



## SSA #26 BROADWAY RENEWAL

### Advisory Committee #1 Meeting Minutes

February 26, 2026, 1:00pm – 2:30pm · Edgewater Chamber of Commerce

#### Present:

##### **Advisory Committee**

Rajan Shahi, Sewa Senior Care, Chair  
Karen Ami, Chicago Mosaic School  
Zach Joseph, 49th Ward  
Summur Lawson, Loyola University  
Ben Rees, MacMaster Properties, Advisory Committee  
Mark Towns, Edgewater Candles  
Mike Waszkowski, Rivers and Roads Café  
Jenny Yang, Phoenix Bean Tofu  
Joe Zureikat, Castle Liquors

##### **Edgewater Chamber of Commerce and SSA #26, City of Chicago and Teska Associates**

Garrett Karp, Edgewater Chamber of Commerce  
Jessica Wobbekind, Edgewater Chamber of Commerce  
Mark Roschen, City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development  
Erin Cigliano, Teska Associates  
Scott Goldstein, Teska Associates

#### Not Present

Margaret Hagerty, State Farm Insurance, Advisory Committee

## 1. Welcome & Introductions

Garrett Karp, Executive Director of the Edgewater Chamber of Commerce and Program Manager for Special Service Area #26, called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. Advisory Committee members were then invited to introduce themselves and share their connection to Edgewater and the SSA #26 renewal effort.

In introducing the Chamber's role in the renewal process, Garrett highlighted that he and Jessica Wobbekind, Director of Community Development, jointly oversee and manage both the Chamber and SSA #26. He also noted Jessica's experience supporting other SSA renewal efforts, emphasizing the value of that institutional knowledge as the district enters its reauthorization phase.

Mark Roschen, Assistant Commissioner with the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD), stated that the purpose of the meeting was to formally initiate the renewal process for SSA #26 and outline the required steps toward reauthorization. Scott Goldstein and Erin Cigliano of Teska Associates, the project consultants supporting the Edgewater Chamber through the renewal effort, noted their role in helping guide the process and translate the technical requirements into a clear, accessible framework for the Advisory Committee and stakeholders.

## 2. Presentation by City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development

Mark Roschen with DPD presented an overview of the 2027 SSA Renewal Process, flagging key points, checks and balances, and areas where questions can arise:

- The SSA is a locally initiated, self-imposed property tax used to fund services within a defined geographic boundary.
- Funds must be spent within district boundaries and supplement City services.
- SSA Commissioners appointed by the Mayor and City Council
- The City contracts with a Service Provider agency to administer daily operations, in this case Edgewater Chamber of Commerce.
- Administrative expenses (Categories 6.00 and 7.00) may not exceed 30% of the levy per State Statute.

DPD reviewed governing legislation, including Illinois State Statute, City Ordinances, and City of Chicago renewal requirements, including two community meetings, aldermanic support, signatures representing at least 20% of non-exempt PINs within the district, a formal public hearing and City Council adoption.

### 3. SSA Overview & Advisory Committee Role

Erin Cigliano of Teska Associates provided a brief overview of the SSA structure and the role of the Advisory Committee within the renewal process. She noted that at the next meeting, the Committee will be asked to vote to confirm the proposed SSA boundaries and maximum tax rate, both of which must be finalized before the Chamber can begin securing required signatures of support.

She emphasized the value the Committee brings to the process, noting the diversity of affiliations, business perspectives, geographic representation, and community connections reflected among the group. The importance of continued engagement at the upcoming meeting and throughout the renewal process was underscored.

### 4. Boundaries & SSA Service Examples

The existing SSA #26 boundary was presented, which extends north–south along Broadway from Devon to Foster and includes portions of Devon, Granville, Bryn Mawr, and Ridge. It was noted that expansion of the boundary west along Devon Avenue to Clark Street is under consideration, subject to further outreach and a recommendation by the Advisory Committee at the next meeting.

Teska reiterated that all funds generated within the district are reinvested locally based on district priorities, reinforcing the SSA’s role as a locally directed investment tool for the corridor. Examples and photos of SSA #26-funded services and programs were presented to illustrate the range of eligible service categories, recent investments, and tangible outcomes within the district.

### 5. Visioning Activity

To better understand priorities of the Advisory Committee and generate discussion, Teska next led a facilitated visioning activity to prompt input and ideas surrounding SSA priorities, visible improvements, “must-have” services, and areas for additional investment.

Participants expressed a broad range of priorities and takeaways, including:

- “The chairs are a recent and very visible investment, vibrant and inviting.”
- “Edgewater Music Fest. I heard from a lot of customers and people saying the neighborhood is cool. The fest and markets are a big part of that.”
- “As a resident I love the farmers market, and the Indoor Market has expanded so much. It’s drawing a lot of people here.”
- “I’m really happy when I see the holiday stuff going up.”
- “I always say thank you to Cleanslate for picking up litter and keeping things nice.”
- “Trash pick-up is a big winner. Being by the Lake is windy, trash blows from alleys.”
- “The patio rebates are super unique, something other SSAs don’t do much of.”
- “Even though you don’t always look at them, Street Banners are important. It subconsciously lets you know where you are.”
- “The placemaking that is happening is great, the murals are vibrant, very lovely.”

- “The illuminated signage mural inside the vacant storefront is really innovative.”

## 6. Needs Assessment Survey

Participants were encouraged to complete and share the Needs Assessment Survey with district stakeholders and to distribute informational brochures explaining the SSA renewal process. Jessica Wobbekind encouraged committee members to direct any detailed questions from property owners or businesses to the Chamber, noting that she and Garrett are available to provide clarification and guidance.

## 7. Costs & Tax Rate Considerations

Following visioning and discussion of priorities, Scott Goldstein from Teska explained the tax rate variables, cost scenarios, and SSA budgets. The distinction between the Maximum Rate and Annual Levy was discussed. The Maximum Rate establishes the cap for the 15-year term, while the Annual Levy is set each year by the SSA Commission.

- The current Maximum Tax Rate for SSA #26 is 0.55%.
- The 2026 Annual Rate / Levy for SSA #26 is 0.53%.

The current levy is nearly at the max rate. The annual cost is approximately \$46 per month for \$100,000 of Equalized Assessed Value (EAV). For an additional \$4 to \$8 per month, the SSA would have enough funds to expand garbage collection, sidewalk cleaning, murals and other programs. Jessica Wobbekind emphasized that a 15-year term is a significant horizon, and the district should plan for long-term flexibility. She noted that future streetscape improvements or public investments by the City may require the SSA to support maintenance, enhancements, or matching funds. Maintaining flexibility within the maximum rate provides capacity to address inflation, capital needs, vendor cost increases, and evolving priorities over the life of the 15-year cycle.

## 8. Next Steps & Adjournment

The 2026 renewal timeline was reviewed and upcoming milestones flagged. **Advisory Committee Meeting #2 will take place on March 18<sup>th</sup> at 11am as a virtual meeting.** The SSA Boundary and Maximum Tax Rate vote will be on the agenda at that meeting. Committee members were encouraged to take and share the needs assessment survey by visiting [here](#). The meeting adjourned with appreciation for Advisory Committee participation and commitment to the renewal process.