

PARTNERS IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY

2024 CONFERENCE



Growing in Concrete: Green Spaces in Marshall Square (Little Village)

PRESENTED BY:



Luis Gutierrez

Founder and Chief Executive Officer
Latinos Progresando (LP)



Joel Zavala

Chicago Director of Community Engagement
The Nature Conservancy Illinois (TNC)



Latinos Progresando

Our mission is to elevate the well-being of the Mexican community.

Our Services

- Immigration Legal Services
- Community Programs: Implementing Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) in local schools

Marshall Square Resource Network

A collaborative network of over 60 partners providing solutions in community response, education, health, and peace.



Marshall Square is in the 'Front lines' of Climate Change

Multiple Environmental Burdens



- Canopy cover percentages between **~15% and 18%** (Below the region's average of 23%).*
- 2020 Chicago Department of Public Health Report determined MS as a community with **high vulnerability** when accounting for **air quality, health and other social factors.****
- TNC Conservation Greenprint tool identifies MS as a community facing:
 - **Poor air quality**
 - **High heat (urban heat island)**
 - **High flood risk**

*CRTI Tree Canopy

**CDPH Air Quality and Health

LP and TNC Partnership

MSRN: Health Committee

Goal 1: Reduce barriers to engagement with green space which prevent community members from fully accessing the health benefits that nature provides.

- Installation of a new co-designed green space at local elementary school:
 - **Hammond Elementary (completed in Summer of 2024)**
 - 500 native plant and trees.
 - Formal and informal gathering space for educational and social opportunities
 - Artwork and sporting equipment for students and community



LP and TNC Partnership

MSRN: Health Committee

Goal 2: Contribute to the body of knowledge and best practice for community work at the **intersection of community health and green space.**

- Mobile Community Air Quality Monitoring (2020 – 2023):
 - **25 community participants** collected **+350 hours** of data
 - Monitored levels of **PM 2.5**
 - In the field observations and correlations between AQ and their surrounding environment
 - Facilitated discussions about **community action**



An Opportunity to Grow: **Trees in Marshall Square**

Our Roots Chicago:

- 75K trees in 5 years
- Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)

Data from AQ Monitoring

- Direct feedback from participants
- Areas of concern along major street segments in the community



An Opportunity to Grow:

Trees in Marshall Square

Building the case for support

- Engaging Community
- Engaging Businesses
- Engaging Network
- Engaging Local Leaders



Spring 2024: +120 Trees Planted in MS.



LP and TNC Partnership

Growing Our Urban Forest Continues

- Contracting **maintenance and supplemental watering services** for newly planted trees throughout establishment.
- Active **stewardship** and **community engagement** around newly established green spaces
- Tree Ambassador Grant recipients (**100 new trees**).
- Active participation in the **Tree Equity Working Group**
- Fostering a climate of **tree advocacy** through bi-lingual programs and workshops.
- 2024 Chicago Region Tree Initiative: **Urban Forest Advocate Award**.



Thank You.



CEUs

For ISA CEUs, record the code to the right for each session.

Post conference, you can submit all Your CEU codes within the Conference app.

Sign-in sheets for Society of American Foresters (SAF) CFE credits are available at the registration desk post conference.

Growing in Concrete: Green Spaces in Marshall Square (Little Village)

Speakers:

Luis Gutierrez and Joel Zavala



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