



City of Chicago



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CITY OF CHICAGO
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

20
23

Advisory Concerning Interdepartmental Coordination and the City's Administrative Officer Position

March 21, 2023

DEBORAH WITZBURG | INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR THE CITY OF CHICAGO



Deborah Witzburg | Inspector General
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March 20, 2023

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) is charged, among other duties, with promoting economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the administration of the programs and operations of the City government by recommending policies and methods for the elimination of inefficiencies and waste.¹ In its recent inquiries, OIG has found a number of areas of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in City government attributable to poor or inadequate coordination among City departments.

In a January 27, 2023 letter to the Mayor's Office, OIG advised of these findings and noted that the Municipal Code of Chicago (MCC) requires that the Mayor appoint for confirmation by the City Council an administrative officer, among whose statutory duties is coordination among City departments. That position has not been filled during the present mayoral administration or during any recent predecessor administration.

Specifically, MCC § 2-4-020 states:

The mayor shall appoint, with the consent of the city council, an officer to be known as the mayor's administrative officer who shall serve at the pleasure of the mayor [...]

The mayor's administrative officer, subject to the direction and control of the mayor, shall supervise the administrative management of all city departments, boards, commissions, and other city agencies established by the code and the laws of this state.

In addition to such supervisory power, the mayor's administrative officer may, in [sic] respect to any or all agencies under his supervision, establish reporting procedures, require the submission of progress reports, provide for the coordination of the activities of such agencies, and shall perform such other administrative and executive functions as may be delegated by the mayor. He shall make periodic reports with such recommendation as he deems appropriate to the mayor concerning the administrative management of all departments, boards, commissioners and agencies of the cities.

OIG suggested that, in order to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and the quality of services across City government by improving coordination among departments and in order to comply with the requirements of the MCC, the Mayor appoint and empower a City Council-confirmed administrative officer.

¹ MCC § 2-56-030(c)

In her response, Mayor Lori Lightfoot “strongly dispute[s] [OIG’s] observation that a lack of adequate communication and coordination among City departments has been a common or widespread problem at the root of various adverse events and inefficiencies” across the eleven recent inquiries summarized in OIG’s letter. Mayor Lightfoot expresses the view that “it is questionable” whether the provision of MCC § 2-4-020 that “[t]he mayor shall appoint, with the consent of the city council, an officer to be known as the mayor’s administrative officer” establishes a legal obligation for the Mayor.² Further, the Mayor asserts that her administration has achieved such coordination “very effectively” under her own “organizational approach,” and characterizes the structure prescribed by the MCC as “archaic and overly simplistic.”³

OIG appreciates Mayor Lightfoot’s response. In order to comply with the MCC and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the operations of the City, OIG continues to urge that an administrative officer be appointed for City Council confirmation and empowered to carry out the duties enumerated in the MCC. OIG’s letter to Mayor Lightfoot is attached as Appendix A; the response sent on her behalf is attached as Appendix B.

² Notably, the suggestion that the word “shall” actually amounts to “may” in MCC § 2-4-020 is difficult to reconcile with the fact that Council chose to use the word “may” elsewhere in MCC Chapter 2-4, specifically in the provisions related to the Mayor’s secretary and the Chief Risk Officer. See MCC § 2-4-050 (“The mayor may appoint a secretary, whose duty it shall be to preserve and keep in the mayor’s office books and papers . . .”), MCC § 2-4-060 (“The Mayor may appoint an officer to be known as the Chief Risk Officer, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Mayor.”).

³ As noted in OIG’s letter, professional administrative management is associated with more efficient service delivery, organizational excellence, and innovation.

Appendix A | IG Letter



Deborah Witzburg | Inspector General
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Via Electronic Mail

January 27, 2023

Lori Lightfoot
Mayor
121 N. LaSalle St., Room 507
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Mayor Lightfoot:

The City of Chicago, like many municipal governments, organizes its departments around distinct functional responsibilities (e.g., transportation, planning and development, and finance). This administrative structure creates challenges when policy issues span multiple departments and require coordination to achieve objectives, deliver services, and maximize efficiency and effectiveness.

