



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR A GREEN RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**CHICAGO** – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today celebrated Earth Day on a tour of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) GreenRise building. ICA GreenRise is a historic building that houses a wide range of social service providers and is a model for high-efficiency retrofits and onsite renewable energy generation. Mayor Lightfoot was joined by Lesley Showers and Naomi Davis, two leaders driving the green recovery locally.

"A significant portion of the emissions in Chicago are from the built environment," said Mayor Lightfoot. "That's why it is absolutely critical that we double down on our efforts to drastically reduce carbon emissions and invest in our local green economy. By creating and supporting more sustainable and equitable solutions for our city, we will be able to keep our communities healthy, provide residents with good-paying jobs and further ensure that our recovery from this pandemic is both equitable and inclusive."

The ICA GreenRise Building is an eight-floor, 166,000-square-foot building home to many, including two intentional residential living communities and 25 different non-profits and social service providers. For the thousands of Chicagoans who live, work, or visit the building for services, this investment improves air quality, health, and quality of life.

"The Institute of Cultural Affairs is proud to host the Mayor for the release of her ambitious Green Recovery Agenda on Earth Day, said Lesley Showers, Chief Operating Officer of the ICA. "The ICA GreenRise building is a unique demonstration of a historic building striving to lower our emissions through innovative energy efficiency efforts and on-site solar energy. We are committed to joining forces with many stakeholders to guide and implement the City's Green Recovery Agenda."

Mayor Lightfoot and Lesley Showers were joined by Naomi Davis, a climate leader in Chicago and the Founder and CEO of Blacks in Green.



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“Blacks in Green is spearheading efforts to design and operationalize the Sustainable Square Mile in Chicago’s Woodlawn Community. Our vision is to strengthen our community by generating wealth through the green economy, eliminating our reliance on fossil fuels, and taking other actions to build a vibrant and resilient local economy,” said Naomi Davis, Founder and CEO of Blacks in Green. “We believe that our community-focused approach is a model for a green recovery for Chicago’s Black and Brown communities, and we look forward to sharing our expertise with the City of Chicago as they advance this ambitious agenda.”

The City of Chicago is actively creating opportunities for a green economic and social recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. A green recovery will significantly strengthen local communities, provide critical relief for residents, generate quality jobs, and improve the overall livability of the city. Using Earth Day as a platform, Mayor Lightfoot is advancing four strategies that will position Chicago to achieve our 2025 and 2035 clean energy targets, maximize local benefits to communities beginning first with our historically underserved, create new workforce development opportunities, reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

1. Climate Action Plan - The City’s forthcoming Climate Action Plan will identify strategies, in close coordination with community stakeholders, to equitably reduce emissions, achieve community-level climate adaptation, and chart pathways to a green recovery through providing high-quality jobs to residents.
2. Building Decarbonization Strategy - Currently, buildings account for 70% of Chicago’s greenhouse gas emissions and the City must reduce energy consumption in buildings to meet our long-term climate goals. The City is developing an equity-focused building emission reduction strategy that lowers economic burdens on residents and businesses through energy efficiency, electrification, renewable energy, and innovation in new construction. This effort will lead to a significant step towards the City’s commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement.
3. Electricity Franchise - For the first time in nearly 30 years, the City of Chicago will renegotiate or replace its franchise agreement with a public utility to operate and manage the electric distribution system that serves the residents and businesses in the City of Chicago. The next franchise agreement will ensure that in addition to delivering safe and reliable service, residents will benefit from increased programs that reduce household electricity costs and fight climate change.



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4. Renewable Electricity Supply - This year, the City will sign a new contract to power municipal buildings and operations with 100% renewable energy by 2025, with at least half of the supply sourced from new renewable energy sources in the region.

“The exciting package of initiatives under the Green Recovery Agenda will drastically transform our energy system and spur new opportunities for a local green economy,” said Angela Tovar, Chief Sustainability Officer for the City of Chicago. “I am thrilled to advance this agenda alongside Mayor Lightfoot, local leaders, residents, and stakeholders across Chicago. This is our opportunity to chart a path forward for an equitable climate future and to develop the deep hyper-local benefits that our neighborhoods need now more than ever.”

Chicago is one of 25 cities selected to participate in the Bloomberg Philanthropies American Cities Climate Challenge, an effort to resource cities to take strong action to reduce pollution that contributes to climate change and impacts public health. As part of the Challenge and in line with the City’s community-wide 100% clean energy commitment, Chicago is prepared to take bold action to reduce emissions from its building and transportation sectors. The Lightfoot administration is underway with collaborative efforts to develop and enact strategies that will develop an equity-based climate action plan and move Chicago to reach its climate commitments over the next decade.

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