

# Local Government **REIMAGINED** CONFERENCE

MAY 10-12, 2023 LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

## **Immigration: Federal Control, Local Impact**

Evan Walter – Village Administrator

Hannah Weyant – Special Projects Manager

Village of Burr Ridge, Illinois

**ICMA** | conference

# Disclaimer



The language used in this presentation is intentional and is used to tell a story.



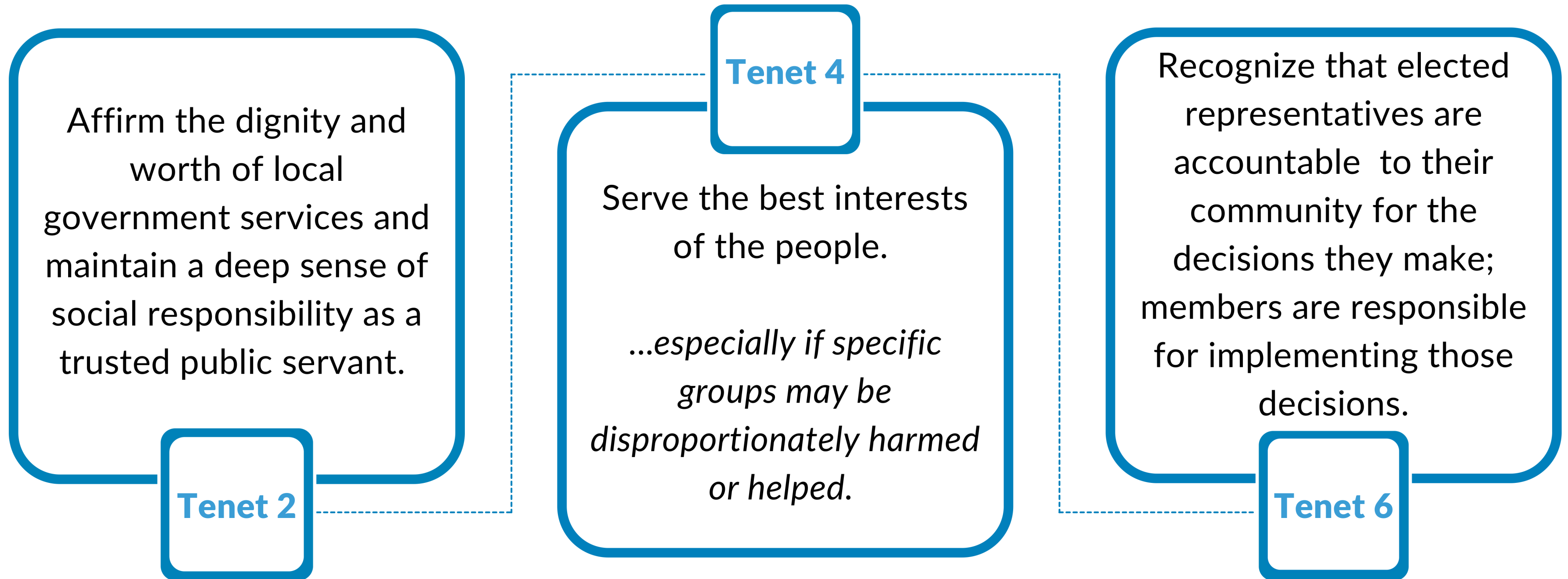
Presenters do not intend to cause offense but recognize that the specific wording or characterizations used may be offensive to some listeners.



We look forward to learning from the perspectives of others.

# Why Are We Here?

Consider the ways in which public discourse shapes our communities and positions the value of professional administration within today's hyper-partisan political environments.







# About Me

- Evan Walter
- 33-year-old Millennial
- From Cleveland, Ohio
- Married to Kim
- Kids - Nora, Merrick, and Rowan
- I enjoy running, play golf, go Buckeyes!
- Village Administrator since 2020
  - Assistant Village Administrator since 2017
- Previously worked for City of Elgin (pop. 120,000) and Senator Sherrod Brown



