car braking sound effect] and I really want to just share some things that I have learned to employ in those moments.

Play dumb, do not nod and kind of go along with whatever is maybe being said, right? So here's what I'm what I mean by that:

When I first moved to I lived in North Lawndale for over a decade. Then I moved to Little Italy, just north of Roosevelt Rd. and there's a lot of public housing just South of Roosevelt Rd. I know this very well, right? But my new neighbor tells me she's also a runner.

I was like, "oh, great, where do you go running?"

"Well, I never go South of Roosevelt Rd."

I said, "oh why?" Like I don't have any idea what she'd be referring to, right? I'm gonna make you say this out loud. I'm not just gonna like, "hmm, I'm sure" You know?

Or "is it a good school?"

"I don't know. What do you mean by a good school?"

"Is it a good neighborhood?"

"I don't know. How do you define a good neighborhood?"

You can ask it very nicely, right? It doesn't have to feel like you just blew up Thanksgiving dinner. Just ask! "I have no idea what you mean by a good neighborhood. Tell me, what do you mean?" And make them define it. Don't just nod

and kind of feel weird about what was just said. That's so that's one piece I would say.

Because I think- and I say this as someone who lived for 12 years in North Lawndale. My kids were born there, went to home daycare there. We are not, as White people, socialized to think that we are missing out on anything when we live in an all-White environment. Ever. And we are.

But that's just not what the version of reality we are sold and that's part of our loss, right. So Tonika's point, it's like- what I love about what you're doing is- We're creating spaces where we can start to unpack that and start to say, well, here's what I was taught, and now that it feels a little like I'm losing something here.

We are taught that others are losing out when they live in other kinds of neighborhoods. We are not taught to look at that for ourselves. And that's our own deficit.

00:53:52 Tonika Lewis Johnson

It's because we don't have the space to talk about that, and I have close friends from high school who are White. My friend Steve-

00:54:04 Commissioner Marisa Novara

Is he the one who went into hip hop?

00:54:05 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Yes! And he's actually a teacher! He's a public school teacher now, and his trajectory to becoming a public school teacher- he will be the first person to tell anyone.

"My life changed as a result of having non-White friends that I would not have met if I didn't go to Lane Tech."

He'll even tell people, "my high school experience was way more fun. I knew about a whole bunch of cool stuff. Before the rest of the rest of the city, the rest of the world." That's what it felt like for him.

So he was able to help articulate the empathy that he was allowed to develop and the beautiful ways in which his friends of color and relationships with Black people really opened up his eyes in a way that he knows the rest of his family doesn't have. And we don't get to talk about that.

So when we talk about the Cost of Segregation, we have to also have White people who speak to the ways in which their lives have been enriched through encountering engagement with people who are outside of their segregated social network.

00:55:37 Jen Parks

So on that note, which was phenomenal to end on, we do want to open it up to some questions from the audience. Do we have anyone who would like to kick us off here?

[audience member in front row raises hand]

00:55:51 Audience Member 1

So with the Inequity for Sale project you showed Englewood. That's where you're from. And there's obviously were a lot of those types of contract sales there.

Do you know if that's the epicenter of those types of sales in Chicago or is that replicated probably throughout many neighborhoods in the South and West Sides?

00:56:13 Tonika Lewis Johnson

The epicenter was the West Side, Lawndale. The West Side was completely devastated by land sale contracts.

The only other neighborhood that had that high concentration of land sale contracts that wasn't really known prior to the plunder of Black wealth report that was done in 2018- a lot of my projects are inspired by reports- [laughter] is Greater Englewood.

For me, it was really important to share that history of Greater Englewood. If you look up land sale contract history, the West side will pop up because that's where the movement to-

00:56:57 J.R. Fleming

The buyers contract league.

00:57:01 Tonika Lewis Johnson

The buyers contract league. That was all West Side Black residents trying to disrupt this, what they were experiencing. But it was also happening in Greater Englewood.

And for me, that report that came out in this information answered the question as to why my neighborhood looked the way that it did. Because I would always hear the homeownership rate is so low. But I never heard anybody say, "Well, when was it higher?"

If we know how it decreased then we would know what we need to do to increase it. And it's because of this history. So it's primarily those neighborhoods only. But again, that's just the documented.

It wasn't a requirement to document if you sold a home on a land sale contract, so it could very well be many other neighborhoods. But just so far as records, it's the one on this map.

00:57:59 Jen Parks

Additional questions? [gestures to a member in the middle of the audience] Yes!

00:58:03 Audience member 2

Well, first thank you so much that I have a million questions. I'm going to go with one that's kind of been a thing in a lot of circles that I've been in.

And what are your thoughts on the Obama Center coming to the community. There's a lot of panic, I know in certain conversations, are like, "they going to kick us all out. They're pushing Section 8 folks out."

They're going to do all these different things. So there's certain anxieties at certain levels. And then there's other people who are really excited and it's going to integrate the city. It's going to be all this great stuff.

So just based around with you all we're talking about-

00:58:40 Jen Parks

Does anybody hear that asking about the Obama Center and its impact?

