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Mayoral Platform 2027

Executive Summary

Chicago's fiscal trajectory is unsustainable. Appropriations have grown 54.3% since 2019 while inflation grew 27.0%—a 2.0× divergence that has crowded out service investment and created budget fragility. This platform proposes to reverse that trajectory through an integrated fiscal operating system anchored in five principles: measurable capacity, cross-pillar rigor, operator discipline, public transparency, and reinvestment predictability.

Platform in Numbers: 9 Pillars, 9 Commitments

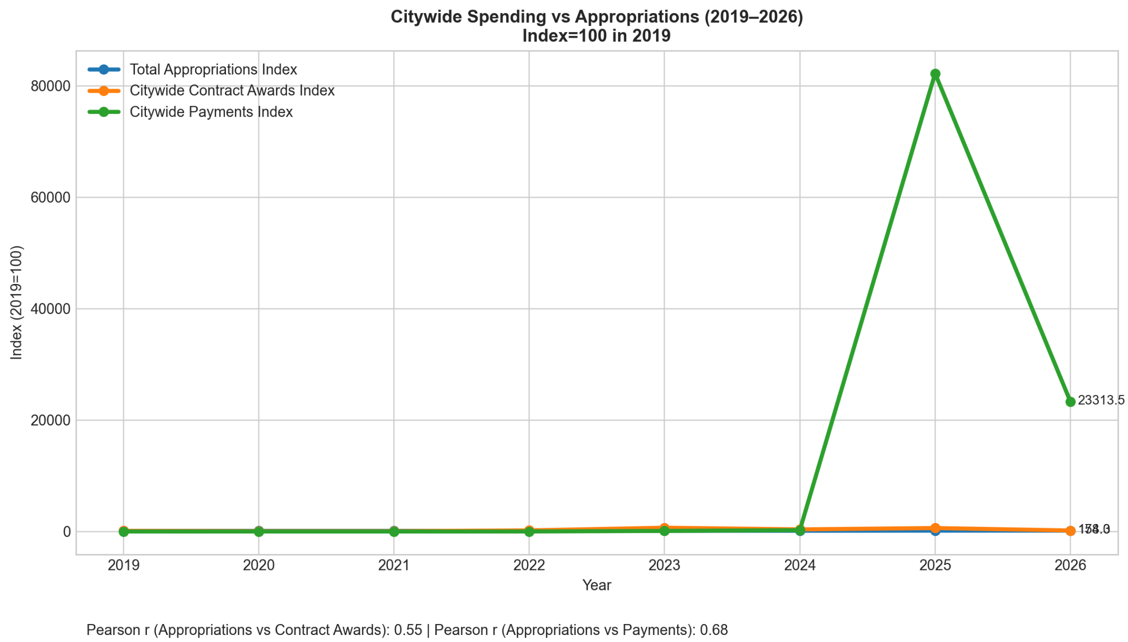
Pillar	Problem	Target
Fiscal Discipline	Spending 2.0× inflation	CPI+1% cap, no tax increase
Public Safety	14.6 homicides/100k, -1,276 officers	500 net new officers
Workforce Productivity	+38.9% exempt growth, $217M for zero officers	$217M to 500 officers
Procurement Reform	$20B+ unverified, 24.7% payment match	$1.1B-$1.9B/yr capture
Healthcare	$5.79B fragmented contracts	$245M/yr savings
Pension Solvency	$35.4B unfunded, 26.2% funded ratio	60% funded ratio by 2040
Housing + TIF	Fragmented incentives, slow permits	30-day permit SLA
Economic Growth	GDP +4%, unemployment +1.49pp	Unemployment to national -0.5pp
Parenting Matters	Teen takeovers, fragmented youth/family services	43-50% violence reduction, 3-5 pilot areas

The Fiscal Operating System

Fiscal Discipline is the operating system for all 8 other pillars. Without controllable appropriation growth, no reinvestment is durable. The platform enforces three rules: (1)

CPI+1% growth cap, (2) monthly fiscal transparency, (3) 100% payment verification for contracts >$1M.

Spending Growth Outpaced Inflation 2.0×



Appropriations grew 54.3% while inflation grew 27.0%. This divergence has crowded out both reserves and reinvestment capacity.

