









2021 Budget Community Conversations | Wednesday, September 16,  
Topic: COVID-19 Budget Impacts

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

1. Are you satisfied with the City's COVID-19 response so far? If not, how can the City improve?

- Yes (Provided housing for those in need in hotels, but it took some time to ramp up.)
- Yes (Felt that Connections for the Homeless did the bulk of work regarding housing, but kept residents well informed. The City's rent moratorium was a huge lifesaver for small nonprofits)
- Yes.
- Not sure. (Results in Evanston have been better than most. Not sure how much to credit the City, but has no reason to fault the City.)
- Not sure. (Appreciates that public spaces like the lakefront were kept open, which became a safe haven for some Chicagoans. Disappointed about the loss of businesses, and feels the City could be doing more to assist them.)
- Feel like schools are doing more for youth than the City. Would like to see the City improve support for youth and students.
- Yes, satisfied in terms of proposed economic solutions
- Did a great job
- 2021 budget not relevant to COVID
- Empower Health and Human Services to look at more public health issues
- Enable Health and Human Services to work more with police and fire
- Satisfied and very impressed by the City response with COVID-19, especially with the assistance with

- the homeless population and the senior facilities to keep the death in those facilities low.
- Communication surrounding the pandemic is helpful and consistent.



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2. What services should the City prioritize to respond to COVID-19?

- Continued focus on public health, including a mask mandate, quarantine guidelines, and distributing PPE
- Make masks available at the Library or a more friendly location (not the police station)
- Communicate and coordinate better with Northwestern
- Health department should consider climate impact, pathogens in storm water and its effects on health
- Improve communication – would like to see the actions the City has taken so far as it relates to Covid-19 and contract tracing



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3. How can we ensure the City's COVID-19 response is reaching all communities in Evanston?

- It's not possible to over communicate in this situation. Use every available communications channel
- Utilize more public engagement and in-person outreach to gather input. Need more effort to reach isolated residents. Knock on more doors
- Partner with service providers that already have contacts with those who may not have access to technology. Provide free COVID testing at the Levy Center as an example
- Work with schools and nonprofits more to reach isolated individuals
- Need to ensure City is reaching seniors
- Not all communities are reachable by email. Consider snail mail
- Do phone alerts with an option for residents to Opt-out
- Need more resources devoted to communication overall
- Communication surrounding the pandemic is helpful and consistent





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4. Are there any other issues the city should focus on related to COVID-19

- Mental health; coordinate, promote, and make mental health resources available.
- Support food and housing need first.
- Invest more in testing to identify asymptomatic contacts
- Provide care for those who contract COVID
- Rise in Crime
- Unemployment
- Food insecurity
- Would like to compare Evanston with our neighboring communities such as Naperville, Skokie, to see how we prioritize our funding around programs and personnel









2021 Budget Community Conversations | Monday, September 21  
Topic: Health & Human Services

3. What ideas do you have about how the City should continue funding our social services?

- Decrease funding from the police department and reinvesting it in social services. This would address a lot of the core issues. This must be a thoughtful decision
- See what other towns and cities are doing. More research needs to be done. Consider selling off City property
- Defund the police is a concept that is very much circulating. Not wise to try and cut any essential services. Concerned about the apparent attraction of taking resources from one department to another. There are always tradeoffs. This would need to be done cautiously
- Do not sell the Civic Center. Public land is a commodity that City should hold on to. Short-term solution. Look at departments budgets and consider whether the health department can take a more significant role. Reallocate and deploy police and fire funds differently
- Participatory budgeting on an ongoing basis - specific items for the budget
- Reallocating and reimagining resources from the police department
- Look at how services could be provided elsewhere





**2021 Budget Community Conversations | Monday, September 24**  
**Topic: Conversaciones del Presupuesto 2021 (Sesión en español)**

**2) ¿Qué tipo de servicios cree que faltan en la comunidad hispanohablante de Evanston?**  
**(What types of services are missing in the Latino community in Evanston?)**

- A mentoring program, not just for youth, but that would help. A program where they could engage with our kids and meet them where they are at. We need a 3rd person to help, outside of the family unit that can help. I have not been able to do this within the family unit.
- A lot of services are offered by the city, but they are not accessible to Spanish speaking communities. Are you reaching all community members? Collecting information from participants and assuring that participation is a representation of the diversity of the city. We need more services to the Hispanic community.
- Social services are the most important. We spend a lot of money on the police. I would like to see some of those services transferred to social services as mentioned in the previous comments. What practices are you using that are culturally competent for the Latino community? As an example, is there a community psychologist that can help the Latino community as an individual or family unit?
- All the links for assistance for community services are hard to navigate and are not in Spanish. In addition, technology is a barrier. Those services should be front and center on the City' webpage. There should be a

- concerted effort by the city departments to proactively outreach to the Latino community. Specifically, senior services and youth areas. They are not reaching where Latinos naturally gather.
- The Latino community doesn't necessarily congregate in specific neighborhoods or spaces. But that's why partnerships are important. The school districts touch so many of our Latino families. Yet they don't have a strong liaison in the city. We don't have that in the city. We have so much talent in Evanston who know services, schools, communities, and there should be an effort for the city to hire local talent. They know how to navigate the city; we need to hire them. In the city, they tend to hire people who already have connections with the City. Whether it's someone they know, has a reference in the City.
  - When you get a ticket or citation in the city, there are no judges that are bilingual. The majority of Latinos struggle with English. They deserve the possibility of being to speak to a judge and fight for issues. If they speak with a judge that doesn't speak Spanish, you can't fight for yourself. I think of senior citizens who can't fight for themselves and defend themselves in this situation.







