In 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. made North Lawndale the base of operations for the Chicago Freedom Movement — the first expansion of his civil rights work from the South to the northern U.S. The neighborhood, less than three miles from the Loop, was roiled in the 1950s and ‘60s by tensions between new African-American residents, who had difficulty finding work, and white workers who commuted in for jobs at the nearby International Harvester, Western Electric Plant and Sears, Roebuck & Co. After the West Side riots of 1968, many businesses left and housing stock continued to decline as poverty, unemployment and crime grew.

Four decades later, North Lawndale neighbors are working together to realize Dr. King’s vision “to make real the promises of democracy...to open the doors of opportunity” through organizations such as the North Lawndale Community Coordinating Council (NLCCC), a group that includes community nonprofits, business owners, elected officials and residents. The NLCCC is currently working with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning to create the North Lawndale Neighborhood Plan, designed to help bring to life the NLCCC’s vision of North Lawndale as “a healthy, vibrant community with a diversified and innovative economy, competitive work force, engaged citizens and infrastructure that supports long-term, sustainable growth.”

You can see the beauty in the neighborhood and what it could be and what it definitely used to be.

– RUMC focus group participant from North Lawndale

HIC survey participants asked how common violence is in their community: 72.8% said “extremely” or “very.”
Who lives here?

- **36,169** people live in North Lawndale. The average household size is **3.3** people, compared to an average Chicago household size of **2.6** people.¹

- North Lawndale has approximately the same population density as Chicago overall, with a population per square mile of **11,267.6** people compared to **11,841.8** people per square mile in Chicago.²

- Between 2000 and 2010, North Lawndale’s population decreased by **16.3%**. In Chicago overall, the population decreased by **6.9%** during the same period.³

RACE AND ETHNICITY⁴

The population in North Lawndale is mostly African American.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Lawndale</th>
<th>Chicago</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/ Latino</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AGE⁷

The population in North Lawndale is younger than the city of Chicago average, with a median age of **28.7** as compared to the citywide average of **33.3**.

If the kids see the grownups coming together they’ll come together. Kids learn how to hate from grownups hating.

– RUMC focus group participant from North Lawndale
What are the potential barriers to good health?

**HARDSHIP INDEX**

North Lawndale’s hardship index is **87**, based on the following statistics (North Lawndale at left, Chicago at right):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Lawndale</th>
<th>Chicago</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crowded Housing</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households Below Poverty</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment for Those Over Age 16</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of High School Diploma</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Under 18 and Over 64</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per-Capita Income</td>
<td>$12,034</td>
<td>$28,202</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHILD OPPORTUNITY INDEX**

The Child Opportunity Index (COI) assigns a “low” ranking to North Lawndale’s educational opportunities; “very low” to health and environmental opportunities; and “very low” to social and economic opportunities. This gives the neighborhood an overall COI ranking of **“very low.”**

**CRIME**

North Lawndale is in the third quartile of communities served by Rush for its rate of crimes against people, including simple assault, aggravated assault and homicide.

**LACK OF HEALTH INSURANCE**

North Lawndale residents have health insurance at about the same rate as residents of the rest of the city. However, Chicago’s percentage of people without insurance is significantly higher than the percentage in the U.S. overall, which is 13.3% of the population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Lawndale</th>
<th>Chicago</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple Assaults</td>
<td>11.53</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggravated Assaults</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homicides</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I’m tired of the...stuff that’s going to Band-Aid us but not really heal us. That doesn’t make any kind of sense.

– RUMC focus group participant from North Lawndale
What is the impact of the barriers?

YEARS OF POTENTIAL LIFE LOST

North Lawndale ranks **eighth** among Chicago’s 77 neighborhoods in total number of years of potential life lost annually. Annual years of potential life lost per 100,000 residents aged 75 and younger due to selected causes of death: **15,106**.

What resources make life better?

COMMUNITY ASSETS

Some of North Lawndale’s community assets include the following:

**Hospital**
- Mount Sinai Medical Center
- Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital

**Grocery store**
- Leamington Foods

**Childcare center**
- North Lawndale YMCA

**Pharmacy/clinics**
- Lawndale Christian Health Center
- Take Care Clinic at Walgreens

**Public parks**
- Christiana Playlot Park
- Crawford Playlot Park
- Douglas Park
- Franklin Park
- Ginkgo Playlot Park
- Hornbeam Playlot Park
- London Playlot Park
- Millard Playlot Park
- Ninebark Playlot Park
- Park No. 519
- Park No. 534

**Community-based health centers**
- ACCESS at Sinai
- ACCESS Westside Family Health Center
- Lawndale Christian Health Center – Homan Square
- Lawndale Christian Health Center – Ogden Campus

**CHA housing**
- Park Douglas

**Nursing facility**
- Sacred Heart Home

**Childcare centers**
- Gads Hill Center
- Great Expectations Learning Academy Inc.

**Schools**
- Les Finch’s Learning Tree Day (Christian, Daycare/PK, K)
- Chalmers, Crown, Dvorak, Herzl, Hughes C, Johnson, Lawndale, Mason, Penn (Public, PK-8)
- Chicago West Side Christian School (Calvinist, PK-8)
- St. Agatha Catholic Academy (Roman Catholic, PK-8)
- Kipp Chicago-Ascend Primary (Charter, K-5)
- Plamondon (Public, K-8)
- Frazier Charter, Legacy, Learn-Butler (Charter, K-8)
- Frazier Prospective (Magnet, K-8)
- Kipp-Ascend (Charter, 5-8)
- Collins (Public, 9-12)
- Magic Johnson-North Lawndale (Citywide, 9-12)
- North Lawndale-Christian, North Lawndale-Collins (Charter, 9-12)
- Community Christian Alternative Academy (Alternative School, 10-12)
- YCCS-CCA Academy (Charter, 10-12)

**Churches with which Rush has affiliations**
- Greater Galilee Baptist Church
- Kedvale New Mt. Zion M.B. Church

YEARS OF POTENTIAL LIFE LOST PER 100,000 RESIDENTS
North Lawndale at left, Chicago at right

North Lawndale at left, Chicago at right

15,106
8,371

YEARS OF POTENTIAL LIFE LOST PER 100,000 RESIDENTS
North Lawndale at left, Chicago at right

15,106
8,371
ENDNOTES

5 MetroPulse Community Data Snapshot, North Lawndale, www.cmap.illinois.gov/.
7 MetroPulse Community Data Snapshot, North Lawndale, www.cmap.illinois.gov/.
8 data.cityofchicago.org/Health-Human-Services/hardship-index/792q-4t4u.
10 www.chicagohealthatlas.org/place/north_lawndale.
11 www.chicagohealthatlas.org/place/north_lawndale.
13 data.cityofchicago.org/Health-Human-Services/Public-Health-Statistics-Selected-underlying-cause/j6cj-r444.