



# ANNUAL REPORT

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# EDGE

WATER

EDGEWATER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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2020

Reflecting on a year of resilience,  
strength, and innovation.



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## LETTER TO MEMBERS, BUSINESSES, PARTNERS, AND PROPERTY OWNERS

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This year tested our community and businesses in ways that we could not have imagined. In the face of challenges, we have seen selflessness and a willingness not just to have difficult conversations, but also act on them; and we have seen an outpouring of support for Edgewater's small businesses. 2020 taught us a lot, especially that during challenging times it is important that we band together – fueled by the power of community, we can do anything.

Though many aspects of this year were not part of our strategic plan, our community's culture of collaboration and spirit of innovation has never been more evident than it is today. As we begin to slowly emerge from the shadow of COVID-19 we reflect on the year behind us, full not only of virtual hugs, but also tangible assistance in the form of reinvented programs and service offerings from both the Edgewater Development Corporation and Special Service Area #26. Our program evolutions have not only made the Edgewater Chamber of Commerce and our community more resilient but also stronger.

We are incredibly grateful for your continued engagement and support for the future of our business community.

Christina Pfitzinger  
Executive Director



# EDGEWATER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

We are conveners, collaborators, and community builders. Since 1985, the Edgewater Chamber of Commerce, a 501c6 nonprofit, has worked to create a thriving environment that supports business, while also attracting new businesses to our commercial corridors, contributing to a vibrant Edgewater community. Together, our dedicated staff, chamber members, partner organizations, Boards of Directors and civic leaders are working hard to build a strong economic future for the Edgewater community, continuing to make progress possible for all.

## ECC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Kate Piatt-Eckert**, Chair Steep Theatre
- Sean Connolly**, Executive Vice Chair Helix Cafe
- Michael Caramagno**, Treasurer Caramagno + Associates
- Maria Sigman**, Secretary Salon Echo
- Patti Colandrea** Bark Bark Club
- David Frederickson** State Farm Insurance
- Adam G. Gertsacov** Acme Clown Company
- Tim Harrington** Barr Funeral Home
- Troy Mcmillan** Edgewater resident
- Cecilia Rodriguez** Loyola University
- Kelly L. Stoltz** Nicolaides Fink Thorpe Michaelides Sullivan LLP
- Tom Welch** Edgewater Reads

## ECC STAFF

- Christina Pfitzinger**, Executive Director
- Andrew Miller**, Events & Marketing Manager
- Frank Kryzak**, Economic Development Manager







## EDGEWATER DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION:

In 2020, the Edgewater Chamber of Commerce joined forces with the Edgewater Development Corporation (EDC), a longstanding 501c3 community-based nonprofit organization with the mission to redevelop the commercial resources of Edgewater to better serve the entire neighborhood. This mission is achieved by attracting new commercial business to Edgewater and helping those new businesses succeed, along with ensuring the existing businesses in the neighborhood are supported as well. The EDC now serves as a supporting organization of the Chamber, and both organizations champion to:

- Strengthen Community Connections
- Build Vibrant Spaces and Dynamic Events
- Create an Active Network of Engaged Business Organizations
- Further Innovation through Entrepreneurship

### EDC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Kelly Stoltz**, President   Nicolaides, Fink, Thorpe, Michaelides, Sullivan, LLP  
**Dave Frederickson**, Vice President   State Farm Insurance  
**Michael Caramagno**, Treasurer   Caramagno + Associates





## EDGEWATER SPECIAL SERVICE AREA SSA #26

### What is a Special Service Area?

For decades, the Special Service Area (SSA) program has provided communities with the financial means to create, maintain, and manage dynamic and thriving commercial corridors within the City of Chicago. SSAs are local property tax districts that provide funding for enhanced services and programs in neighborhoods throughout the city. These services, which include landscaping, sidewalk litter abatement, trash removal, sidewalk snow removal, area branding, neighborhood identification, business attraction, and providing rebate programs for businesses are important for maintaining thriving commercial corridors.

The City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) contracts with local nonprofits, typically chambers of commerce to act as service providers to administer the SSA program. A local Commission, appointed by the Mayor, oversees the service provider and determines SSA services and budgets annually. SSA funds are controlled locally, must stay in the community, and must be spent on services that achieve the mission of the particular SSA. Similar SSA programs enhance commercial corridors in over 50 areas throughout the City of Chicago.