Deliberate and mindful organizational design provides structure for interdepartmental coordination.¹ In one model, common throughout the United States, a professional administrative officer manages the day-to-day coordination of municipal departments and services. This approach is associated with more efficient service delivery, organizational excellence, and innovation.² Notably, the Municipal Code of Chicago (MCC) mandates such an arrangement by requiring a "mayor's administrative officer," who is charged with coordinating agency activities, among other responsibilities:

The mayor shall appoint, with the consent of the city council, an officer to be known as the mayor's administrative officer who shall serve at the pleasure of the mayor [...]

The mayor's administrative officer, subject to the direction and control of the mayor, shall supervise the administrative management of all city departments, boards, commissions, and other city agencies established by the code and the laws of this state.

In addition to such supervisory power, the mayor's administrative officer may, in [sic] respect to any or all agencies under his supervision, establish reporting procedures, require

¹ Krause, Rachel M., Christopher Hawkins, and Richard C. Felock, "Implementing City Sustainability: Overcoming Administrative Silos to Achieve Functional Collective Action," Temple University Press, 2021, p. 16.

² IBM Global Business Services, "Smarter, Faster, Cheaper - An Operations Efficiency Benchmarking Study of 100 American Cities," October 10, 2013, p. 8, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://www.cornellcitygov.org/records/consolidation-task-force/2013-10-10-ibm-report-smarter-faster-cheaper.aspx>; Keene, James, John Nalbandian, Robert O'Neil Jr., Shannon Portle, and James Svora, "How Professionals Can Add Value to Their Communities and Organizations," Public Management, March 2007, P. 38, accessed January 27, 2023, <https://cma.org/sites/default/files/1625.pdf>

the submission of progress reports, provide for the coordination of the activities of such agencies, and shall perform such other administrative and executive functions as may be delegated by the mayor. He shall make periodic reports with such recommendation as he deems appropriate to the mayor concerning the administrative management of all departments, boards, commissioners and agencies of the cities.³

This position is not currently filled. City budget documents since at least the late 1980s have included positions with titles such as "Mayor's Administrative Officer (Chief of Staff)." According to the Mayor's current Chief of Staff, their position oversees all department heads and mayoral staffers, including a team of Deputy Mayors. Each Deputy Mayor is responsible for a portfolio of related departments (e.g., Infrastructure and Services, Public Safety, Education and Human Services, Economic and Neighborhood Development) and may also oversee relevant special initiatives like INVEST South/West. The Mayor's senior staff communicate the administration's overarching priorities to department heads, who have discretion over how to implement policy as an operational matter and to resolve conflicts with other departments.

The Mayor's Chief of Staff, however, has not been confirmed by Council in the manner required by the MCC of a Chief Administrative Officer during the current—or any other recent—mayoral administration. In addition, it may not be clear to Council or the public how the current structure aligns with the administrative officer's authority and responsibility to coordinate departments, establish performance measures, and submit progress reports concerning the administrative management of City departments.

I | PAST OIG OBSERVATIONS

As summarized in Figure 1, many of OIG's recent inquiries have identified problems caused by a lack of interdepartmental coordination at the operational level. These observations highlight opportunities for improvement and suggest that Chicago could benefit from administrative oversight, coordination, and monitoring of departments' regular operations using the structure required by MCC § 2-4-020. Several audited departments committed to corrective actions to address the issues identified below. However, the number and variety of these examples over multiple years suggest a City-government-wide need for more intentional interdepartmental coordination.

