

StreetWise Announces Next Chapter: Expanding Economic Opportunity and Elevating Community Voices in Chicago

StreetWise, one of Chicago's most enduring and impactful social-enterprise organizations, today announced a bold new chapter in its mission to provide economic opportunity and elevate community-driven journalism. Backed by new investment from Press Forward Chicago, StreetWise will deepen its role as both an income engine for individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty and as a vital source of storytelling rooted in lived experience.

A Transition that Supports Growth and Mission Alignment

In March 2020, StreetWise merged with the YWCA Metropolitan Chicago. Over the past five years, the nonprofit sector has faced significant challenges. YWCA Metropolitan Chicago and the StreetWise Advisory Board jointly agreed this is the right moment for StreetWise to leverage its unique strengths, mission, and potential for growth and step forward as an independent organization, once again.

YWCA will continue to serve as fiscal sponsor until StreetWise secures its reinstated 501(c)(3) status. Both organizations look forward to ongoing collaboration—including referrals, shared resources, and aligned advocacy—to ensure equitable access to economic opportunities for all Chicagoans.

Looking Ahead

StreetWise's evolution into a modern economic empowerment and storytelling hub represents an exciting phase of growth—one that will:

- Expand immediate income opportunities for vendors
- Elevate underrepresented voices through multichannel storytelling
- Strengthen Chicago's community media ecosystem
- Foster civic dialogue rooted in lived experience

As we move forward, our commitment remains unwavering: to ensure every individual in Chicago has the dignity, tools, and opportunity to move toward stability and self-sufficiency.

We look forward to sharing more updates, new programming, and expanded storytelling initiatives in the months ahead. Together with our vendors, community partners, supporters, and neighbors, StreetWise is stepping boldly into its next chapter—empowering people, elevating voices, and building a more equitable Chicago.

