



**Landmarks Illinois Statement to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks  
Regarding St. Adalbert Parish Complex  
Bonnie McDonald, President & CEO  
August 7, 2023**

Good afternoon Commissioners, my name is Bonnie McDonald and I am the President and CEO of Landmarks Illinois. My organization supports of preliminary landmark designation for the St. Adalbert Parish Complex and urges the Commission to vote in favor of that designation today.

In 2016, Landmarks Illinois placed St. Adalbert and Chicago's Historic Catholic Churches on our annual list of the Most Endangered Historic Places in Illinois in response to the Archdiocese of Chicago's announcement that it would close the church for worship.

St. Adalbert Church has served as a community anchor for generations. It is already an unofficial spiritual and community landmark for Pilsen, and it is deserving of official Chicago landmark status to ensure that this building can remain an icon of its neighborhood. We recognize, however, that the Archdiocese of Chicago will no longer maintain St. Adalbert as an active place of worship. With that in mind, Chicago landmark designation can be a key piece of the strategy to transition the parish complex to a new, active, and community-serving use, which we believe to be the best prospect for its preservation. We recognize that accommodating a new

use is likely to require creativity, and we urge the Commission to move forward with landmark designation with an eye towards flexibility in future review. We also urge that all conversations about the future of these buildings be undertaken with the substantial input of the Pilsen community.

Sacred places are part of community infrastructure. Chicago is expected to see many more Catholic parishes close and a more proactive strategy is needed for community engagement and to identify reuse opportunities. We offer our expertise and partnership to further that broader conversation.