# Burr Ridge, Illinois

*"A Very Special Place"*

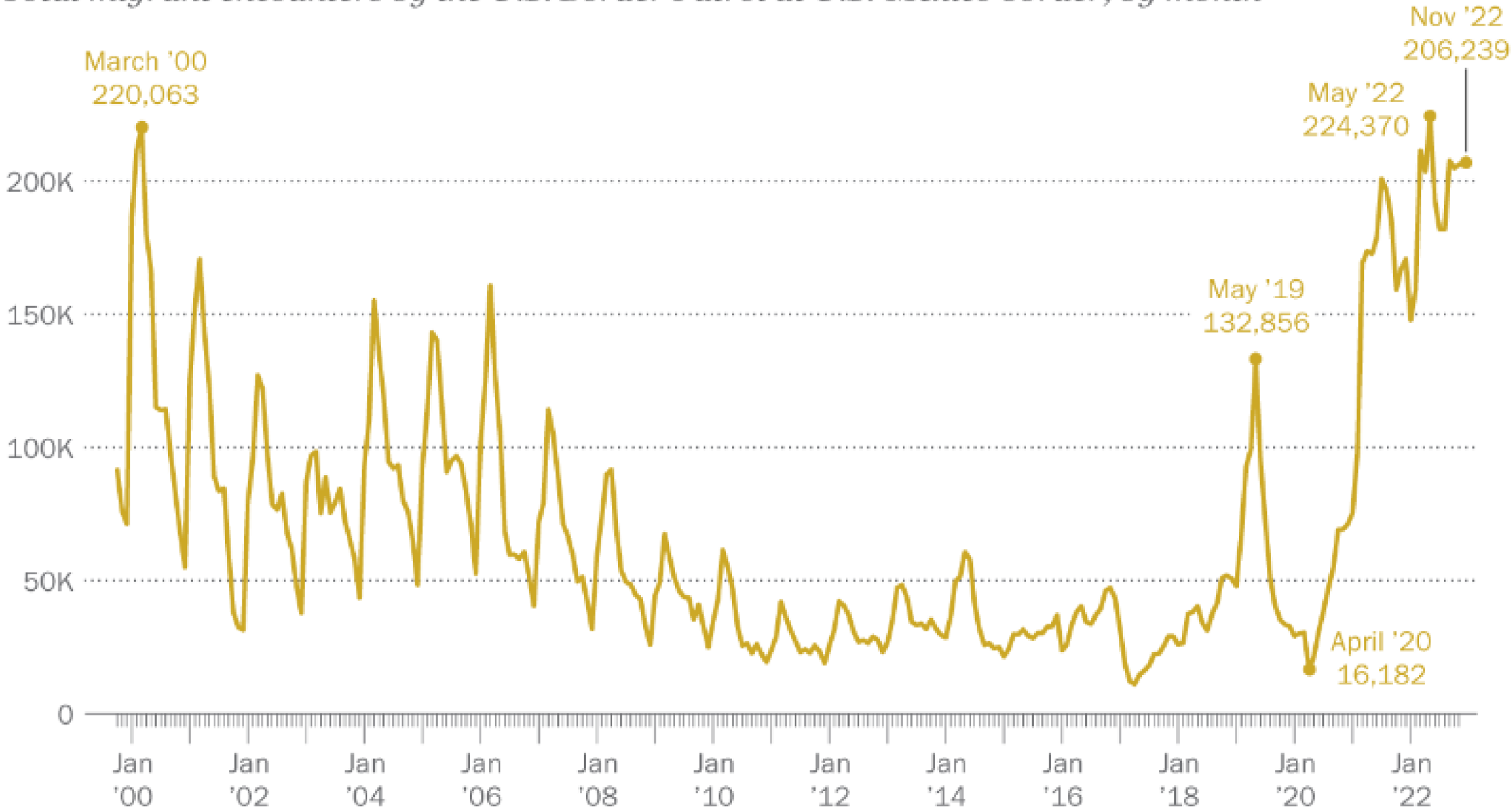
Census Data	Burr Ridge	Illinois
White	77%	77%
Hispanic	5%	18%
65+	31%	16%
Foreign-Born	23%	14%
HH Income	\$148,500	\$72,500
Home Value	\$700,000	\$212,600



# Immigration in Brief

## Monthly migrant encounters at U.S.-Mexico border are near record highs

*Total migrant encounters by the U.S. Border Patrol at U.S.-Mexico border, by month*

