



Directing Energy Savings Back to Chicago Families



For more than 120 years, Chicago Commons has been firmly rooted in traditionally-underserved communities delivering programs designed to help children, families, and seniors live richer, more fulfilling lives. Chicago Commons’s childcare centers serve families with a median income of \$16,015, and help make life a little easier by offering year-round, low-cost or free educational services depending on income eligibility. They maintain a portfolio of buildings in south- and west-side neighborhoods in Chicago that house childcare and adult service centers.

Facilities Director Eric Woods began to work with Elevate Energy to analyze how Chicago Commons’ portfolio uses energy and how they could save money by improving energy and water efficiency. Since utility bills take up a significant amount of their budget, Woods is always focused on running their facilities as efficiently as possible; Chicago Commons

also utilizes state childcare subsidies to help families in need and looks to cut costs wherever possible to stabilize their budgets and remain resilient during uncertain budgetary climates.

After Elevate Energy performed comprehensive energy and water assessments for two of their facilities, Chicago Commons decided to move forward with lighting retrofits at the Nia Family Center, a childcare center in Humboldt Park, and their Adult Day Service Center on the south side. Elevate Energy helped them leverage multiple funding sources to cover over 50% of the project costs. The lighting upgrades are expected to save the organization roughly 9%, or \$8,631, on electricity annually. Chicago Commons is now assessing other energy- and water-saving projects with Elevate Energy to divert more resources to the important programs they operate in their communities.

Project Information

BUILDING INFORMATION

Parts of Chicago Commons’ building portfolio:

- Nia Family Center, childcare center serving 113 families in West Humboldt Park
- Adult Day Service Center, serving 75 seniors on the South Side

ENERGY SAVINGS

- Percent annual electricity savings (projected): **9%**
- Annual electricity cost savings (projected): **\$8,631**
- Payback period in years: **3.1**

FINANCING:

- Additional grant funds: **\$31,708.50**
- ComEd’s Energy Efficiency Program incentive: **\$14,056**

“We are so grateful to be able to save on energy and costs at our facilities. We can now pursue projects that we otherwise would not have been able to during these uncertain budgetary times. The improvements will help us continue to provide quality services to our communities and families long into the future. We are excited to continue to work with Elevate to identify further savings in our portfolio.”

Edgar Ramirez, President and CEO



Percentage of Nonprofits in Low-income areas, by County

