Chicago, IL

227.3 mi² | Pop: 2,720,546 | 3ʳᵈ Most Populous U.S. City | Est. 1837

Blocks of older, smaller, mixed-age buildings play a critical role in fostering robust local economies, inclusive neighborhoods, and sustainable cities. The Preservation Green Lab report, *Older, Smaller, Better,* leveraged the ideas of **Jane Jacobs** to show why preservation and building reuse matter for successful communities. The *Atlas of ReUrbanism* expands this research to 50 U.S. cities, demonstrating that **Character Counts.**

In **Chicago**, compared to areas with large, new structures, character-rich **blocks of older, smaller, mixed-age buildings** contain...

65% greater population density

Greater proportions of jobs in small and new businesses

25% more units of affordable rental housing

The building blocks for an inclusive, diverse, economically vibrant city, Chicago's older, smaller buildings are irreplaceable assets. For more information about Chicago's high-character areas, **please see reverse.**

Built Character in Chicago

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*The Atlas of ReUrbanism uses the Character Score to classify building stock by age and size. Higher scoring areas in **red** represent blocks of older, smaller, mixed-aged buildings. Lower scoring areas in **blue** represent newer, larger, similar-aged development.*

High Score — Blocks of older, smaller, mixed-aged buildings
Low Score — Blocks of newer, larger, similar-aged buildings
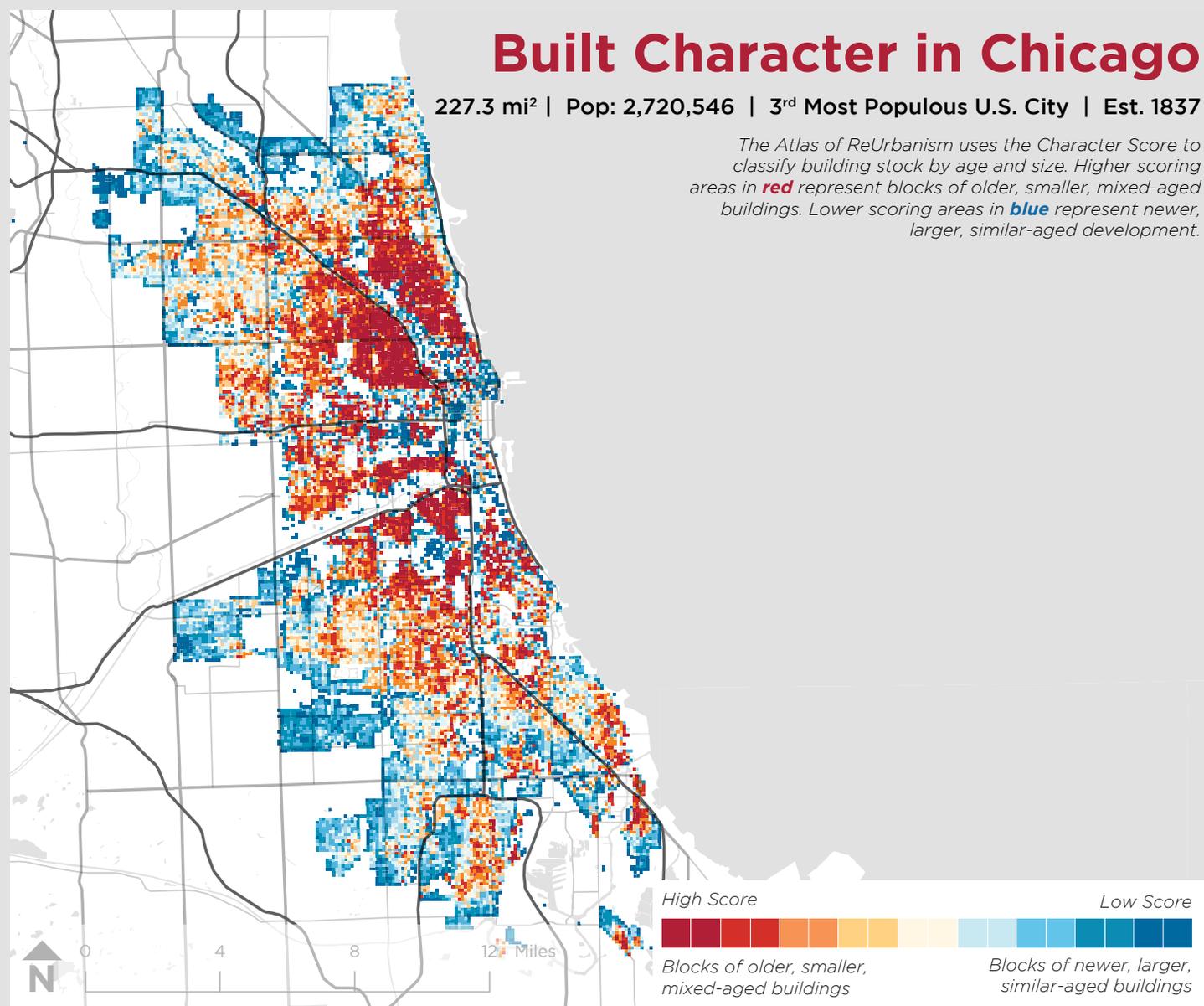
High v. Low Character Score

Use the table below to compare high- and low-character score areas in terms of their density and diversity, inclusiveness, and economic vitality.

■ High Character Score Areas   ■ Low Character Score Areas

Density & Diversity

	High	Low
Avg. Population/Grid Square[†]	170.1	102.8
Median Age (Years)[†]	33.5	38.3
Avg. Between Age 18-34[†]	29.5%	23.6%
Avg. Foreign Born[††]	18.5%	17.5%
Avg. New to County[††]	2.4%	2.0%
Avg. People of Color[†]	73.4%	65.3%
Avg. Housing Units/Grid Square[†]	73.2	47.4
Avg. Vacant Homes[†]	13.7%	9.1%
Avg. Owned Homes[†]	45.2%	64.3%

Inclusiveness

	High	Low
Total Women and Minority-Owned Businesses[†††]	5,830	5,076
Avg. Affordable Rental Housing Units[†]	73.8%	72.6%

Economic Vitality

	High	Low
Total Jobs in Small Businesses[††††]	75,981	78,888
Total Jobs in New Businesses[††††]	14,042	15,978
Total Jobs in Creative Industries[††††]	49,656	143,891

[†]Data from the 2010 Census
[††]Data from the 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates of the American Community Survey
[†††]Data from Dun & Bradstreet, 2016.
[††††]Data from LEHD LODES, 2014

Building and Preservation Facts

Parcels/Buildings	Chicago	50-City Average
Total	489,588	204,038
Per Square Mile	2,154	1,436
Median Year Built	1925	1952
On Nat'l Register of Historic Places	5.6%	6.8%
Locally Designated	1.6%	4.3%
Historic Tax Credit Projects	81	27.5

Year Built By Period, **Chicago** | 50-City Average

489,588 Buildings

- **26.1%** | 22.2% — 1920-1945
- **26.3%** | 27.9% — 1945-1967 (50+ Years)
- **8.8%** | 34.2% — 1967-2017
- **38.8%** | 15.7% — Pre-1920