Financial Capacity Stack (Year-1 Projection)

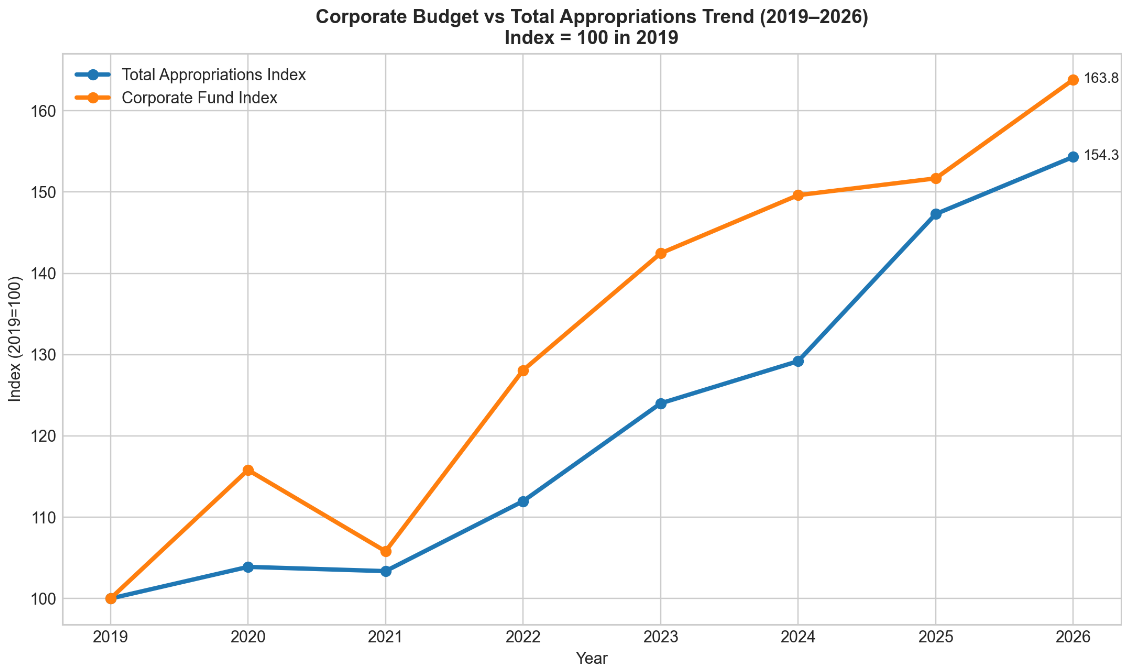
Scenario	Procurement	Overtime Reform	Healthcare Savings	Total Available	Notes
Conservative	$400M	$60M	$120M	$580M	50% execution
Base	$700M	$90M	$180M	$970M	75% execution
Aggressive	$950M	$110M	$220M	$1,280M	90% execution

Reinvestment Allocation (per $1.00 of base scenario $970M capacity): $0.44 → Public Safety hiring, $0.33 → Pension ADC floor, $0.23 → Neighborhood services & youth/family programs.

Pillar 1: Fiscal Discipline — Ending 2× Inflation Growth

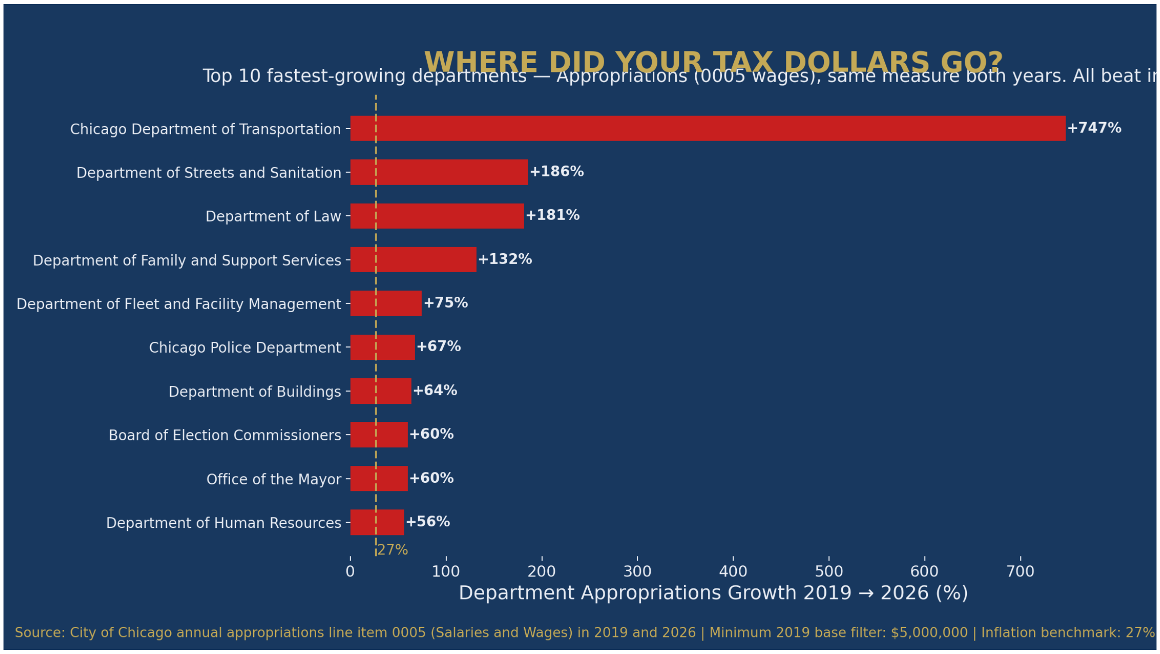
Chicago appropriations: $9.59B (2019) → $14.80B (2026). Corporate Fund: $3.82B → $6.25B (+63.8%). This growth has outpaced inflation, resident income, and any reasonable service improvement metric.