³ MCC § 2-4-020

FIGURE 1: Across its operations, the City has missed opportunities to promote efficiency and economy through interdepartmental coordination

Report Title	OIG Observations
Use of Litigation Data in Risk Management Strategies for the Chicago Police Department (#18-0790) ⁴	In 2022, OIG found that the Chicago Police Department (CPD), the Department of Law (DOL), and the Mayor's Office of Risk Management did not effectively share data to coordinate their strategy for reducing liability for police misconduct liabilities. Between 2017 and 2021, the City paid out over \$250 million in settlements and judgments arising from claims against CPD members for excessive use of force, wrongful arrest, motor vehicle crashes, and other causes. Though best practices in risk management call for law enforcement to analyze the links between personnel, incident data, and lawsuits, the City's outdated systems and inconsistent data-gathering practices limited its ability to link CPD's misconduct allegations to DOL's litigation information. As a result, the City missed potential opportunities to prevent misconduct before it led to harm or costly lawsuits.
Fairness and Consistency in the Disciplinary Process for CPD Members (#19-0972) ⁵	In 2022, OIG found that CPD's Bureau of Internal Affairs, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA), and the Chicago Police Board had not aligned the sets of mitigating and aggravating factors they used to reach disciplinary decisions about members of CPD. As a result, they risked reaching inconsistent disciplinary decisions and complicating the review or comparison of case files. OIG recommended that CPD, COPA, and the Police Board work together to standardize criteria, improve documentation, and ensure that similar circumstances result in similar disciplinary determinations.
Implosion of an Industrial Smokestack (#20-0486) ⁶	In April 2020, the planned implosion of an industrial smokestack threw a plume of particulates over the Little Village neighborhood, creating a high likelihood of negative impacts on the environment and residents' health. The Department of Buildings (DOB) and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), which oversaw the demolition's permitting process, had been warned that an "almost cataclysmic" dust cloud would result from a demolition using explosives. ⁷ Nevertheless, senior officials failed to communicate or intervene when the contractor changed its plans to adopt that method of implosion and drastically weakened its dust mitigation plan. In the wake of the implosion, officials contended that the permit-holder was responsible and that, during the planning process, the City had insufficient policies and procedures for multi-departmental oversight of implosion projects.

⁴ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Use of Litigation Data in Risk Management Strategies for the Chicago Police Department," September 29, 2022, <https://oig.chicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Use-of-Litigation-Data-in-Risk-Management-Strategies-for-the-Chicago-Police-Department.pdf>

⁵ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Fairness and Consistency in the Disciplinary Process for CPD Members," June 16, 2022, <https://oig.chicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Fairness-and-Consistency-in-the-Disciplinary-Process-for-Chicago-Police-Department-Members-Copy.pdf>

⁶ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Fourth Quarter Report 2021," 15-18, January 14, 2022, <https://oig.chicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/OIG-Fourth-Quarter-2021-Report.pdf>

⁷ OIG, "Fourth Quarter Report 2021," 15

Advisory Concerning the City of Chicago's Data Quality (#21-1035) ⁸	In 2021, OIG summarized past findings of problems with the objectivity, utility, and integrity of the City's data. The impacts of poor data quality ranged from missed revenue to inefficient administration to major delays in City services. OIG encouraged the City's Chief Data Officer (CDO) to develop a framework for ensuring data quality to guide departments' trainings, policies, and processes. ⁹ OIG also suggested that the CDO coordinate interdepartmental data needs and requests.
OBM Capital Improvement Program Audit (#19-0681) ¹⁰	In 2020, OIG found that the five departments involved in the Capital Improvement Program did not use the same standards for developing and evaluating their capital projects. ¹¹ Without consistent evaluation frameworks, the City could neither determine whether it achieved the Program's overall goals nor easily apply lessons learned to future projects. As a result, the City may have made investment decisions that did not balance across functional areas or provide the best long-term returns. OIG recommended that the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) establish investment review frameworks, require departments to develop results-oriented goals and performance measures, and consider convening departments to share lessons learned.
DHR Employee Performance Evaluation Audit (#19-0929) ¹²	In 2020, OIG found that the Department of Human Resources (DHR) had not coordinated with City departments to ensure they conducted required performance evaluations of all employees. Without clear guidance, departments developed disparate processes: 10,194 City employees worked in seven departments that conducted no performance evaluations, while 5,512 more worked in 13 departments that did not conduct regular performance evaluations of all employees. This created the risk that personnel decisions like salary increases and discipline would be based on management discretion rather than a standard evaluation process. OIG recommended that DHR develop a citywide evaluation standard with options for departmental flexibility and exert its authority to compel departments' compliance with the performance evaluation requirement.

