



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 23, 2023

**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES MAYOR JOHNSON'S UNITY PLAN FOR  
REORGANIZATION OF COMMITTEES**

**CHICAGO** — Today, City Council approved of Mayor Brandon Johnson's Unity Council Organization Plan, marking a significant milestone in his administration's commitment to delivering tangible outcomes for the people of Chicago. The innovative Unity Plan introduces a comprehensive framework designed to foster collaboration among aldermen from diverse backgrounds while aligning the Mayor's office and City Council around shared priorities and values.

"As elected leaders, our primary responsibility is to ensure that our government is structured to effectively serve the people," stated Mayor Johnson. "This plan empowers the most diverse group of Council chairs in our city's history and unites us across geographical boundaries and political spectrums."

Mayor Johnson's Unity Plan introduces 20 committees providing avenues for addressing critical issues facing the city. By appointing aldermen from a wide range of political affiliations as committee chairs, the plan promotes inclusivity and ensures equitable representation for all communities.

The Unity Plan includes the following aldermen in prominent leadership positions within City Council:

- Ald. Pat Dowell, Chair of the Committee on Finance
- Ald. Jason Ervin, Chair of the Committee on the Budget and Government Operations
- Ald. Maria Hadden, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection and Energy
- Ald. Michelle Harris, Chair of the Committee on Committees and Rules
- Ald. Brian Hopkins, Chair of the Committee on Public Safety
- Ald. Daniel La Spata, Chair of the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety
- Ald. Matt Martin, Chair of the Committee on Ethics and Government Oversight
- Ald. Greg Mitchell, Chair of the Committee on Transportation and Public Way
- Ald. Emma Mitts, Chair of the Committee on Contracting, Oversight and Equity
- Ald. Matt O'Shea, Chair of the Committee on Aviation



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



- Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, Chair of the Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards
- Ald. Rossana Rodriguez Sanchez, Chair of the Committee on Health and Human Relations
- Ald. Michael Rodriguez, Chair of the Committee on Workforce Development and Audit
- Ald. Byron Sigcho-Lopez, Chair of the Committee on Housing and Real Estate
- Ald. Deb Silverstein, Chair of the Committee on License and Consumer Protection
- Ald. Nick Sposato, Chair of the Committee on Special Events, Cultural Affairs and Recreation
- Ald. Chris Taliaferro, Chair of the Committee on Police and Fire
- Ald. Jeannette Taylor, Chair of the Committee on Education and Child Development
- Ald. Andre Vasquez, Chair of the Committee on Immigration and Refugee Rights
- Ald. Gil Villegas, Chair of the Committee on the Economic, Capital and Technology Development

The implementation of Mayor Johnson's Unity Plan marks several historic firsts, including the appointment of the first Black woman as Finance Committee chair, the first Latina leading a committee, and a record-breaking seven Latinx aldermen serving as Chairs.

Ald. Samantha Nugent (39<sup>th</sup>) will serve as President Pro Tempore, while Ald. Stephanie Coleman (16<sup>th</sup>) assumes the role of Assistant President Pro Tempore. Ald. Walter Burnett (27<sup>th</sup>) will make history as the first Black Vice Mayor.

###

### **MAYOR JOHNSON INTRODUCES ORDINANCE TO CREATE A PERMANENT EXPANDED OUTDOOR DINING PROGRAM**

**CHICAGO** — Today, Mayor Brandon Johnson introduced an ordinance to establish a long-term version of Chicago's Expanded Outdoor Dining (EOD) program. Chicago's EOD program expired at the end of 2022 after providing support to hundreds of restaurants throughout the pandemic. The ordinance introduced today would create a long-term EOD program that incorporates feedback and lessons learned from the past three years to allow eligible restaurants and bars to continue to responsibly operate on the roadway immediately in front of or adjacent to their establishment.



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



"Outdoor dining has proven critical to restaurants in neighborhoods across Chicago," said Mayor Johnson. "By introducing this ordinance to create a long-term version of the Expanded Outdoor Dining program, we are sending a signal to local restaurateurs that they are valued members of our city's culture and business community and that my administration is here to support in any way we can."

The proposed EOD program will be administered by the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) and the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT). This multi-department collaboration makes possible outdoor dining options that add to the character of a neighborhood. The proposed EOD program would establish an Outdoor Dining Street Permit to allow businesses with a valid Retail Food Establishment, Tavern, or Consumption on Premises-Incidental Activity liquor license to expand operations. To improve accessibility, the new permit would allow restaurants to also operate in curb lanes adjacent to the licensed premises. Full street closures would continue to be allowed for groups of three or more businesses. Permits would be valid from May 1 through October 31 on an annual basis, and establishments would be required to follow all rules and regulations.

"The previous success of the Expanded Outdoor Dining Program has led us to reimagine outdoor dining spaces," said BACP Commissioner Kenneth J. Meyer. "We must evolve to meet the needs of small business, and creating a long-term outdoor dining program is a solution that benefits businesses and consumers. BACP worked with city agencies and community partners to ensure the program would provide a framework for success."

"Expanded outdoor dining in Chicago started as a lifeline for the restaurant industry during the pandemic and quickly became a popular program that led to more vibrant public spaces," said CDOT Commissioner Gia Biagi. "CDOT has worked closely with BACP and local stakeholders to thoughtfully incorporate lessons learned over the past few years to create a long-term program that works for residents, businesses, and neighborhoods."

"The timely introduction of the outdoor dining ordinance will provide the restaurant industry an opportunity for additional sales growth and customer attraction leading into the summer months," said Illinois Restaurant Association President and CEO Sam Toia. "The IRA worked closely with City partners to develop an outdoor dining program that showcases the City's unique outdoor dining spaces while adhering to safety and accessibility."

Initially created in response to restrictions on indoor dining during the COVID-19



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



pandemic, the program became a popular and effective way to both support the City's restaurant industry and create inviting outdoor community spaces.

###