Corporate Fund Growth Accelerated After 2021



The Corporate Fund (core taxpayer fund) has grown at compound rates suggesting structural overspend rather than temporary budget pressure.

Growth is Concentrated in Largest Departments



Police (+$742M, +47%), Public Health (+$445M, +152%), and CDOT (+$747M, +447%) account for 65% of total appropriation growth.

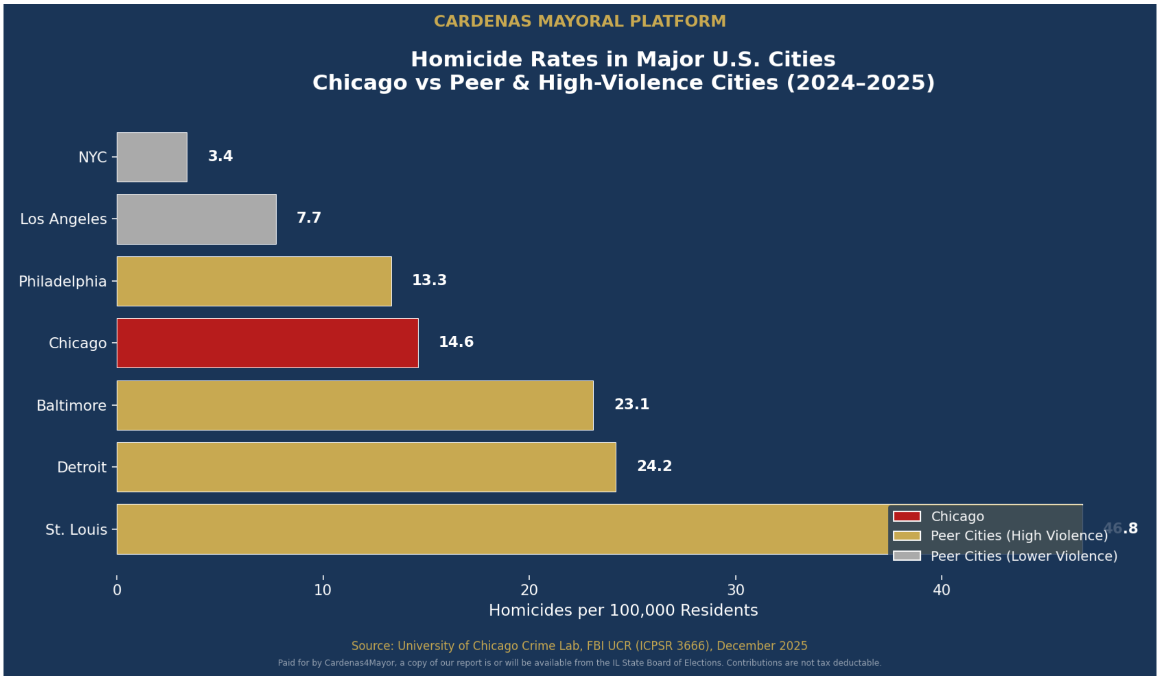
100-Day Actions (Fiscal Discipline):

- Day 1: Sign executive order establishing Fiscal Transparency Office.
- Day 30: Submit CPI+1% spending growth cap ordinance to City Council.
- Day 60: Complete line-item zero-based budget review for all dept budget growth >25% since 2019.
- Day 100: Publish Year-1 Balanced Budget blueprint with no property tax increase.

