United Way of Metro Chicago
neighborhood network INITIATIVE

AUBURN GRESHAM NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

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.

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.

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES: A DUAL APPROACH IN AUBURN GRESHAM

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 stable housing will strengthen the neighborhood significantly.

Developments include:

- Jump starting the renewable energy industry on Chicago's South Side, including a new anaerobic digester on the **Green Era Campus** bringing sustainable jobs, training, and food access, plus a high-tech urban farm and education
- New federally qualified health clinic run by **UI Health–Mile Square Health Center** exceeding goal of 20,000 visits per year
- Promoting sustainable market rate and **stable 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 UIC Neighborhood Center, doctor's office, bank, restaurant, and teaching kitchen, and expanding health-related services to nearby vacant properties
- Breaking ground on a local **Metra Station**

Photo Credit: Tom Harris

COALITION HIGHLIGHTS

- 2020 Pritzker Traubert Foundation Chicago Prize Winner
- Expanded resources to local schools through the AG Gold 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

JOIN US! Together, we can build neighborhoods like Auburn Gresham stronger. Direct your United Way gift to **"Neighborhood Networks"** to be a part of this critical strategy. Learn more at **LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/neighborhood-networks**

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