00:58:47 [crosstalk]

00:58:49 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Englewood will take it if the South Shore people don't want- [laughter]

00:58:54 J.R. Fleming

Look, so development that spurs displacement, everybody always worrying about that. Always tell people, "worry if you have a close proximity to the lakefront." South Shore do.

"If you're close to a university or close proximity to downtown over the last 20 years, you are targeted communities for redevelopment."

I've kind of changed the way I look at development as a developer now. I don't think folks in South Shore should worry a lot because it's out of folks in South Shore hands. South Shore as a community that makes up, I think, 60 to 70% rental right versus homeownership. And that's Woodlawn too.

[00:59:37 crosstalk]

00:59:39 J.R. Fleming

Yeah, the highest amount is Section 8. So there you have it. With a development like that coming, I can assure you Airbnb- unless the city put in some restrictions and certain things- South Shore is going to have [inaudible].

So it's not just Obama Presidential Center and Campus. It's Yoko Ono River Garden. And hopefully Tiger Woods golf course. I golf. [laughter]

01:00:02 Tonika Lewis Johnson

So you know.

01:00:02 J.R. Fleming

I'm pro golf.

01:00:04 J.R. Fleming

But traditionally, when developments come in like that, you're going to have people- anywhere in the country, President Clinton's Presidential Center made the property value go up. President Bush's Presidential Library made- the community around it- property value go up, so it happens with presidential libraries.

01:00:25 Commissioner Marisa Novara

So this was concerns about this were one of the first things that I was asked to address. I think folks have been working on the Obama team for many years on the community benefits agreement and then kind of shifted gears and said, "let's see what we can get from the city."

And ultimately what we did was something I think the city hasn't done before, which is to say we want to be a proactive partner, not just kind of sit back and watch.

We know that a massive investment is coming. And most folks want to see investment in their community, they just want to be able to stick around and enjoy it when it shows up, right?

So what we did was to say, well, how could- because there were to be clear, a range of opinions as there are in every community, right? So let not anyone say the community speaks with one voice ever. There were a range of opinions.

Some people were like, "awesome. I want my property value to go up and you know I've wanted more amenities for a long time. And I want the return of a strong Black middle class that I had when I first moved here.

And then there were people saying, "I am very concerned that I'm not gonna be able to afford to live here anymore. And I rent and I don't have the security that. Someone else might have. So both of those things were true.

And what we tried to do was to come up with a package of things that would say, "if you live in Woodlawn now and you want to stay, we want to help you stay. And if you're a homeowner now, we want to help you stay in your home. And if you want to move into Woodlawn and become a homeowner, we want to create new construction and home ownership opportunities."

All of those things came into a package of programs. And we're living that out right now in real time. So we have an RFP out right now on 63rd St. for hundreds of affordable housing units. We have a development right next to the 63rd Street Green Line that's under construction right with 40 affordable units.

We have a request for applications out right now for new construction homeownership, where we're writing down the cost to make it affordable to folks and we've put out 31 grants to longtime homeowners to make repairs to their homes so they can stay in their home and keep building wealth in their home and hopefully pass it on to in their family.

So it's like it's not one thing, it's a whole range of things that we hope together will allow for folks who want to stay, to stay. Folks who want to move in, to have the opportunity to do that and to allow for people to enjoy this as an amenity and not have it be something that makes them leave.

01:03:06 Jen Parks

We have time for one more question.

01:03:12 Audience Member 3

The former Lawndale resident of K Town. What are the thoughts behind gentrification and the number of developers? What is it 25% or so of Black, Brown communities are being impacted by gentrification. How do we navigate that as White allies? How do we approach development as a whole?

More directly to Marisa, but-

01:03:42 Commissioner Marisa Novara

Can you? I'm not sure what you meant by the 25% comment.

01:03:47 Audience Member 3

Communities that are being impacted in Chicago from gentrification. That's the latest study that of communities that are under the red warning zone of that.

01:03:59 Commissioner Marisa Novara

I think so here's where, you know, Tonika's earlier point about, let's be precise about our language. And I think often as White people were more comfortable. I don't remember what exactly what wording you used. This is a broader statement.

Because White people we tend to be more comfortable saying people of color than saying Black if we mean Black or Latino if we mean Latino or whatever the case might be. It really matters in Chicago because up until- there was a study in 2014- that up until that point at least, neighborhoods that were more than 40% Black did not gentrify.

If we're talking about gentrification, we are talking about it more of a Latino concern than we are a Black concern. So we need to be precise about our language.

I'm not saying that's static. We just had a conversation about Woodlawn and we certainly have seen lots of changes in Bronzeville and other places. So I'm not saying that that's like a never-ending finding, but I do think we need to be clear in our language about how these things impact neighborhoods differently.

And when we looked as part of our follow-up study to the Cost of Segregation, and we looked at the data around the region. The areas that stayed the same from we looked at 2010 to 2020. The areas that stayed the same.

Sorry, that wasn't 2020 yet. It must have been 2000 to 2010. The areas that stayed the same, in 2000, The majority they were massively White or were massively Black. When we looked at them ten years later, they were the same.