Pillar 2: Public Safety — 500 Net New Officers, Year 1

Homicide rate: 14.6 per 100k (2024-2025). Officers lost since 2019: 1,276. Police budget increased: $217M. Zero net new officers hired. This disconnect is the core problem: budget growth was absorbed into overtime, not deployment.

Chicago's Homicide Rate Remains Elevated vs. Peer Cities



At 14.6/100k, Chicago's rate is lower than Baltimore (23.1) and Detroit (24.2) but higher than NYC (3.4) and LA (7.7). The recent decline is real but fragile without adequate staffing.

100-Day Actions (Public Safety):

- Day 1: Appoint Public Safety Accountability Czar; launch weekly crime data briefings.
- Day 30: End discretionary overtime; implement data-driven scheduling. Project $60-90M/yr savings.
- Day 60: Publish CPD staffing audit; announce 500-officer hiring plan.
- Day 100: Publish first Public Safety Performance Report (homicides, shootings, arrests, response times).

Pillar 3: Workforce Productivity — $217M Freed for 500 Officers

Exempt (non-union) payroll grew +38.9% (2019-2026). 776 administrative positions added, 0 net police officers hired. The issue is not workers; it is deployment discipline and administrative bloat.

Wage Budget Grew Faster Than Inflation But Didn't Fund Officers

Wage and benefit spending grew 28.8% while inflation was 27%. But the mix shifted toward admin and away from frontline police.

100-Day Actions (Workforce):

- Day 1: Freeze all exempt (non-union) hiring citywide.
- Day 30: Launch Labor-Management Productivity Compact framework to all unions.
- Day 60: Begin CPD backfill of 500 officers funded from overtime reform savings.
- Day 100: Publish Workforce Accountability Report (headcount, cost per employee, overtime, 3-year trajectory).

Pillar 4: Procurement Reform — $1.1B–$1.9B Annual Capture

$26.61B in awards issued (2019-2026). Only 24.7% has a confirmed payment match. $20B+ sits in an unverified audit queue. Every contract category—professional services, NFP/NGO, fleet, vendors—must meet payment transparency and outcome verification.

Category	Awards 2019-2026	Verified Payment %	Capture Potential/yr
Professional Services	$8.2B	18.9%	$350M
Vendor Consolidation	$6.1B	28.3%	$240M
NFP/NGO Rebid	$5.8B	19.2%	$220M
Other (Fleet, IT, etc.)	$6.5B	32.1%	$290M

100-Day Actions (Procurement):

- Day 1: Freeze professional-services awards >$500K.
- Day 15: Red/Yellow/Green triage on all contracts >$1M.
- Day 45: Terminate all Red contracts.
- Day 100: Publish Vendor Consolidation and Performance Scorecard.

Pillar 5: Healthcare — $245M/yr Savings + Neighborhood Access

Two distinct problems: (1) Employee cost discipline — $5.79B spent on fragmented contracts with 1,422 contracts, 215 vendors, modeled savings $245M/yr. (2) Resident access — South/West Side communities face primary-care gaps, worse outcomes, shorter lives. The solution: savings in employee plans fund neighborhood access expansion.

100-Day Actions (Healthcare):

- Day 1: Freeze large employee-health renewals; launch resident healthcare access command table.

- Day 45: Issue PBM competitive rebid; execute term-sheet negotiations with 2–3 FQHC partners.
- Day 60: Sunset COVID-era healthcare contracts; stand up community health worker recruitment.
- Day 100: Publish dual healthcare dashboard (cost-per-covered-employee + resident access/outcome indicators).

Pillar 6: Pension Solvency — 60% Funded by 2040

Chicago's four pension funds carry a combined $35.4B unfunded liability and are 26.2% funded. At current trajectory, pension contributions will exceed $3.5B/yr by 2033—consuming 25% of operating budget. The platform moves pensions from annual negotiation to rule-based fiscal management: full ADC compliance, verified savings allocation, transparent investment benchmarking.

Fund	Funded Ratio (FY2024)	Unfunded Liability
MERF (General)	25.8%	$14.79B
PABF (Police)	24.6%	$13.53B
FABF (Fire)	24.4%	$5.66B
LABF (Laborers)	42.6%	$1.77B

100-Day Actions (Pensions):

- Day 1: Direct CFO to produce 10-year pension solvency projection for each fund.
- Day 45: Identify dedicated post-ARPA replacement revenue sourced from procurement and efficiency savings.
- Day 60: Submit Actuarially Determined Contribution (ADC) Ordinance to City Council.
- Day 100: Deliver first annual Pension Health and Investment Benchmark Report.

