

ULI Chicago 9th Annual Vision Awards
July 11, 2024



Project Finalist: Cultivate Collective – Phase One | URBAN ReSOLVE

Project Team:

Developer/Owner: URBAN ReSOLVE

Architecture Firm: SMNG Architects

Project Description: Cultivate Collective is a national model for holistic community revitalization that unites education, wellness, sustainability,

and economic vitality to create a resilient, equitable, and vibrant future for all. Cultivate's six-acre demonstration site on Chicago's southwest side opened its doors in September 2023, and houses the Academy for Global Citizenship's existing K-8 public school, an early childhood Head Start center, a federally qualified health care center, three-acre urban farm, neighborhood fresh food marketplace, six teaching kitchens, and a range of community wellness programs and amenities. Additionally, Cultivate was designed to meet the world's most ambitious standards for sustainability through the Living Building Challenge, which most notably refers to net-positive energy and water, through a combination of 550 kW of on-site solar energy, 50 geothermal wells, along with battery storage to ensure climate resiliency. Our plans are the result of deep collaboration with community leaders, volunteer organizations, neighborhood voices and local constituents who have worked in partnership with the Academy for Global Citizenship and parents, families, and community members to develop a collective vision for bringing vital resources to our community. The comprehensive needs analysis has occurred over a three-year timeframe and consisted of town hall gatherings, design charrettes, community forums, small group collaboration sessions, surveys, participation in location neighborhood organization meetings and monthly working group sessions. To formally acquire the land where our project resides, we engaged in a thorough five-year community engagement process resulting in a Community Benefits Agreement with the Chicago Housing Authority and a Memorandum of Understanding with the neighborhood-based Hearst Community Organization, all centered around hiring practices, community governance, and community use of our site. Over the past two years alone, we have held over 100 community engagement events, stakeholder interviews, meetings with community organizations, and focus group meetings. To enhance market study analyses and identified racial and social inequities pertaining to air quality, food insecurity, health care access and disinvestment, our Collective obtained over 200 survey results from community constituents who shared their needs, hopes, and dreams for our future. We have engaged over 1,000 unique participants in our outreach events, which have ranged from community dinner and breakfast information sessions, meet-and-greet gatherings, back-to-school events, neighborhood park movie nights, job fairs, weekly fresh produce distribution, farmers markets, community picnics, Park Advisory Council meetings, and virtual stakeholder interviews.