



## **AGENDA**

**Joint Environment Board and Equity and Empowerment Commission**

**Thursday, February 20, 2020**

**Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center**

**Parasol Room**

**6:30 PM**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

### **2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **3. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **A. [Review of Draft Resolution to Support Environmental Justice](#)**

### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Order & Agenda Items are subject to change. Information about the Environment Board is available at: [www.cityofevanston.org/government/boards-commissions](http://www.cityofevanston.org/government/boards-commissions). Questions can be directed to Kumar Jensen at 847-448-8199. The City of Evanston is committed to making all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. Any citizen needing mobility or communications access assistance should contact the Facilities Management Office at 847-448-4311 (Voice) or 847-448-8064 (TTY)



## Memorandum

To: Members of the Environment Board  
Members of the Equity and Empowerment Commission

From: Johanna Leonard, Director of Community Development

CC: Kumar Jensen, Chief Sustainability and Resilience Officer  
Kimberly Richardson, Interim Assistant City Manager

Subject: Review of Draft Resolution to Support Environmental Justice

Date: February 20, 2020

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Recommended Action:

Staff seeks feedback from the members of the Environment Board and Equity and Empowerment Commission on the draft language of the Environmental Justice Resolution.

Council Action:

For Discussion

Summary:

The attached draft resolution is provided for review of the Joint Meeting of the Environment Board and the Equity & Empowerment Commission. At the February 20, 2020 meeting, the two groups will review the resolution in a working session and provide feedback to the document that will be made during the meeting. Following the revisions, staff will work with the Law Department to create a final version that will travel to the City Council's Planning & Development Committee for further discussion.

Attachments:

[DRAFT: A Resolution to Support Environmental Justice](#)

## **A Resolution to Support Environmental Justice**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Evanston recognizes that Environmental Justice (EJ) is concerned with the equity and empowerment of all community members such that every resident experience the same degree of access to environmental assets, protection from environmental hazards and health risks and an opportunity to play an effective role in making decisions that affect the quality of life in this community;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Evanston prides itself on being a community that cares about fostering equality, community involvement, sustainability, community cohesion and, transparent decision-making;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Evanston aspires to mitigate negative environmental consequences and health risks resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations in all of its neighborhoods;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Evanston seeks to support the delivery of an equitable share of environmental benefits and community assets in all neighborhoods that enhance the quality of life, such as parks and open spaces, trees, natural areas, community gardens, and the lakefront as well as equal access to the City's environmental and infrastructure investments that support health, well-being and a sense of community;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Evanston aspires to engage Evanston all residents regardless of race, ethnicity, or language, in order to experience equal access to information about, and opportunities for meaningful involvement in, local decision-making that affects their quality of life.

### **Section 1: Purpose**

The purpose of this Resolution is to establish the City of Evanston's policy for environmental justice and to put in motion the development of ordinances to ensure active consideration of environmental justice and meaningful public participation in City policies, practices, procedures, and other decision-making.

### **Section 2: Definitions**

**Environmental Justice (Evanston):** Environmental Justice (EJ) is when equity and empowerment are achieved for all community members such that every resident experience the same degree of access to environmental assets, protection from environmental hazards and health risks, and an opportunity to play an effective role in making decisions that affect the quality of life in this community.

**Public Participation:** Public participation is any process that directly engages the public and stakeholders in taking an action or making a decision and gives full consideration to public input in making that decision. The City would publicize such issues and give residents enough time to educate themselves, participate in meetings and provide input on the issue. In response, the City would give due consideration to all public comment provided by involved individuals, summarize and respond to major public comments, and make its best effort to incorporate their ideas, concerns and criticisms into the final decision-making.

Public participation is a process, not a single event. It consists of a series of activities and actions by the City over the full lifespan of a project to both inform the public and obtain input from them. Public participation affords stakeholders (those that have an interest or stake in an issue, such as individuals, interest groups, and communities) the opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives.

### **Section 3: Declaration of Environmental Justice and Public Participation Policy**

"The City of Evanston is committed to good public participation practices that provide the foundation for making better decisions around environmental justice issues. Decision-makers have more complete information to understand any potential impact project or program may have marginalized community, decisions are more implementable and sustainable, decisions are perceived as more legitimate, and decision-makers become better communicators.

### **Section 4: Intent to Incorporate Environmental Justice Practices into City Code, Policies, and Practices**

The City of Evanston will incorporate environmental justice into City of Evanston ordinances, codes, policies and processes. Review of existing codes will be conducted and appropriate revisions to bolster and improve environmental justice outcomes. This work will be done in consultation with Environmental Justice Evanston, Evanston Environment Board, the Equity and Empowerment Commission, relevant City departments and other applicable community organizations.

### **Section 5: Intent to Develop a Public Participation (Policy)**

The City is committed to developing a policy that specifies clear procedures defining meaningful public participation for projects, policies and decision making processes carried out by the City. These procedures are intended to ensure that all decisions with the potential to affect the quality of life for residents in Evanston are supported by public participation that is "pursuant to the City's policies.

**Section 6: Mapping of Environmental Justice Areas**

The City will develop and maintain an active GIS-based inventory of environmental justice areas in Evanston. That inventory will be made public through online mapping platforms. The Environmental Justice Areas will, at a minimum, include areas already identified by the U.S. Environmental Project Agency's EJ Screen Tool, but will be supplemented with locally relevant information gathered from City departments and community stakeholders.

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