Pillar 7: Housing Supply + TIF Reform

30-day permit SLA for all small business and residential permits. Fee waiver if permit exceeds 30 days. TIF districts must demonstrate community benefit per dollar allocated or lose authority renewal.

100-Day Actions (Housing):

- Day 15: Establish 30-day permit SLA executive directive.

- Day 30: Deliver TIF effectiveness audit — every district, every dollar, community benefit scorecard.
- Day 60: Publish Permit Performance Report (24/7 dashboard, SLA compliance tracking).
- Day 100: Submit TIF Accountability Ordinance to City Council.

Pillar 8: Economic Growth — Unemployment to National Average

Chicago GDP +4% (2019-2023) while spending +54%. Unemployment +1.49pp vs. national trend. Population −0.6% (2020-2025). The platform realigns spending to drive growth: $300M Neighborhood Capital Fund, 30-day permits, WBC accountability, talent retention compact.

100-Day Actions (Economic Growth):

- Day 1: Audit all WBC incentive deals (jobs promised vs. delivered, wages, retention).
- Day 30: Launch Chicago Competitiveness Index (quarterly benchmark vs. Austin, Nashville, Indianapolis, Columbus).
- Day 60: Present $300M Neighborhood Capital Fund ordinance (allocation by unemployment rate per community area).
- Day 100: Publish WBC Incentive Accountability Report — every deal, every job promised, every job delivered.

Pillar 9: Parenting Matters — Two-Generation Youth & Family Stability

Teen takeovers continue to disrupt public space and erode confidence. The issue is not that Chicago lacks youth programs— After School Matters serves 17,000+ teens, Chicago Youth Works is active, and evidence-based interventions exist (BAM reduces violent arrests by 45-50%, paid employment by 43%). The gap is integration around families: structured parent engagement, rapid 72-hour referral response, and two-generation support (youth opportunity + caregiver stability).

Parenting Matters links existing programs around families through five pillars: (1) Paid parent participation with structured engagement ($100-250/month stipends); (2) Family navigation into jobs, healthcare, housing; (3) Two-generation programming connecting youth opportunity to caregiver stability; (4) Targeted behavioral/mentoring referrals for highest-risk youth; (5) Tiered accountability framework that is support-first, not punishment-first.

Implementation: Pilot in 3-5 highest-disorder community areas (summer 2027), expand to 10 areas (Year 2), citywide referral capacity (Year 3).

Year-1 Investment: $10-18M pilot (combination of DFSS operations, grant funding, philanthropic seed capital).

100-Day Actions (Parenting Matters):

- Day 1: Issue mayoral executive order establishing Parenting Matters as initiative.
- Day 30: Select 3-5 pilot community areas; launch philanthropic partner conversations (MacArthur, CCT, Joyce).
- Day 45: Draft operating guidelines; issue RFP for navigator staffing and program delivery.
- Day 60: Execute intergovernmental agreement with Cook County (JAC / Diversion); finalize evaluation design with Crime Lab.
- Day 75: Hire 10-15 navigators; stand up Community Advisory Board.
- Day 100: Launch pilot enrollment; begin navigator training and community engagement sessions.

Platform KPI Dashboard

KPI	Baseline	Day-100	Year-1	Year-3
Appropriations Growth Rate	+2.0%	+1.5%	+1.2%	+1.0%
Homicide Rate (per 100k)	14.6	13.8	12.9	10.2
Police Officer Count	12,124	12,224	12,624	13,124
Procurement Payment Verification %	24.7%	45%	72%	90%
Exempt Payroll Growth Rate	+3.2%	0%	−1%	−1%
Pension Blended Funded Ratio	26.2%	26.8%	28.4%	31.2%

Healthcare Cost per Covered Employee	$14,200	$13,800	$13,100	$12,400
30-Day Permit SLA Compliance %	42%	68%	85%	92%
Chicago Unemployment vs National	+1.49pp	+0.8pp	+0.3pp	−0.1pp
Neighborhood Capital Investment	$0	$50M	$120M	$200M
FQHC Satellite Activations	0	3	8	15
Public Safety OT Spending Reduction	$0	$20M	$60M	$90M
Parenting Matters Families Enrolled	0	400	1,200	2,500
Teen Takeover Incidents (annual)	18	12	7	3

Credibility & Sources

All metrics sourced to: City of Chicago Annual Appropriation Ordinance (FY2019–FY2026), Budget Recommendation books, University of Chicago Crime Lab (FBI UCR ICPSR 3666), CFO verified contracts database, pension actuarial reports, After School Matters program data.