### Who Makes up the Commission?

SSA commissioners are either owners or tenants of buildings, such as property managers or business owners, located within the SSA boundaries. These commissioners oversee and recommend the annual services, budget, and Service Provider Agency to the City of Chicago. A strong, creative, and diverse SSA Commission is an integral part of implementing successful programs and services within SSA #26.

### SSA #26 Commissioners

Margaret Hagerty, Chair: State Farm Insurance

Helen Cameron, Vice Chair/Treasurer: Uncommon Ground

Kate Merrill: Edge of Sweetness

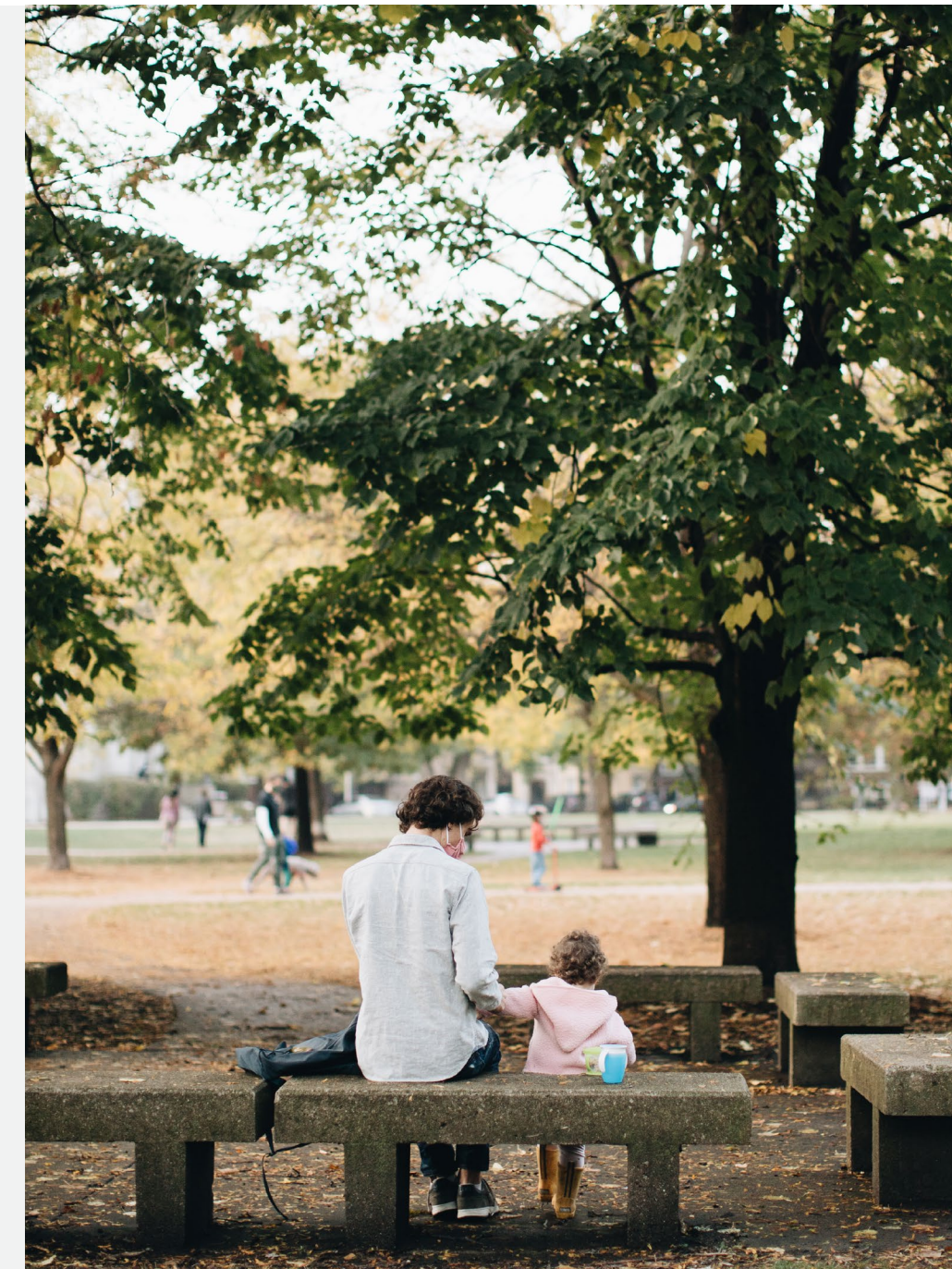
Jill Metz: Metz + Jones LLC

Jenny Yang: Phoenix Bean

Rae Ann Cecrle: B&R Developers

### How is the Edgewater Chamber of Commerce involved?

The Edgewater Chamber of Commerce is the sole service provider for SSA #26, and implements the annual work plan that is determined by the Commission. We assist in the recruitment and retention of SSA commissioners, to ensure the SSA is represented by a diverse and well-balanced group of people who are located in different parts of the neighborhood.





