



News
Release



December 4, 2012

Mayor Emanuel Unveils First-Ever Chicago New Americans Plan

New Plan, Developed over Months of Community Conversations, Outlines 27 Distinct Initiatives That Can Create Thousands of Jobs and Boost the Ability of Chicago's 560,000 Foreign-Born Residents to Fully Contribute to the City's Growth

Today, Mayor Emanuel released the Chicago New Americans Plan, which outlines 27 initiatives to build a thriving, diverse and welcoming city over the next three years. The plan, which is the first of its kind in the nation, highlights the potential economic impact when the City supports the creation and expansion of immigrant-owned businesses; develops, attracts, and retains talent and expertise from other countries; and aims to bolster the City's status as a vibrant and welcoming international city.

"With residents from over 140 countries and more than 100 languages spoken in our city, Chicago is a city of immigrants," said Mayor Emanuel. "These immigrants are small business owners, teachers, parents, clergymen, elected officials, and leaders in our communities. This is why I am committed to making Chicago the most immigrant friendly city in the nation. I thank the ONA Advisory Committee for assisting us in developing a plan that will ensure Chicago continues to thrive and grow and attract the world's leading human capital to compete in the 21st century global economy and beyond."

By implementing the initiatives listed in the Chicago New Initiatives Plan, the plan proposes to create thousands of jobs by increasing the growth of immigrant small and medium sized businesses and by doubling the exports of immigrants businesses. The plan also states that making early childhood options and summer enrichment opportunities more available to immigrant parents will increase savings later; for each dollar spent on early-childhood education, seven dollars in savings are coming.

In July 2011, Mayor Rahm Emanuel created the Office of New Americans and set the goal for Chicago to become the world's most immigrant-friendly city. Just months later, the Mayor convened an advisory committee comprised of 50 leaders representing Chicago's business, academic, civic and philanthropic communities. The goal of the advisory committee was to identify challenges unique to immigrants, recommend initiatives to be implemented over the next three years, and develop a detailed implementation plan for the Office of New Americans and its partners.

The Chicago New Americans Plan recommends a broad array of new programs and initiatives, which are designed to improve the day-to-day lives of immigrants while promoting Chicago's economic growth and cultural vitality.

The plan's 27 initiatives are grouped into three categories: Our Growth, Our Youth, and Our Communities. The three categories are divided into eight subgroups which will focus

on economic opportunities, human capital, education, public safety, health, city services, civic engagement and ensuring that Chicago remains a place where diversity is welcomed and celebrated.

“The Chicago New Americans Plan is an economic improvement and community development tool that will be a national model for creating a city that welcomes and incorporates the immigrant community into all city services and programs,” said Celena Roldan, Executive Director, Erie Neighborhood House. “Historically serving immigrants since 1870, Erie Neighborhood House is committed to empowering the immigrant community through the Mayor’s New American Plan and applauds his efforts to make Chicago the most immigrant friendly city in the country.”

"As one of the most rapidly growing immigrant groups in the Chicago area, South Asian Americans appreciates having a voice as the city considers how to make the city more inclusive and leverage the great potential of all immigrant groups," said Ami Gandhi, South Asian American Policy & Research Institute (SAAPRI).

"Our humanity is enhanced by our differences; we build Chicago knowing that our diversity represents our strength and our best selves," said Jerry Doyle, Vice Provost, Illinois Institute of Technology. "The Mayor's announcement today reminds us all that we are ONE Chicago; that as we welcome, embrace, and celebrate New Americans we draw upon and renew the long-standing tradition of Chicago as a city of immigrants upon whose shoulders we have launched the dreams of millions; a city whose voice and achievements serve as a beacon for all to aspire to - including ourselves."

To make Chicago the world’s most immigrant-friendly city, the City will effectively manage the implementation and success of this plan. The Office of New Americans will utilize a multi-tiered scorecard to measure initiative implementation and results. The scorecard will also evaluate the extent to which the initiatives together are improving economic, civic, and cultural vitality for Chicago.