⁸ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Advisory Concerning the City of Chicago's Data Quality," December 14, 2021, <https://icchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Advisory-Concerning-the-City-of-Chicago's-Data-Quality.pdf>

⁹ In June 2022, the individual that held the Chief Data Officer position in the Department of Assets, Information, and Services was named as the Chief Technology Officer, a newly created role in the Office of the Mayor.

¹⁰ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Audit of the City's Capital Improvement Program Development and Evaluation," December 22, 2020, <https://icchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/OIG-Audit-of-the-City's-Capital-Improvement-Program-Development-and-Evaluation.pdf>

¹¹ Every year, the Capital Improvement Program produces a preview of the City's next five years of investment in infrastructure like airports, streetscapes, sewers, bridges, and more. At the time of OIG's audit, the departments participating in the program were the Department of Aviation, Department of Transportation, Department of Water Management, Department of Planning and Development, and Department of Fleet & Facilities Management.

¹² City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Department of Human Resources Employee Performance Evaluation Audit," October 14, 2020, <https://icchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/OIG-Department-of-Human-Resources-Employee-Performance-Evaluation-Audit.pdf>

Review of Compliance with the City of Chicago's Video Release Policy for Use of Force Incidents (#17-0697) ¹³	In 2020, OIG found that coordination problems among COPA, CPD's Crime Prevention Information Center (CPIC), and the Office of Emergency Management & Communications (OEMC) violated the requirements of the City's Video Release Policy by contributing to the late and incomplete publication of police use-of-force materials. ¹⁴ CPIC did not report all potentially relevant incidents to COPA, which published materials for 27% of use-of-force incidents after the policy's 60-day deadline. Further, COPA did not always publish all required materials by the deadline due to delays in receiving information from OEMC. OIG recommended that CPIC and COPA collaborate to reduce the risk of missed notifications and misaligned timelines, and that the City find ways to improve OEMC's backlog of requests from COPA and other agencies.
Juvenile Intervention and Support Center Audit (#18-0087) ¹⁵	In 2020, OIG found that CPD and the Department of Family & Support Services (DFSS) did not share information and had no common goals, accountability measures, or advisory body related to their joint youth arrest diversion program. As a result, the program spent roughly \$5 million and served 3,000 youth per year for over a decade without knowing whether it created positive or negative outcomes. Among other recommendations, OIG advised CPD and DFSS to agree on shared goals, responsibilities, information-sharing standards, and accountability measures.
2FM Maintenance of Police Vehicles Audit (#18-0066) ¹⁶	In 2019, OIG found that the former Department of Fleet & Facilities Management (2FM) did not effectively communicate with CPD about the availability of vehicles for maintenance and performed only 12.9% of preventive maintenance of CPD vehicles on time. As a result of forgone maintenance, fleet vehicles may have had a shorter useful life and needed more frequent and costly repairs. The Interagency Police Vehicle Committee, whose purpose was to discuss the purchase, maintenance, and retirement of CPD vehicles, had not met since 2017. OIG recommended that 2FM and CPD improve communication around maintenance requirements and regularly convene the interagency vehicle committee.

¹³ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Review of Compliance with the City of Chicago's Video Release Policy for Use of Force Incidents," September 15, 2020, <https://oigchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/OIG-Review-of-Compliance-with-the-City-of-Chicago's-Video-Release-Policy-for-Use-of-Force-Incidents.pdf>

¹⁴ The City's Video Release Policy gives it 60 days after an incident to publish video, audio, and initial police reports for certain use-of-force events. Applicable events include the discharge of an officer's gun that strikes or could strike another person, use of a Taser/stun gun that causes death or great bodily harm, and any use of force that causes the death or great bodily harm of a person in police custody. Agencies can request a 30-day extension for the release of materials, and some incidents are subject to court orders that prohibit the publication of materials while legal cases are ongoing. COPA publishes eligible materials on its website after receiving use-of-force notifications from CPIC, CPD's Bureau of Internal Affairs, CPD supervisors, and the public.

