

SEEDS OF JUSTICE

The goal of this project was to collect stories regarding the relationship between environmental/climate justice with food traditions and cultural identity manifested in the stories shared by community members

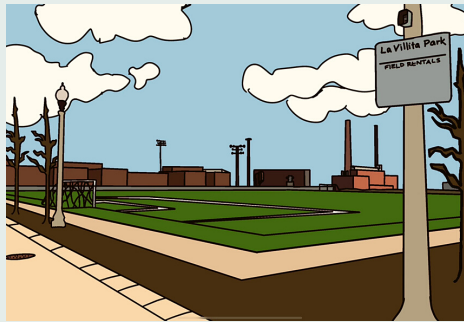
Ethnographic methods were used to carry out the project, including various story circles, a toxic tour through La Villita park, and a food demonstration at the Troy Garden.

JUST TRANSITION

"Just Transition is a principle, a process, and a practice... it is about a healthy economy and a clean environment can and should co-exist... people who are most affected by pollution... should be in the leadership of crafting policy solutions." ¹

- Community Garden/Farm as solutions
- Sharing healthy foods and cultural traditions

Few public spaces (and available spaces like La Villita park have been fought for by the community, and this space is elevated because of the toxic waste beneath)



COMMUNITY FARM/GARDEN The Semillas de Justicia - Troy Garden

SOMOS LX S
SEMILLERXS DE JUSTICIA

- 1.5 acres of garden land located on 2727 S. Troy St in Chicago, IL 60623
- Used to be a site to dispose of leftover oil barrels.
- People can have their own little plot within the garden.
- Community comes together for special events surrounding the vegetables and fruits that they harvest.²

"During the pandemic 17 new gardeners have joined Troy Garden".
Food Justice Organizer

LAND JUSTICE

Who owns the land? Who works the land?

Moving towards a green economy: Deep inequalities exist within the US farm system:

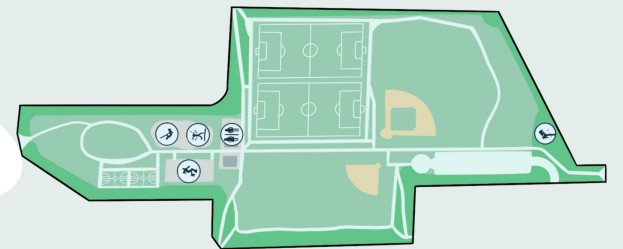
Today, the US has more people in prison than farmers working the land ... of these farmers, only eight percent are Indigenous or of Asian, Latino, or African descent.³



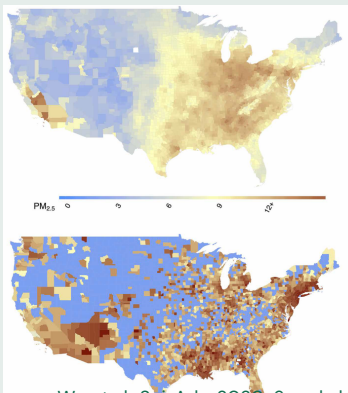
LA VILLITA PARK

La Villita Park was established in 2014 after a 20-year campaign carried out by residents and LVEJO that fought for more green spaces within the Little Village community. The EPA oversaw the cleanup of the former Celotex site, where residents reported suffering from skin rashes and contaminated water flooding basements. Although the park represents a much-needed recreational space in this largely Latinx neighborhood, there is limited seasonal access as it lacks a fieldhouse.

It's on a hill because of what was there before... Residents decided to leave the toxic waste buried deep underneath the park instead of dumping it on another community.
-Community storyteller



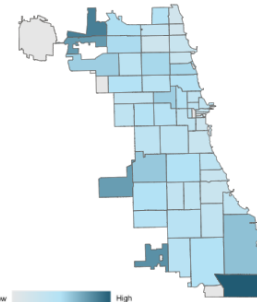
The correlation between the lack of resources and the health of many minority groups has been visible for many years, but with the coronavirus, it became more visible. "It forces us to pay closer attention to the complex interwoven threats of health inequity, economic insecurity, environmental injustice, and collective trauma." Similarly, the coronavirus became a grant to demonstrate healthcare options' injustices and the lack of Spanish-speaking healthcare providers.