# REBATE PROGRAMS

SSA #26 funds various rebate and grant programs for businesses and property owners within the area. In 2020, the SSA administered a large number of programs resulting in tens of thousands of dollars in funding for support during a particularly difficult year.



## Facade Improvement Rebates

Rebated **\$18,744** for a total investment of **\$60,364** of improved storefronts in SSA #26



## Sidewalk Cafe/Patio Rebates

Helped cover costs of **11 sidewalk cafes/patios** in SSA #26



## Health & Sanitation Rebates

Rebated **\$7,376** for PPE and sanitation supplies for 16 businesses within the SSA in response to COVID-19

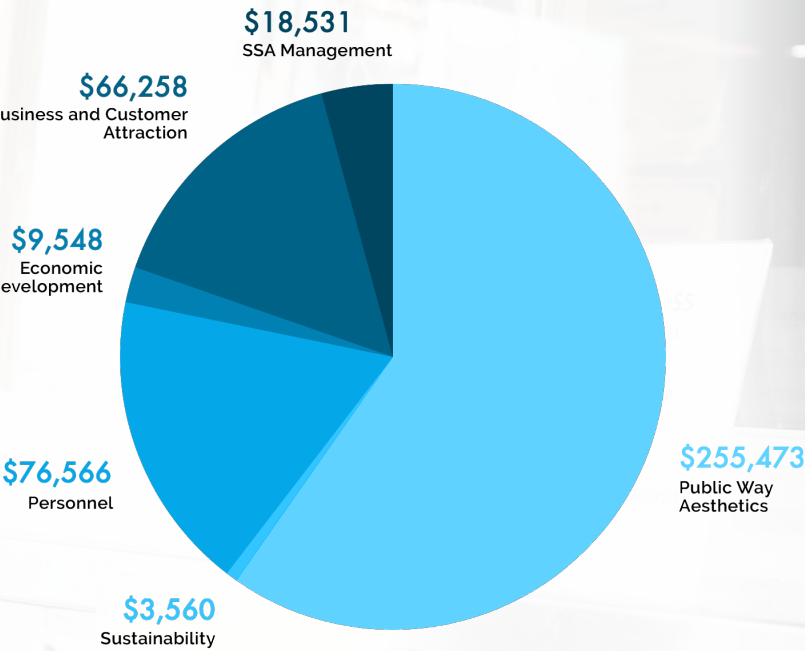


## Public Art Grant

Rebated **\$1,000** for a mural within the SSA

# SSA 2020 SPENDING

WHERE WE ALLOCATED FUNDS IN 2020





# PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



## Trash Removal

SSA garbage were cans emptied **3 times a week** for the entire year by Wastemaster



## Landscaping

**143 planters** throughout the SSA were filled with flowers, plants, and decor for each season by Patch Landscaping



## Trees

**639 trees** (34 different species) were inventoried, pruned, treated, and the soil was cared for by Bartlett Tree Experts



## Public Art

Edgewater Garden: **Mosaics** were created and installed by the Chicago Mosaic School on the east side of Uncommon Ground to help beautify Devon Avenue



## Litter Removal

Litter was removed from sidewalks **3 times a week** for the entire year by Patch Landscaping



## Banners

**163 blue Edge banners** on light poles are maintained throughout the year by Chicago Event Graphics



## Snow

**28 inches of snow** were removed in 2020



## Holiday Decorations

**100 poles** along Broadway were each adorned with garland and ribbon during the holidays by Patch Landscaping

**23 poles** along Bryn Mawr were each adorned with garland, ribbon, a wreath and a bow during the holidays by Patch Landscaping

**163 red Edge banners** are replace the blue banners on light poles during the holiday season by Chicago Event Graphics



## Weeds

Weeds were removed from sidewalks and tree pits **twice** by Patch Landscaping



## Bike Racks

**14 bike racks** were installed







## NEW BUSINESSES

Despite COVID-19, a myriad of new businesses chose to open in Edgewater in 2020, showcasing the resilience and strength of the neighborhood and its commercial corridors.