It was the areas that were majority Latino that would shift and when they shifted, they became more White. It was the areas that were already a mix that you might see move toward one pole or the other because we have a little bit of a hard time in Chicago just keeping something as a mix of people. That's not really our ethos. We have some neighborhoods that pull it off right, but it hasn't always been our history.

So I think I do think it's important that we're really precise in looking at that and why I do think it's important that when we have conversations about, for instance, concerns in Woodlawn that we're not dismissive. That we say, OK.

How do we look at something. For instance, if you look at what happened on the western end of the 606, we already knew that there was a rise in values happening on the east side of that trail. That was already underway and likely already heading West. I think most folks agree that the establishment of this trail really accelerated that process into more heavily Latino neighborhoods that had not yet been

And what I would say looking at that from my perch now is it was not until- I want to say 2016, '17- that the city first offered grants to longtime homeowners around the trail. To say we want to help you stay, we're realizing what's going on.

And in contrast to what I just said. The Obama Center Obama presidential Center just broke ground a second ago, and we've already got grants out to people helping them stay in their home.

I think there's a real difference in how you can be a proactive partner in spaces if you're paying attention to what's happening.

01:07:17 J.R. Fleming

And if I can just comment to that point, so let me just be blunt. I like being blunt with folks. So on the South side, you had a push.

Remember I talked about the wealthy and the rich moving to Chicago? The tech community, all of that, where they push White folks from the north side. They push them from the north side into these communities: Albany Park, Logan Square, Little Village, Pilsen.

I feel like I left out one right Latino community. So that's White gentri- Humboldt Park- gentrifying Latino community. On the South side, you have Chicago Lawn and the Southwest, lot of the Latinos who's been pushed from there, pushed over to the Black community.

So if you really look at it, it's like the folks that's going to push from the North. Got to skip over Lincoln Park. Can't afford to live there. Skip over Cabrini Green because you can't afford to live there.

I get to smile because public housing people still there.

Skip over South loop because you can't afford to live there.

So you seeing these folks push down into some of Bronzeville, Washington Park, Woodlawn, and now some White folks coming into Englewood now.

01:08:22 Tonika Lewis Johnson

Latinos now.

01:08:22 J.R. Fleming

Right.

01:08:23 J.R. Fleming

Well, well, well, the southwest. How do y'all say that? West Englewood? I could say Englewood. I can't do all this-

01:08:30 Tonika Lewis Johnson

As a result of the gentrification at Humboldt Park, the Latino population is decreasing-

01:08:31 [crosstalk]

01:08:34 J.R. Fleming

Is increasing on the South side, right. So we're pushing each other- as the White folks coming to Latino communities, Latinos are coming into Black community. I'm just going to be blunt with it- documented. Particular communities are like Humboldt Park. It's attractive now. All of these communities are attractive now. And so that's what we're saying on the West side.

01:08:55 Jen Parks

Thank you. We're going to wrap it up now.

01:08:59 Jen Parks

I want to just let's give a round of applause to our amazing panel here.

[applause]

We're also grateful for all of your attendance tonight. We do encourage you to network with folks. We can you can stick around a little bit more. We've got some food and drink is still available.

01:09:20 Jen Parks

You may be wondering what comes next. You some great ideas of ways in which to engage coming from our panelists tonight. There's a couple other ideas we have for you, in terms of ways that you can plug in, one is- to build off the earlier conversation- volunteer your time in one of these organizations that are here tonight or with other Chicago organizations that are focusing on Race and Housing issues.

01:09:43 Jen Parks

We encourage folks to make a financial investment. The sustainability of this work depends on the generosity of people like you. And please consider making a donation tonight.

01:09:53 Jen Parks

Inside your program, you'll see a little QR code that is for all of us that are up here in terms of the organizations that we represent. And you can learn more about us and you can also contribute.

And then third, continue the learning. We encourage you to check out Habitat Chicago's Race and Housing webpage. We will continue to post content there about this topic, and we'll continue to learn from the experts in the field. And you can also follow us and other organizations through social media, which is another way to stay abreast of opportunities.

You know, today I found a a terrific quote in my e-mail, unexpectedly. You get a lot of e-mail, not a lot of terrific quotes in there. [laughter]

But I got a really powerful one that I think sums up a lot of where we are and we're still moving through hundreds of years of racist policies and systems that we are trying to undo.

And I think as we speak into this moment and continue to advance, the words of Frederick Douglass from a letter from 1846. He was in Scotland and he wrote to the New York publisher, Horace Greeley, and he said the following:

“I'm one of those who think the best friend of a nation is he who most faithfully rebukes her for her sins. And he her worst enemy, who, under the specious and popular garb of patriotism, seeks to excuse, palliate, and defend them.”

And I think we have an opportunity to speak. We have an opportunity to engage. We have this opportunity to make a more equitable Chicago for everyone.

So again, thank you to our incredible panelists tonight. We are grateful.

Marissa, J.R., Tonika, thank you so much for being here.

And again, thank you all. Have a wonderful evening. Drive safe tonight. Please be careful on the roads. Thank you everybody.