"Non-Hispanic black residents accounted for 42% of the COVID-19 deaths in Chicago" ⁵

- Locations with industrial factories have higher rates of pollution and a more significant amount of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. "Non-Hispanic Black percentage, in particular, is about five times higher in counties at the intersection of high COVID-19 prevalence and HAP respiratory risks." ⁶
- In Chicago, the amount of COVID-19 cases are followed depending on the ZIP codes. Those cases are higher in neighborhoods in the south where predominantly African American and Hispanic groups tend to live.

Map showing % positivity from week ending 11/27/2021



HEALTH AND COVID-19

Source: <https://www.chicago.gov>

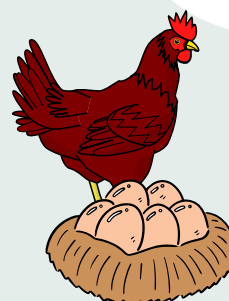
FOOD JUSTICE

Today, the global food supply chains have made it easier to spend less money on more, often insufficiently nutritious calories, contributing to poor diets and chronic health problems. In addition, the food systems make the most nutritious foods the most expensive and least accessible. Especially among the urban poor.⁷

Community members in Little Village, Chicago, have found a way to address the inequalities in the food system through food justice.

"Food justice places the need for food security – access to healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate food – in the contexts of institutional racism."⁸ In partnership with LVEJO, community members grow and distribute their harvests to other communities that lack fresh, affordable foods.

Access to food was reduced because many people in the Latino communities lost their jobs, many worked in restaurants and those were the first to close... Hispanics are not used to eating canned foods so even though there were many food pantries, but the truth is that only 10-20% of the food they handed out was consumed.
-Community member



FOOTNOTES

[1] Just transition for all (2015). International Labour Office. Just Transitions Alliance.
 [2] LVEJO. (2014). Community Garden. <http://www.lvejo.org/our-accomplishments/community-garden/>
 [3] Holt-Giménez, E. (2017). Agrarian Questions and the Struggle for Land Justice in the United States. In J. M. Williams & E. Holt-Giménez (Eds.), Land Justice: Re-imagining Land, Food, and the Commons (pp. 1-14). Food First Books/Institute for Food and Development Policy
 [4] Watson, M. F., et al. (2020). COVID-19 interconnectedness: Health inequity, the climate crisis, and collective trauma. Family Process; Fam Process, 59(3), 832-846. doi:10.1111/famp.12572
 [5] Scannell, B., et al. (2021). Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) mortality and neighborhood characteristics in Chicago. Annals of Epidemiology; Ann Epidemiol, 56, 47-54.e5. doi:10.1016/j.annepidem.2020.10.011
 [6] Chakraborty, J. (2021). Convergence of COVID-19 and chronic air pollution risks: Racial/ethnic and socioeconomic inequities in the U.S. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Elsevier. doi:10.1016/j.environres.2020.110586
 [7] Heynen, N., Kurtz, H.E., & Trauger, A. (2012, May 9). Food Justice, Hunger and the City. Geography Compass, Vol.6(5), 304-311. doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2012.00486.x
 [8] Alkon, A.H. & Norgaard, K.M. (2009, July 9). Breaking the Food Chains: An Investigation of Food Justice Activism. Sociological Inquiry, 79(3). doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-682X.2009.00291.x

Credits: This infographic was developed by Ashley Maldonado, Maciel Roa, Pam Jones, and Susan Monge, students in the UIC Fall 2021 course "Environmental and Climate Justice: From Puerto Rico, the U.S./Mexico border and other localities to Chicago neighborhoods" taught by Rosa M. Cabrera, PhD. Thank you to Alianza America, Centro San Bonifacio, the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO), and all the community members who graciously collaborated and shared their stories.