**Andy's Art, Antiques, & Oddities:** 1253 W. Devon

**Himsben Design Studio:** 6136 N. Clark

**Kyoto Black:** 1445 W. Devon

**Guidepost Montessori at Edgewater:** 6001 N. Clark

**Similan Thai-Sushi Restaurant:** 1123 W. Granville

**The Pack Nutrition:** 6206 N. Broadway

**Boukarou Lounge:** 5973 N. Clark

**Rewired Cafe** (New Location): 1100 W. Thorndale

**GoPuff:** 1242-44 W. Devon

**Verizon:** 6355 N. Broadway

**The Studio @ The Center for Women's Fitness:** 6054 N Broadway

**Anytime Fitness:** 5417 N Broadway

**Happy Monday Coffee Roasters:** 1307 W Hollywood Ave

**Beard and Belly / Honey Pie:** 6157 N Broadway

**Nina Beauty Salon:** 5916 N. Clark

**Sunshine Threading Salon:** 1108 W. Granville

Businesses in existing commercial space weren't the only ones to open in 2020. There were also nearly 20 home-based businesses that opened in Edgewater, showcasing the entrepreneurial spirit of our residents.





## 2020 TIMELINE

### International Women's Day 3/8/2020

As part of this global celebration on March 8th, the 2020 theme of "Each for Equal" commemorated the cultural, political, and socioeconomic achievements of women. This annual event is a focal point in the women's rights movement, bringing attention to issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence against women. The Chamber's International Women's Day Crawl featured 8 woman-owned business locations that hosted 8 unique activations involving 19 participating businesses.

### Virtual Restaurant Week 3/20/2020 - 3/30/2020

The goal of this program was to promote the take-out and delivery options of the amazing dining spots in Edgewater as restaurant kitchens cautiously reopened. Virtual Restaurant Week featured 28 restaurants and cafes with many featuring special dishes and deals created for this event. Earned media was received from three online magazines and two news outlets, including The Chicago Sun Times and Block Club Chicago. Restaurant week also inspired the Edgewater Restaurant Guide, which is now updated weekly on the Chamber website with Edgewater restaurant hours and information.

### Edgewater Essentials 5/28/2020

As businesses began to pivot their operations to continue to service our community, so did the Chamber by providing our first fully online forum. Edgewater Essentials presented over 8 hours of programming that featured 21 businesses with 20 speakers with topics ranging from social media and communications to personal health and wellness. This event provided business owners and professionals an opportunity to showcase their expertise and attendees a chance to learn from their successes.

### State of Edgewater 10/1/2020

Transit was at the heart of this program, focusing on the current station and track construction in the area. This online event engaged residents and small business owners with representatives from Walsh Fluor, CTA, and Metra providing updates and taking questions. Keynote speaker Olatunji Oboi Reed, President & CEO of Equiticity, spoke on racial equity with transportation disparity. A panel of local government officials including Rep. Cassidy, Ald. Osterman, Ald. Vasquez, Sen. Steans and Comm. Gainer closed the event with reports on area activities.





# 2020 TIMELINE (CONTINUED)

## Reflections: An Edgewater Art Experience 10/1/2020 - 10/30/2020

Through this public art initiative, the Chamber showcased powerful messages of unity, social justice and hope with more than 20 art installations and mosaics. The art was presented on storefront windows, exterior business walls, and in windows of theatres and empty storefronts throughout the neighborhood. Local businesses owners collaborated with artists on the messages they wished to share with the community. The Chamber partnered with the Lytle House, Urban Art Restart, Paint the City, the Chicago Mosaic School, and the 48th Ward for the exhibit, highlighting their public art initiatives as well. Fifteen local businesses participated in the experience. Local street artists, professional muralists, mosaic world masters, fine artists and more created the artwork exhibited. Using an interactive online map, residents were invited to explore Edgewater in a new way to discover art, businesses and shops they may not have been familiar with. This program was featured on ABC, WGN and NBC news programming as well as in many online blogs and magazines.

## Holiday Mix 12/18/2020

The Edgewater Chamber of Commerce curated performances from some of our talented friends and neighbors to present the Edgewater Holiday Mix, a collection of songs, stories and holiday cheer fit for the whole family. The program included storytelling, carols, crafts and messages from community members and the ECC Board of Directors..