The ONA collaborated with Civic Consulting Alliance, A.T. Kearney, and Downtown Partners Chicago, all of whom provided their support on a pro-bono basis, in the development of the plan.

The Chicago New Americans Plan was unveiled at the Erie Neighborhood House, a place historically serving immigrants since 1870. The Chicago New Americans Plan and a full list of initiatives are available at <http://www.cityofchicago.org/newamericans>.

###

ONA Advisory Council Members in their respective subgroups:

Economic Opportunities:

- Omar Duque, President and Chief Executive Officer, Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Nilda Esparza, Executive Director, Little Village Chamber of Commerce
- Sue Gin, Chief Executive Officer, Flying Food Groups
- Liz Griffiths, Executive Director, Albany Park Chamber of Commerce
- Luis Gutierrez, Executive Director, Latinos Progresando
- Michael Mini, Director Government Relations, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
George

- Chunkau Mui, Global Business Consultant, U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency
- Rob Paral, Principal, Rob Paral and Associates
- Jaz Park, Board Member, Korean American Association of Chicago
- Alberto Senior, Senior Exec., Miller Coors
- Alejandro Silva, Chief Executive Officer, Evans Food Group
- Roberto Rodrigues, Professor, University of Chicago

Human Capital and Education:

- Nancy Aardema, Executive Director, Logan Square Neighborhood Association
- Ana Bedard, Associate Director, St. Augustine Institute for Workforce Education
- Tanya Cabrera, Associate Director, Illinois Institute of Technology
- Gerald P. Doyle, Vice Provost, Illinois Institute of Technology
- Roberto Gonzalez, Assistant Professor, University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration
- Jill Kushner Bishop, President, Multilingual Connections
- Clara Lopez, Vice President, El Valor
- Juan Rangel, Executive Director, United Neighborhood Organization (UNO)
- Harold Rice, Executive Director, Albany Park Community Center
- Juan Salgado, President, Instituto del Progreso Latino
- Rebecca Tancredi, Managing Director, Upwardly Global - Chicago Office

Safety, Health and Access to city services:

- Walter "Slim" Coleman, Reverend, Centro Sin Fronteras
- Ahlam Jbara, Interim Executive Director, The Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago
- Kathleen Jung Hee Fernicola, Policy Director, Asian American Institute
- Viviana Martinez, Chief of Staff, Office of Cook County Commissioner Jesus Garcia
- Mary Meg McCarthy, Executive Director, National Immigration Justice Center
- Katya Nuques, Associate Director, Enlace Chicago
- Caroline Orzac Shoenberger, Director, Chicago Legal Clinic
- Maria Pesqueira, President and Chief Executive Officer, Mujeres Latinas en Accion
- Sima Qureshi, Executive Director, Muslim Women's Resource Center
- Celena Roldan, Executive Director, Erie Neighborhood House
- Layla Suleiman Gonzalez, Director Office of Strategic Planning, Illinois Department of Human Services
- Tania Uzueta, Advocacy Coordinator, LGBTQ Immigrant Rights Project - ALMA
- Bernie Wong, Executive Director, Chinese American Service League

Civic engagement, Diversity welcomed and celebrated:

- Lawrence Benito, Executive Director, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant & Refugee Rights
- Dalila Fridi, Senior Technical Application Analyst, Northwestern Memorial Hospital
- Ami Gandhi, Executive Director, South Asian American Policy and Research Institute
- Maricela Garcia, Executive Director, Gads Hill Center
- Alie Kabba, Executive Director, United African Organization
- Gary Kenzer, Executive Director, Polish American Association
- Emma Lozano, Founder, Centro Sin Fronteras
- Denise Martinez, Director of Office of New Americans, Office of the Governor
- Ahmed Rehab, Executive Director, CAIR Chicago
- Rebecca Sanders, Executive Director, Chicago Cultural Alliance
- Freddy Santiago, Pastor, El Reban Church

Elena Segura, Director, Office for Immigrant Affairs and Immigrant Education,
Archdiocese of Chicago