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CHICAGO'S FIRST NET-ZERO, ALL-AFFORDABLE HIGH-RISE ANNOUNCED FOR LOOP SITE

The C40 Reinventing Cities competition winner will support \$2 million makeover of adjacent Pritzker Park

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, city and community leaders today announced the winner of the City of Chicago's C40 Reinventing Cities competition. The property is a 20-story, 100 percent affordable high-rise that will create a "stunning transformation" of underutilized Loop land.

"This project is emblematic of the deeply positive impacts that community-driven neighborhood development can have on our entire city," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Not only will 'Assemble Chicago' help to address our city's need for more sustainable and affordable housing units, but it will also help to reinvigorate the surrounding Pritzker Park through infrastructure improvements. I want to thank The Community Builders/Studio Gang and their design partners for their ingenuity, hard work, and commitment to making Chicago a better, more equitable place for all residents."

The \$102 million, 20-story structure planned by The Community Builders for City-owned property at Van Buren Street and Plymouth Court was selected through a Department of Planning and Development (DPD) Request for Proposals (RFP), issued last year through the international C40 Reinventing Cities competition.

"Chicago's Reinventing Cities announcement today will provide the City of Chicago with much-needed affordable and sustainable housing in the heart of the loop," said Laura Jay, C40 Regional Director for North America. This project also serves as an important example for cities around the world on how to ensure equitable housing, improvement of public spaces and services, and climate change can be addressed jointly."

Designed by Studio Gang with DesignBridge and JAQ Corp, the "Assemble Chicago" project was selected over three other net-zero, mixed-use proposals due to its



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superior design, commitment to affordability, family-sized units, development team experience, proposed purchase price, and community feedback, among other factors.

“This winning proposal demonstrates that high-quality, environmentally sensitive design can be applied to any building in any location to achieve local and citywide goals,” Department of Planning and Development Commissioner Maurice Cox said.

Each proposal was reviewed during a May community meeting prior to being evaluated by a City of Chicago and community-represented selection committee.

The project’s planned 207 rental units will range from studios to two-bedrooms and be priced for tenants earning 30 to 80 percent of the Chicago area median income (AMI).

Located at the nexus of multiple rapid transit lines, the building will include a two-level podium with a food hall for minority-owned restaurants, nonprofit office and meeting space, a produce grocer, and a wellness clinic.

“I want to thank The Community Builders for this thoughtful development that will add 207, 100% affordable units in the Loop to expand housing choice into Chicago’s downtown,” said Department of Housing Commissioner Marisa Novara. “Assemble Chicago will not only serve a range of household sizes, but importantly reach our lowest-income and highest-need population – those earning 30% of the area median income (\$28,000 for a household of four.)”

The project will also support approximately \$2 million in improvements for Pritzker Park, which will be reconfigured and integrated into the adjacent site improvements. Upgrades will include a spray fountain, community stage, rain garden, extensive landscaping, and restrooms. Details will be finalized through a Chicago Park District-led community engagement process.

The building will be constructed with an innovative, low-carbon concrete mix that helps achieve LEED Zero Energy Certification and Living Building Challenge Materials Petal Certification.

“As an all affordable net-zero housing development, The Assemble Chicago project raises the bar for sustainable design in Chicago,” says Angela Tovar, Chief Sustainability Officer. “As part of the City’s Green Recovery, we will advance a new policy to enable more innovation in new construction so that more projects that rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, while providing critical relief for residents, are standard practice.”



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The project is expected to generate approximately 530 temporary and permanent jobs. The site is currently occupied by a vacant parking garage and vacant land.

The property, recently appraised at \$7.95 million, would be sold to the Community Builders for \$1, pending approval by City Council. Zoning and other project considerations may also be subject to Council approval. Groundbreaking could occur later this year.

Assemble Chicago team members also include dbHMS, Thornton Tomasetti, Engage Civil Engineering, Site Design Group, Applied Ecological Services, Center for Neighborhood Technology, Rush University College of Nursing, and Calibrate Coaching.

The C40 Reinventing Cities Initiative is a global competition intended to drive carbon neutral and resilient urban regeneration in major cities worldwide.

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