Community Snapshot: South Lawndale
South Lawndale is the official name of this neighborhood located five miles southwest of the Loop, but the community is better known as La Villita/Little Village. Now the city’s largest Mexican neighborhood, it was settled by Czechs and Germans after the Chicago fire of 1871; the Mexican population grew throughout the late 20th century, particularly as people moved from neighborhoods that were disrupted by the construction of the University of Illinois at Chicago campus. Today, a thriving commercial strip along 26th Street is the centerpiece of South Lawndale — and, after the Magnificent Mile, is the city’s second-highest tax-generating district.

In 1990, a group of community leaders founded the Little Village Community Development Corporation (renamed Enlace Chicago in 2008). Enlace’s more than 140 full-time and part-time staff members focus on community and economic development; education; organizing and advocacy; and violence prevention, annually serving more than 8,000 youth and adults in Little Village and the surrounding neighborhoods.

The community has a high density of community resources, including health clinics, nonprofits, and schools. It also has a rich history of local activism and leadership, and many community amenities that are a direct result. Little Village’s non-profit and community development community has a long history of cross-community and cross-sector planning and collaboration that has led to impressive progress in improving quality of life for community residents.

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

- From www.enlacechicago.org
Who lives here?

- **69,951** people live in South Lawndale. The average household size is **3.7** people, compared to an average Chicago household size of **2.6** people.¹

- South Lawndale is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the city, with a population per square mile of **15,235.7** people as compared to **11,841.8** people per square mile in Chicago.²

- Between 2000 and 2010, South Lawndale’s population decreased by **14.9%**. In Chicago overall, the population decreased by **6.9%** during the same period.³

### RACE AND ETHNICITY¹

The population in South Lawndale is mostly Hispanic or Latino.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SOUTH LAWNDALE</th>
<th>CHICAGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.2%</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>84.5%</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### AGE³

The population in South 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**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SOUTH LAWNDALE</th>
<th>CHICAGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80+</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-79</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-49</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-34</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-0</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIC survey participants asked how much neighbors trust and look out for each other: **52.4%** said “a little/none/not at all.”

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¹ Source: U.S. Census Bureau

² Source: U.S. Census Bureau

³ Source: U.S. Census Bureau
What are the potential barriers to good health?

HARDSHIP INDEX
South Lawndale’s hardship index is 96, based on the following statistics (South Lawndale at left, Chicago at right):

- **CROWDED HOUSING**: 15.2% vs. 4.7%
- **HOUSEHOLDS BELOW POVERTY**: 30.7% vs. 19.7%
- **UNEMPLOYMENT FOR THOSE OVER AGE 16**: 15.8% vs. 12.9%
- **LACK OF HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA**: 54.8% vs. 19.5%
- **POPULATION UNDER 18 AND OVER 64**: 33.8% vs. 33.5%
- **PER-CAPITA INCOME**: $10,402 vs. $28,202

CHILD OPPORTUNITY INDEX
The Child Opportunity Index (COI) assigns a “very low” ranking to South Lawndale in all three opportunity areas: education; health and environment; and social and economic. This gives the neighborhood an overall COI ranking of “very low.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITY AREAS</th>
<th>SOUTH LAWNDALE</th>
<th>CHICAGO</th>
<th>UNITED STATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC</strong></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LACK OF HEALTH INSURANCE
South Lawndale residents have health insurance at a significantly lower rate than residents of the rest of the city. Of note: 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.

- **SOUTH LAWNDALE**: 36.3%
- **CHICAGO**: 19.6%
- **UNITED STATES**: 13.3%

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRIME TYPE</th>
<th>SOUTH LAWNDALE</th>
<th>CHICAGO</th>
<th>UNITED STATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIMPLE ASSAULTS</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOMICIDES</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have plenty of hospitals and clinics; however, we do not have any collaboration. ...Why can’t we have any collaboration between these bigger institutions and the schools?

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

YEARS OF POTENTIAL LIFE LOST
South Lawndale ranks 66th 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: 5,114.

What resources make life better?

COMMUNITY ASSETS
Some of South Lawndale’s community assets include the following:

**Hospitals**
- Saint Anthony Hospital

**Public parks**
- Homan Park
- Limas Playground Park
- Madero Park
- Miami Playlot Park
- Piotrowski Park
- Shedd Park
- Washtenaw Park

**Community-based health centers**
- ACCESS Centro Medico
- ACCESS Centro Medico San Rafael
- ACCESS Plaza Family Health Center
- ACCESS Servicio Medicos la Villita
- Centro De Salud Esperanza
- Dr. Jorge Prieto Health Center of Cook County

**School-based health centers**
- Alivio Medical Center at Little Village Lawndale High School
- Farragut Academy – Lawndale Christian Health Center

**Nursing facilities**
- California Gardens and Rehabilitation Center
- Park House Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

**Mental health centers**
- Pilsen Wellness Center
- Saint Anthony Hospital

**CHA housing**
- Albany Terrace Apartments
- Lawndale Gardens

**Pharmacies**
- Walgreens

**Schools**
- Ortiz de Dominguez (Public, PK-2)
- Cardenas (Public, PK-3)
- McCormick (Public, PK-5)
- Gary (Public, PK, 3-8)
- Corkery, Hammond, Little Village, Spry, Telpochcalli, Whitney, Zapata (Public, PK-8)
- Castellanos (Public, 4-8)
- Farragut (Public, PK, 9-12)
- Madero (Public, 6-8)
- Infinity, Multicultural, Social Justice, Spry, World Language (Public, 9-12)
- Kanoon, Saucedo (Magnet, PK-8)
- Epipany Catholic School, St. Agnes of Bohemia School, Our Lady of Tepeyac Elementary School (Roman Catholic, PK-8)
- Grace Christian Academy Education (Lutheran-Missouri Synod, PK-8)
- UNO-Paz (Charter, K-8)
- Our Lady of Tepeyac High School (Roman Catholic, All Girls, 9-12)
- York (Citywide, 9-12)
- YCCS-Latino Youth (Charter, 10-12)

**Neighborhood organization**
- Enlace Chicago
ENDNOTES

1 MetroPulse Community Data Snapshot, South Lawndale, www.cmap.illinois.gov/.
3 MetroPulse Community Data Snapshot, South Lawndale.
4 MetroPulse Community Data Snapshot, South Lawndale.
5 MetroPulse Community Data Snapshot, South Lawndale.
6 data.cityofchicago.org/Health-Human-Services/hardship-index/792q-4ju.
8 www.chicagohealthatlas.org/place/south_lawndale.
9 www.chicagohealthatlas.org/place/south_lawndale.
11 data.cityofchicago.org/Health-Human-Services/Public-Health-Statistics-Selected-underlying-cause/56cjr444.