Our Neighborhood

The Auburn Gresham Neighborhood Network launched in 2016 with United Way of Metro Chicago coordinating efforts between The Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation and 10 social service agencies. The Network introduced the Auburn Gresham GOLD Initiative, which provides professional development and literacy supports for five schools, as well as expanded health services and workforce development training and job placement to parents. It also leveraged its resources to immediately mobilize and distribute critical basic needs items to residents who were negatively impacted by COVID-19 and attracted the $10 million Pritzker Traubert Foundation Chicago Prize.

Auburn Gresham dates back to the early 1800s but boomed around the 1920s, when the population tripled from 20,000 to 60,000. Through the 1960s and 1970s, racism and red-lining led to disinvestment and caused Auburn Gresham to experience a drastic shift. By the 1990s, the South Side neighborhood was facing increased unemployment, depopulation, and declining housing values, among other issues. Today, Auburn Gresham is a predominantly Black community whose residents are working with community organizations to revitalize the neighborhood.

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES: A DUAL APPROACH IN AUBURN GRESHAM

- Food
- Housing Assistance
- Individual Health and Wellness

Responding to Immediate Basic Needs of Auburn Gresham Residents

Building Neighborhood Systems Stronger and More Equitably in Auburn Gresham

LEAD AGENCY
Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation

COMMUNITY VISION
Celebrate the past and present in a healthy and sustainable environment inclusive of all residents, stakeholders, businesses, and partners that make the places of greater Auburn Gresham a community of choice.
JOIN US! Together, we can build neighborhoods like Auburn Gresham stronger and more equitably.

Direct your United Way gift to “Neighborhood Networks” to be a part of this critical strategy. Learn more at LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/neighborhood-networks

Neighborhood Current Day Snapshot

TOTAL POPULATION
44,878

INCOME
Median Household Income .................. $37,741
Rate of Home Ownership .............. 46%
Poverty Rate .................. 25.4%

EDUCATION
Total Schools .................. 12
Students Enrolled .................. 3,725
Student Transfer Rate .... 18.3%
Percentage of Homeless Students .... 9.3%
Adults with High School Diploma ...... 86%
Adults with College Degree .......... 15.5%

EMPLOYMENT
Unemployment Rate .... 19.4%
Top 5 Employment Sectors
Retail .................. 27.8%
Accommodation & Food Service .......... 17%
Health Care .................. 9.6%
Education .................. 9.3%
Finance .................. 6.7%

Neighborhood Network in Action

The Auburn Gresham Neighborhood Network is using catalytic development to jumpstart local economic growth and create employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Increased access to health care, a growing green economy, and affordable housing will strengthen the neighborhood significantly. Developments include:

- New federal qualified health clinic run by UI Health–Mile Square Health Center serving over 11,000 patients its first quarter and on target for up to 20,000 patients in its first year
- Jump starting the renewable energy industry on Chicago’s South Side, including a high-tech urban farm and education and new anaerobic digester on the Green Era Campus bringing sustainable jobs, training, and food equity
- Promoting sustainable market rate and affordable housing, with preservation of current stock
- Employment opportunities and job training for community members and comprehensive support services
- Creating a Health and Wellness Campus, starting with the opening of Healthy Lifestyle Hub with essential services, including a doctor’s office, bank, restaurant, and teaching kitchen, and expanding health-related services to nearby vacant properties
- Breaking ground on a local Metra Station (opening 2024)

COALITION HIGHLIGHTS

2020 Pritzker Traubert Foundation Chicago Prize Winner
Opened the Healthy Lifestyle Hub with essential services, including a pharmacy, doctor’s office, bank, restaurant, and teaching kitchen
Provided free Internet access to CPS students through Chicago Connected
Expanded resources to local schools through the AGGold Summer Camp’s capacity, which served the largest number of neighborhood youth since its inception
Directed investments to neighborhood-based organizations through a Black and Mexican-led Excellerator Fund grant partnership to help small nonprofits build capacity; partnered with Latinos Progresando to raise capital, which has been awarded to 43 small community organizations