

# PRESERVATION FORWARD



## 2022 Landmarks Illinois Influencer

### ELEANOR ESSER GORSKI

*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COOK COUNTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY*

Through multiple leadership roles, Eleanor Esser Gorski has advanced historic preservation as an integral part of Chicago's economic and community development strategy. Eleanor was appointed Executive Director of the Cook County Land Bank Authority (CCLBA) in August 2020. The land bank, which owns more than 1,700 properties, works to return vacant places to productive use in underserved communities by partnering with community developers, small business owners and prospective homebuyers. Equity and community are central to Eleanor's work, which integrates design, planning and historic preservation. The CCLBA is expanding its inventory to create more affordable housing and economic opportunity partnerships within Cook County and Eleanor is prioritizing block- and neighborhood-level preservation and sensitive infill development. Eleanor played a leading role at the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) as First Deputy Commissioner and Acting Commissioner of the DPD, as well as the department's Bureau of Planning and Design lead and director of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks. Her work at DPD in financial incentive legislation provided groundbreaking assistance for small businesses in communities of need through the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, expanding the Adopt a Landmark program citywide and preserving landmarks with the Class L Property Tax Incentive. Eleanor is a licensed architect with degrees in architecture, art history and history. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Rome, where she studied the integration of new construction and old in Rome, Berlin and Amsterdam. She is also a fellow of the University of Chicago Civic Leadership Academy and sits on the local advisory board of Local Initiatives Support Corporation Chicago, the alumni board of the University of Illinois School of Architecture and the board of the Illinois Medical District.

