



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2023

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**CITY OF CHICAGO AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS ANNOUNCE NEW
OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHICAGOANS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CITY'S
CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

*Environmental Justice Progress Updates, Action Plan, Community Engagement
Calendar, Public Comment Options Posted*

CHICAGO (June 29, 2023) – Mayor Brandon Johnson, The Office of Climate & Environmental Equity (OCEE), Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and community co-leaders today announced new opportunities for Chicago residents to participate in Chicago's Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA). The CIA is the City's first initiative to comprehensively examine and assess how combined environmental, health and social stressors affect Chicago residents, and to identify communities that experience the greatest impacts.

"The CIA process is the very best demonstration of full force of government working hand in hand with the people of Chicago to assess ways in which we can understand and mitigate environmental harm in our neighborhoods," said Mayor Brandon Johnson. "Through this process, we are meaningfully partnering with leaders on the frontlines of environmental justice as well as prioritizing the lived experience of individuals most impacted by pollution to guide and inform this important project."

The CIA is a critical step by helping to inform decision-making in policy areas such as land use and zoning, transportation, permitting, enforcement and more. It is being implemented in close coordination with community groups from the Chicagoland Environmental Justice Network, including co-chairs from the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, Neighbors for Environmental Justice, People for Community Recovery, and the Southeast Environmental Task Force.

"Our goal through the Cumulative Impact Assessment is to build meaningful partnerships and advance community-informed solutions, actions and policy changes that will alleviate environmental burdens and advance environmental justice in Chicago," said Chicago's Chief Sustainability Officer Angela Tovar.



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



In early 2023, working groups were formed to focus on Data and Methods, Communications and Engagement and Policy. Today at [Chicago.gov/cumulativeimpact](https://chicago.gov/cumulativeimpact), the working groups made available:

- An **Environmental Justice Action Plan** outlining the City's commitments to ensure that justice and equity principles are part of day-to-day operations and decision-making;
- A **Community Input Summary** that describes the lived experience of people who reside in environmental justice communities, based on a qualitative analysis of community feedback related to environmental, health, and quality-of-life impacts;
- A **Community Engagement Calendar** of in-person opportunities to learn more about the CIA and provide direct input; and
- **Progress Updates** from the CIA working groups, including a summary document outlining potential policy reforms to fully consider the collective environmental burden of existing and proposed industrial operations.

Public comment and feedback from impacted communities is essential to the success of the CIA initiative. Interested parties are encouraged to visit [Chicago.gov/cumulativeimpact](https://chicago.gov/cumulativeimpact) to learn more and share their thoughts about the CIA via an online survey and through written comments submitted through **July 31, 2023**.

"We are deeply grateful to the community organizations that have been working with us on this assessment from the beginning," said CDPH Commissioner Allison Arwady, M.D. "This summer we look forward to robust public conversation about progress on this initiative – particularly from people most impacted by historic and continuing burdens."

"Defining our partnership as co-led and co-designed is not about how it looks or works," said Madalynn Benavides, Cumulative Impacts Organizer for Neighbors for Environmental Justice. "It is about establishing community relationships and working with multiple minds and people with lived experiences that allows us to collaborate on a shared vision for the City."

"Engaging environmental justice communities is the only way we will be successful in addressing the unequal burden of industrial operations in Chicago," said Chloe Butler-Jones, Communications Coordinator for People for Community Recovery. "It is this belief that drives our progress on the Cumulative Impact Assessment and our efforts to center people's lived experiences."

In addition, foundational materials that helped inform the CIA are also now available online, including a landscape assessment of how other jurisdictions are



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



using cumulative impacts data to inform policy changes; and charters that outline the goals, scope of work, decision-making process and deliverables for each CIA working group.

Completion of a baseline CIA is expected by September 1, 2023, followed by presentation to Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Chair of the City Council Committee on Environmental Protection and Energy by October 31, 2023.

###