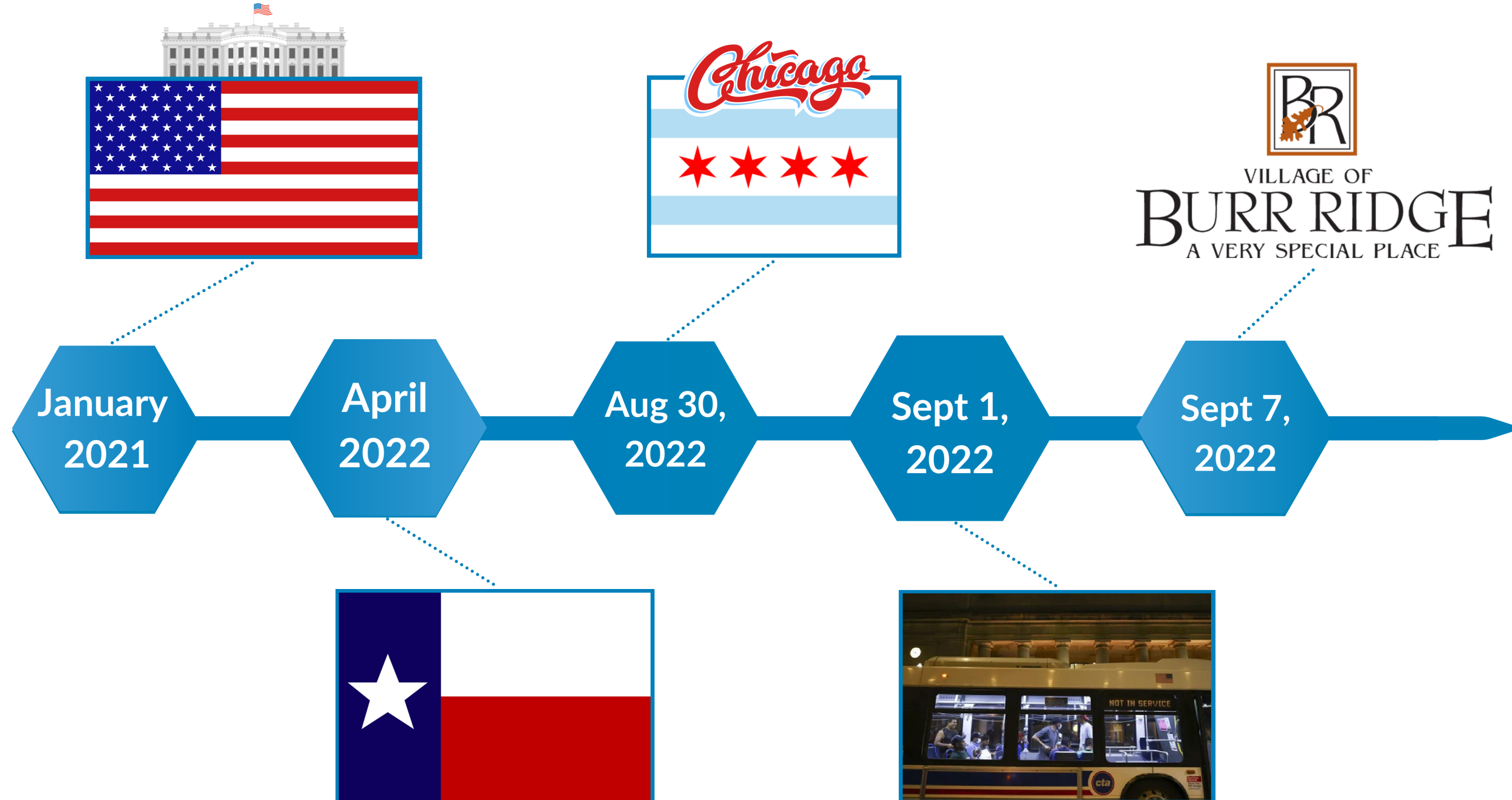


Note: Beginning in March 2020, monthly totals combine apprehensions and expulsions into a new category known as encounters. Monthly totals before March 2020 include apprehensions only.

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# Background





# On the Ground

## Wednesday, September 7

### 7:00 PM

64 immigrants arrive at a hotel in Burr Ridge

### 8:30 PM

"Busload of illegals are arriving at a hotel" - County Sheriff

### 10 PM

Call with Mayor and Vice Mayor

## Thursday, September 8

### 6 AM

Call with Illinois Department of Human Services

### 8 AM

Developed response sheets

### 11 AM

Issued public statement

## Friday, September 9

### All Day

Calls with local, state, and federal officials.

Hotel was host to 75 Afghan refugees in February 2022

Governor's office issues public statement

## Saturday, September 10

### 8:30 AM

Engage staff to formulate updated public statement

### 12:30 PM

Issued follow up statement and public letter to Governor





## Federal Control ➔ Local Impact

“I have not received word from Chicago, Cook County, or the State on this issue. Neither [Village] elected officials nor staff were consulted or contacted about this decision, and we are now gathering information to keep our community updated.”

Mayor (9/8/22)





## Federal Control ➔ Local Impact

“The State has a prior relationship with the hotel, who has done amazing work welcoming refugees and asylum seekers before. It is interesting that local officials are choosing this specific instance to gripe to the press about this specific group of asylum seekers that consists of about 30 families. Illinois is a welcoming state and xenophobia has no home here.”

Gov. Pritzker (9/9/22)



# Organizational Takeaways

- ✓ Get your communications plan in order now to help you later
- ✓ Develop trust and open lines of communication with community members to solve problems
- ✓ Don't do it alone; empower your staff
- ✓ Know your community to be able to craft thematic messaging
- ✓ Identify the assets in your network that can help







# My Takeaways

- **01** Get the whole organization on message
- **02** Know your organizational assets, including staff perspectives
- **03** Leaders will meet the challenges which arise when they are authentic
- **04** If you try and BS your way through a problem, you will not solve it
- **05** Bring everything back to people



# Summary

Consider the ways in which public discourse shapes our communities and positions the value of professional administration within today's hyper-partisan political environments.

