



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

Whole Foods Market

Allison Phelps

312.799.5788

Allison.Phelps@wholefoods.com

**MAYOR EMANUEL, ALDERMAN THOMPSON AND WHOLE FOODS JOIN MEMBERS OF
THE COMMUNITY TO BREAK GROUND ON NEW STORE IN ENGLEWOOD**

New Retail Project Builds on More than \$362 Million in Planned Public and Private Sector Investments in Englewood; Whole Foods to Create 100 New Jobs; Investing in Neighborhoods is a Key Component of the Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Alderman JoAnn Thomson and Whole Foods CEO Walter Robb today broke ground on the planned 18,000-square-foot Whole Foods store that will anchor "Englewood Square," a 5.5-acre retail development planned for completion in 2016. The store, located on the northwest corner of 63rd and Halsted streets on Chicago's South Side, will create 100 jobs and provide area residents with additional access to fresh and healthy food options.

"Today's groundbreaking is symbolic of the millions of dollars in investments that are already being made in Englewood," Mayor Rahm Emanuel said. "With public and private investments, we can ensure that residents across not only this neighborhood, but Chicago, have high quality options for food and services, as well as the investments in infrastructure, education and public space that create vital communities for the future."

Englewood Square will be part of a 13-acre, mixed-use redevelopment project that is planned to include three other buildings totaling 30,000 square-feet of space. Three adjacent sites totaling four acres will be sold by the City in response to market demand and community needs.

"The residents of the 16th Ward and I are very pleased to celebrate the historic groundbreaking of Whole Foods. We thank Mayor Emanuel and Whole Foods for making 63rd and Halsted home," said Alderman Joann Thompson, 16th Ward. "Our neighborhood and community will see growth in economic development, job creation, nutrition, and opportunity as a result of this development and I look forward to lasting prosperity for Englewood."

The Englewood Square project and Whole Foods build on the more than \$362 million in planned and completed public and private investment underway in the community; projects that are expected to create or retain over 4,140 jobs.

Today's announcement continues Mayor Emanuel's efforts to redevelop this South Side neighborhood with new jobs and opportunities as part of the Chicago Neighborhoods Now initiative. Investments announced to-date include:

- The recently completed Large Lots pilot program, which offered City-owned land to local property owners for \$1 per parcel. Applications for nearly 550 lots are currently being processed by the Department of Planning and Development and closing is expected this fall.
- The rehabilitation of the former Engine Co. #84 firehouse at 6204 South Green St., a designated City landmark.
- Growing Home, the only USDA certified organic farm in Chicago, which has expanded to 2 farms and 1.5 acres.
- The new St. Bernard ambulatory care center on 63rd Street that will provide personal health care consultation, treatment and intervention services.
- Improvements at and around the 63rd Street Red Line station.
- Construction of new playgrounds at Lindblom Park and Murray Park. As part of those improvements, Lindblom Park will receive a new turf track and field made possible with \$2 million in TIF funding.

Chicago Neighborhoods Now projects in Englewood are expected to create nearly 500 permanent jobs, over 3,000 construction jobs, and retain more than 500 current jobs, further strengthening economic development, bringing more affordable housing, attracting new retail and jobs to the area, and driving additional private sector growth.

Starting today, the City will begin infrastructure work across the Englewood Square site that includes new roads, sewers, electrical, environmental remediation, and other improvements to facilitate the development. The work was made possible by \$10.7 million Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance. Upon completion of the infrastructure work next year, 5.5 acres will be sold to Chicago-based DL3 Realty, which will construct the retail complex on behalf of Whole Foods and other retail tenants.

"We are elated to begin construction of our Englewood store, and are working closely with community stakeholders to imagine and develop a destination that not only provides fresh, healthy food choices for the community of Englewood, but also serves as a community meeting place for information and education about food and living a healthier lifestyle," said Walter Robb, Whole Foods Market co-CEO. "This new store in Chicago's South Side is an example of our sincere efforts of living our company's core values."

Whole Foods Market currently has three stores under development including one in Hyde Park. This will be the seventh Whole Foods market to open in Chicago since Mayor Emanuel took office in 2011.

"Our roots are deep in the communities where we open our stores and Englewood will be no different," said Michael Bashaw, Whole Foods Market Midwest Region President. "As the brick and mortar of the store builds this future Whole Foods Market, we look forward to building our relationship as a trusted resource for quality natural and organic foods, and health and wellness information. We will continue to meet with city and community members to build a store that serves the neighborhood the highest quality natural and organic food, and offers residents free educational classes on healthy eating and nutrition, shopping on a budget and cooking demonstrations."

Mayor Emanuel's "Chicago Neighborhoods Now" initiative, which was launched in 2013, coordinates new economic development, housing, and quality of life improvements across seven opportunity-rich sections of Chicago – Bronzeville, Pullman, Englewood, Uptown, Eisenhower Corridor, Rogers Park/Loyola University and Little Village. Chicago Neighborhoods Now was projected to coordinate \$330 million in City funding and \$2.6 billion in State, Federal and private funding. Based on projections announced in the past 12 months, the City has not only met, but exceeded those goals.

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