



Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago (“Advancing Justice | Chicago”) is submitting an additional written testimony to clarify Asian American communities of interest and respond to the recently released draft maps from the Illinois Senate. We strongly urge the committee to preserve communities of interest when finalizing Chicago School Board district maps.

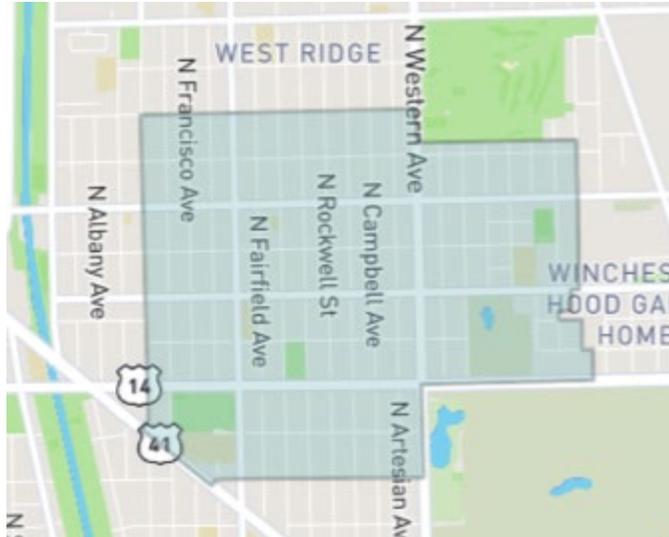
The Asian American community is the fastest-growing racial demographic in Chicago, Illinois, and the country overall. In Chicago, the Asian American population grew by 31% from 2010 to 2020. While the Greater Chinatown area has the highest Asian American density in Chicago, it is not the only area with significant Asian American communities. West Ridge, Albany Park, Uptown, Edgewater, UIC, and the Near West Side also have Asian American population density.

Advancing Justice | Chicago is defining four specific communities of interest:

1. Greater Chinatown
2. West Ridge
3. Albany Park
4. Uptown

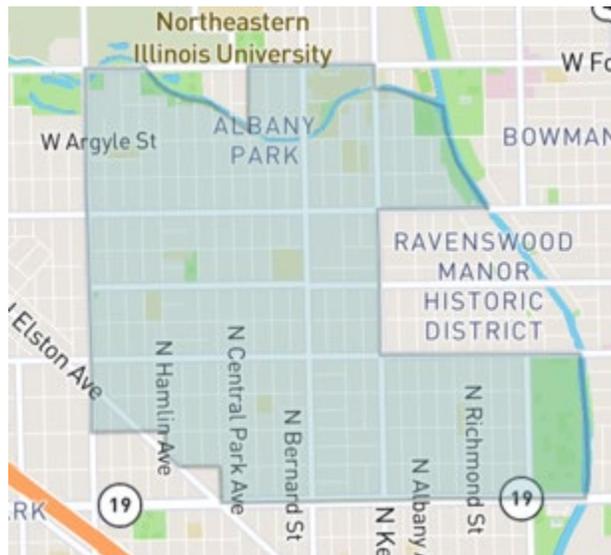
The first community of interest is the Greater Chinatown area, which is made up of Armour Square, Bridgeport, and McKinley Park. The Greater Chinatown community is characterized by large numbers of Chinese American residents, Cantonese and Mandarin speakers, and Asian American-serving institutions, such as the Chinese American Service League, Pui Tak Center, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, local churches, and more. This area is bounded by Clark Street to the east, 17th Street to the north (the northern edge of Ping Tom Park), the Chicago River and Damen Ave to the west, and the Stevenson Expressway to the south. The community also includes Hillard Homes at Cermak and State, which has a mix of Chinese and African American seniors.

The second community of interest is West Ridge. West Ridge has a vibrant South Asian business corridor and community that is centered on Devon Avenue. Here, there exist a variety of South Asian ethnicities, including Indian, Pakistani, and more, as well as religious groups, including Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu. Residents here are served by several Asian American-focused organizations, including the Indo-American Center, Muslim Women Resource Center, Refugee One, and ICNA Relief, which have significant capacity to provide in-language services to Asian Americans who are limited English proficient.



Boundaries: North: Albion Ave. | South: Ardmore Ave. | West: Sacramento Ave. | East: Damen Ave.

The third community of interest is Albany Park. Albany Park has a significant Asian American community, predominantly consisting of Koreans, Filipinos, and South Asians. These Asian Americans reside in and operate businesses here, and have done so for generations, especially along the Lawrence and Montrose commercial corridors.



Boundaries: North: Foster Ave. | South: Irving Park Rd. East: Chicago River | West: Pulaski Rd.

The fourth community of interest is Uptown, home to the Argyle business corridor (also known as “Asia on Argyle”), which has many Southeast Asian-owned restaurants and small businesses. There are also many Asian American-focused social service organizations in Uptown, including



the Vietnamese Association of Illinois and the Chinese Mutual Aid Association, which have significant capacity to provide in-language services to Asian Americans who are limited English proficient. This community of interest is bounded by the lake to the east, Foster to the north, Montrose to the south, and Clark to the west.

Keeping Asian American communities together is important because Asian Americans have long faced discrimination and continue to do so, especially as we have seen throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Historically, the Asian American community has been underrepresented in all forms of government. In addition, each of these communities of interest has its own distinct language access needs, which reflects the diversity of the Asian American community. Language access is a key issue in Chicago Public Schools, as different schools have different interpretation and translation needs among students and families. Keeping Asian American communities of interest together in a single district, rather than divided across multiple districts, will allow Asian American voters to have a greater say in school board elections and will help ensure that school board members are accountable to Asian American voters' priority issues and concerns.

Advancing Justice | Chicago urges the committee to keep each community of interest whole within a single district in the new school board map. In addition, we call on the committee to create at minimum four Asian American influence districts with an Asian American voting age population of 10% or higher.



