



Lakeview and Lincoln Park Area Project Community Meeting

June 22, 2026

YOUR CONCERNS

We've Heard You

- We've taken a thoughtful, careful approach to identifying the best location, one that supports long-term reliability while respecting the character of the neighborhood you love.
- Because substations need to be close to the people and businesses they serve, building it in the community is the best option for meeting increasing power demand and supporting future growth.
- Through more meetings, our website, project hotline and email, we are committed to continuing to work together on this important community project.

AGENDA

Tonight's Two Questions

- 1) Why is a new substation necessary?
 - 2) Why does it have to be at 1111 W. Diversey?
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WHY IS A SUBSTATION NEEDED?

The Capacity Picture

Three substations serve Lakeview, Uptown, North Center, and northern Lincoln Park. They are nearly full.

95%

of allowable capacity reached
in 2026

98%

forecast by 2031, with two
stations exceeding their limits

2029

when demand could exceed
what the grid can support

Without new capacity, these neighborhoods face brownouts and blackouts.

The energy from this substation is NOT powering Foundry Park!

WHY IS A SUBSTATION NEEDED?

Options Within the Existing Grid

Every alternative was studied before a new substation was proposed. **A new substation is the only option that meets the need.**

Reopen the retired Lakeview station

Too small. The old footprint cannot hold the 50 Mega Volt-Amperes (MVA) transformers today's demand requires.

Expand the Diversey station

Not enough room. Space for only a few more transformers — not a long-term solution.

Shift load to other substations

No headroom. Every station serving this area is near its limit, with no room to expand.

Batteries and other non-wire alternatives

Studied — insufficient. They cannot economically relieve constraints of this size.

WHY THIS SITE

The Case for 1111 W. Diversey

A substation site for this area has to meet three requirements.

1. Close to the load

Power must be delivered near where it is used. The growth is here, in northeast Chicago — not in industrial corridors miles away.

2. Large enough for the equipment

Modern transformers and their enclosures need a full-sized parcel. Smaller lots in the area cannot hold them.

3. On this side of the river

Serving the area from across the Chicago River would mean tunneling beneath it for lines and feeders — at exponentially higher cost to customers.

1111 W. Diversey meets all three — ComEd has owned it since 2020, and today it holds an abandoned car lot and a vacant former testing facility.

ZONING

How the Site Is Zoned

The City of Chicago — not ComEd — determines how utility facilities are classified under the zoning code.

"Minor Utility" is the City's term.

Chicago's zoning code expressly classifies electrical substations as Minor Utilities. ComEd does not set, request, or advocate for that designation.

"Minor" describes scale, not impact.

The classification distinguishes neighborhood-serving infrastructure — substations, local distribution — from regional facilities like power plants. It does not mean the project skips review: permits, public filings, and ICC oversight still apply.

The definition reinforces why the site is here.

The code defines Minor Utilities as infrastructure services that need to be located in the area where the service is provided. That is exactly the situation: power for Lakeview and Lincoln Park must be delivered from within Lakeview and Lincoln Park.

The classification follows the City's code, and the code itself recognizes that this kind of facility belongs in the neighborhood it serves.

YOUR CONCERNS

Neighborhood Fit, Sound, and EMF

Sound

THE CONCERN

Equipment noise during construction & after.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

With standard mitigation — low-noise equipment, sound walls, fan silencers — the station will meet every state and municipal noise regulation. The full sound study is public.

EMF

THE CONCERN

Health effects of electromagnetic fields.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

WHO, the American Cancer Society, the National Cancer Institute, and EPRI have found no established causal link between EMF and adverse health effects. EPRI is studying comparable sites, with findings published in 2026.

Appearance

THE CONCERN

An industrial building on a residential street.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

The station will be enclosed and designed to fit the character of the street, replacing an abandoned car lot and a vacant former testing facility. Community feedback will shape the final design.

DURING THE WORK

Construction: What to Expect

30 days' notice

Residents and the Alderman receive written notice before any demolition begins.

Continuous monitoring

Air quality, noise, and vibration are monitored throughout, with dust suppression in place.

Weekday hours only

Work runs Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., per City of Chicago rules.

Pre-work inspections

Adjacent structures are inspected before demolition, with City inspectors on site.

Trucks staged on site

Not on neighborhood streets. Traffic plans are coordinated with CDOT to protect nearby schools.

Secured work zone

Perimeter fencing keeps the public clear of all work areas at all times.

The Case for 1111 W. Diversey

Seven alternative locations were evaluated. None can serve the need.

1901 N. Elston Ave

Too small for the required equipment

Lincoln Yards

Too far from the load center

4646 N. Marine Drive

Too far from the load center

Green space at North Ashland

Across the river — not financially viable

1800 block of N. Elston

Across the river — not financially viable

1200 block of W. School St

Owners uninterested in selling

1320 W Fullerton

Owners uninterested in selling

Serving from across the river means tunneling beneath it — at exponentially higher cost to customers. ComEd currently estimates that it would cost between **\$405.8 million and \$519.4 million** to build an appropriately-sized substation at that location.

WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE

Modified Concept



***Note: Design is conceptual and in refinement based on Municipal code requirements.**