# OTHER PROGRAMS

## Clark Street Banners

In November 2020, 15 new banners were installed on Clark Street, between Ridge and Devon. These banners are sponsored by local businesses and provide increased visibility for them and help brand the neighborhood.

## Holiday Gift Guide

Just in time for the holiday season, the Chamber created a guide to promote local businesses by highlighting a product or service that was a must-have for the season. This online guide included 27 local businesses who featured one item each. The guide was hosted on the Issuu website platform.

## Open for Business

The Chamber assisted in 50+ businesses joining the CTA's "Open for Business" campaign, which is a multi-year marketing effort. Business highlights during the Red,Purple Line Modernization program (RPM) will have a hyperlocal reach followed by a citywide focus in the coming years. Highlights during construction will have a hyperlocal reach followed by citywide focuses in the coming years. Keep an eye out for promotions and sign up is ongoing.

## Consumer Signage

The Chamber assisted businesses with their customer communications, as 50+ Open for Business signs were placed in windows. In compliance with city regulations an additional 150 signs were distributed to mark the "social distancing, mask and hand washing" guidelines. As businesses began to open, over 25 businesses requested chalk markings or floor stickers with 6 feet indicators to allow for social distancing and 60 "We Are Open" stencils were applied in front of reopened businesses.





# OVER 550 BUSINESSES IN EDGEWATER

## NEW MEMBERS IN 2020

- |                                   |                               |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Guidepost Montessori              | Sacred Heart Schools          | The Studio@ The Center for    |
| make Architecture                 | The Nicholas Ryan Team        | Women's Fitness               |
| Pure Holistik Cleaning            | Karen Holt Properties         | Curves Fitness Club for Women |
| Seidman, Margulis & Fairman, LLP  | Adoption Center of Illinois   | School of Martial Arts        |
| G-Spang Real Estate               | Friends of Swift              | Brasserie by C&C              |
| School of Rock Andersonville      | XFun Entertainment LLC        | The Edison                    |
| A Cross Law Firm PLLC             | Edgewater Village Chicago     | Dawson Relocation Services    |
| Edgewater Environmental Coalition | Edgewater Taco                | Becovic                       |
| Fox Pest Control                  | Mary Brown Design LTD         | Himsben Design Studio         |
| Landstar Realty Group             | Hamdard Center For Health And |                               |
| Kam Meditation                    | Human Services                |                               |
| Surging Films & Theatrics         |                               |                               |

# SUPPORT

## SPONSORS, CONTRIBUTORS, PARTNERS

- |  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| B & R Developers - Premier                           | Kids Future Day Care Center - Premier | State Farm Insurance, Dave Frederikson - Elite |
| Byline Bank - Elite                                  | Landstar Realty Group - Premier       | The Breakers at Edgewater Beach - Premier      |
| Caramango and Associates, Ltd - Elite                | Loyola University Chicago - Elite     | The Nicholas Ryan Team - Premier               |
| Chicago Grind - Premier                              | MB Financial Bank - Premier           | Thorek Memorial Hospital - Premier             |
| Dawson Relocation Services - Supporting              | Metropolis Coffee Company - Premier   | XFun Entertainment LLC - Premier               |
| Edgewater Tacos - Supporting                         | NetBlaze - Supporting                 |  |
| Firehouse Chicago - Premier                          | New Financial Path - Supporting       | <b>48th Ward</b> - Alderperson Harry Osterman  |
| First Midwest Bank - Premier                         | Pizzeria Aroma - Premier              | <b>49th Ward</b> - Alderperson Maria Hadden    |
| Great Lakes Clinical Trials - Supporting             | Places to Stay - Supporting           | <b>40th Ward</b> - Alderperson Andre Vasquez   |
| Green Element Resale - Elite                         | Salon Echo - Elite                    | <b>RogersEdge</b> - Loyola University and the  |
| Heather Steans - State Senator, 7th District - Elite | Scarpa Group of Re/Max 10 - Premier   | Rogers Park Business Alliance                  |
| J. Blanton Plumbing - Premier                        | Soundoff - Premier                    |  |





**BY THE COMMUNITY, FOR THE COMMUNITY.**

Though this challenging year, our neighborhood's culture of collaboration and spirit of innovation  
has never been more evident than it is today.