

BLACK LIVES MATTER

We are a community-building organization of dedicated residents and allies working together to develop leaders and create opportunities and programs that build a vital Garfield Park community.

Elevating local leaders is built into our mission. In Garfield Park, this means lifting up the work of legacy residents, the vast majority of whom are Black. At times it seems like our commitment to racial equity is self-evident. But in the past week, we have realized how important it is to affirm, loudly and clearly:

BLACK LIVES MATTER

We mourn the death of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many more who have been unjustly and violently killed as a result of systemic racism. We also grieve for the many others who we have lost as a result of racial disparities in our city, including and especially the victims of retaliatory gun violence and those who have met untimely deaths related to COVID-19.

We condemn, in no uncertain terms, the use of excessive force in policing. It is the duty of all officers to serve and protect Black residents and Black communities.

Racial equity and justice, and creating opportunities for West Side residents, has been and will continue to be the foundation of our work.

We will continue to pursue projects that build long-term community sustainability and resilience:

We will grow our own food, and share it in a way that creates a small but vital revenue stream to maintain gardens and green spaces, building healthy lifestyles from the ground up. We will support residents to start and build businesses and our commercial corridors. We will push for community engagement - and ownership - in new local investments. We will support volunteer-led efforts and build new coalitions, like the Garfield Park Coalition for Affordability and Stability, Rite to Wellness, and West Side Rising.

We will work for more healthy, affordable, and fair housing practices, and for increased home investment and wealth-building opportunities for our neighbors. We will hire local vendors and contractors. We will build partnerships in the community and across the city so that we can lift up the voices of West Side residents. We'll show up at court to support local residents and preserve housing. And we will meet with the Open Space and Land Use Committee once a month.

Most of us have built our lives and raised our families on the West Side. We're not going anywhere.

We will continue to offer programs and spark conversations that specifically address racial equity and justice. We invite you, our neighbors and allies, to join us.

GARFIELD PARK
COMMUNITY COUNCIL