¹⁵ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Audit of the Chicago Police Department and Department of Family and Support Services' Administration of the Juvenile Intervention and Support Center," February 25, 2020, <https://oigchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/OIG-JISC-Audit.pdf>

¹⁶ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Audit of the Department of Fleet and Facility Management's Maintenance of Police Vehicles," September 11, 2019, <https://oigchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Audit-of-2FM-Maintenance-of-Police-Vehicles.pdf>

DOL Notification of Sanitation Citations Audit (#18-0771) ¹⁷	In 2019, OIG found that the Department of Streets & Sanitation (DSS) and DOL had different priorities in their approach to sanitation violations: DSS prioritized obtaining timely compliance, while DOL prioritized gathering evidence for violation hearings. Therefore, DOL had no performance measures relating to timeliness and took an average of 289 days to notify property owners of alleged sanitation code violations. As a result, potential sanitation hazards went unaddressed for long periods of time and DSS faced public backlash as the originating department for the late-issued citations. OIG advised DOL and DSS to develop shared strategies, create realistic targets, and reconcile priorities. ¹⁸
Language Access Ordinance Compliance Audit (#17-0058) ¹⁹	In 2017, OIG found that the City had not implemented the requirements of the Language Access Ordinance across all departments that provide services to the public. The Mayor's Office of New Americans (ONA) engaged with seven departments named by the Language Access Advisory Committee, but had not provided implementation plans, formal oversight, or compliance requirements to departments beyond those seven. As a result, the City may not have provided full access to services for community members with limited English proficiency. OIG recommended that ONA share its language access implementation plan and data tracking templates with all City departments.

II | SUGGESTIONS

As reflected in OIG's recent inquiries, opportunities exist to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and the quality of services across City government by improving coordination among departments. The MCC explicitly recognizes these opportunities and assigns responsibility for them to a City Council-confirmed administrative officer. As required by law, the Mayor's Office should appoint and empower an administrative officer to meet these opportunities. Furthermore, the administrative officer should assert their authority to coordinate departments across policy areas, establish performance measures for departments' implementation of policy priorities, and submit progress reports to the Mayor concerning the administrative management of City departments.

OIG invites the Mayor's Office to respond in writing before February 27, 2023. Any such response will be made public together with this advisory.

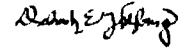
¹⁷ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "Audit of Delays in Providing Notice of Sanitation Code Violations," September 4, 2019, <https://ic Chicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/OIG-Audit-of-Delays-in-Providing-Notice-of-Sanitation-Code-Violations.pdf>

¹⁸ OIG made similar recommendations to DSS and DOL in its 2020 audit of DSS' weed-cutting program, which can be found here: <https://ic Chicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/DSS-Weed-Cutting-Program-Audit.pdf>

¹⁹ City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, "City Of Chicago Language Access Ordinance Compliance Audit," September 20, 2017, <https://ic Chicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Language-Access-Ordinance-Compliance-Audit.pdf>

City of Chicago Office of Inspector General

Respectfully,



Deborah Witzburg
Inspector General
City of Chicago

cc: Sybil Madison, Chief of Staff, Office of the Mayor
Nathaniel Wackman, General Counsel, OIG
Darwyn Jones, Deputy Inspector General for Audit & Program Review, OIG

Appendix B | Mayor's Office Response



CITY OF CHICAGO

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

March 13, 2023

Ms. Deborah Witzburg
Inspector General
City of Chicago Office of the Inspector General
740 North Sedgwick, Suite 200
Chicago Illinois 60654

Inspector General Witzburg:

I write on behalf of Mayor Lightfoot in response to your January 27, 2023 letter expressing observations and suggestions concerning the City's organizational design. You observe that a survey of past OIG reports involving various City departments reveals that the City, across its operations, has "missed opportunities to promote efficiency, and economy through interdepartmental coordination." You then suggest that interdepartmental coordination among departments could be substantially improved if the City adhered more closely to a provision of the Municipal Code of Chicago (MCC) adopted in 1954 (now MCC §2-4-020) authorizing the Mayor to appoint a single "Administrative Officer" charged with supervising the management of all City departments, boards, and commissions.¹

We disagree with both premises of your letter

First, it goes without saying that the City recognizes that effective communication and coordination among City departments and agencies is crucial for effective management of a city the size and complexity of Chicago. The City has also learned over the years that the intricate task of interdepartmental coordination involves a more robust approach than the one outlined in 1954, which features a single officer as the broker of all communications and coordination among City agencies. Chiefs of Staff since at least the early 1990s have managed these functions working closely with other officials to optimize the communication and coordination necessary for effective management.

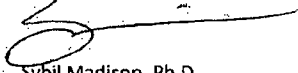
While we cannot speak to previous administrations, the current administration has carried out these functions very effectively under this organizational approach. Presently, the Chief of Staff oversees a small group of Deputy Mayors, each having a portfolio of departments for which he or she is responsible. In addition, the Chief Operating Officer manages a broad portfolio, with special focus on departmental coordination and troubleshooting a range of issues around operational efficiencies. The Mayor, her Chief of Staff, and the Chief Operating Officer hold regular meetings with Commissioners of City departments in which the entire cabinet works together on delivering concrete solutions on how best to accomplish initiatives that span across multiple City agencies and require interdepartmental coordination. This comprehensive approach allows for better, and more efficient, coordination among city agencies and departments than a single officer could achieve.

¹ We note that it is questionable whether MCC § 2-4-020 establishes a legal requirement for the Mayor to appoint an "Administrative Officer" approved by City Council. See *Kennedy v. City of Chicago*, 2022 IL App. (1st) 210492; *People v. Robinson*, 217 Ill.2d 43 (2005).

Second, while we recognize that there is always room to improve coordination among City agencies, we strongly dispute your observation that a lack of adequate communication and coordination among City departments has been a common or widespread problem at the root of various adverse events and inefficiencies. The OIG reports you reference and briefly summarize in your letter certainly do not reflect this as a common thread. Each of these reports reflects disparate events stemming from disparate causes that cannot sensibly nor practically be simplified as resulting from deficient intragovernmental coordination. Moreover, your letter gives no concrete explanation of how the appointment of an Administrative Officer might have some tangible benefit that could have prevented or mitigated the adverse outcomes you identify in one or more of these reports. Importantly, the City has previously provided a substantial response in writing to each of these reports and, where warranted, has introduced legislation and broadscale changes within department policies, rules and regulations to address the kinds of problems that are identified in your reports. Some of these changes have more effectively defined the roles of various departments in City functions and thereby do promote coordination among City departments. However, these benefits do not require the appointment of an Administrative Officer.

While we are surprised that the OIG would devote its resources to revive and mine these reports only to urge the adoption of an archaic and overly simplistic approach to City management, we appreciate the opportunity to respond and, as always, welcome any further discussion on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sybil Madison', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sybil Madison, Ph.D.
Chief of Staff
Office of the Mayor



Anne O'Brien
Performance Analyst

Kevin Smith
Chief Performance Analyst

Darwyn E. Jones
Deputy Inspector General, Audit & Program Review

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OIG's authority to produce reports of its findings and recommendations is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code §§ 2-56-030(d), -035(c), -110, -230, and -240. For further information about this report, please contact the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, 740 N. Sedgwick Ave., Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60654, or visit our website at igchicago.org.

For further information about this report, please contact the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, 740 N. Sedgwick Ave., Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60654, or visit our website at igchicago.org.

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