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CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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179 Lots in East Garfield Park Approved for \$1 Sales to Local Property Owners

One hundred and seventy nine parcels of vacant, City-owned land in East Garfield Park will be sold through the City's "Large Lots" program under a plan approved today by City Council.

The lots were offered for sale in the summer of 2014 during the second phase of the Department of Planning and Development's Large Lots program, which makes vacant, City-owned land available for \$1 to local property owners.

The properties in East Garfield Park will be sold "as is" via a quit claim deed.

The Large Lots program was the first initiative launched by the City as part of Mayor Rahm Emanuel's Five Year Housing Plan, which will invest \$1.3 billion in spending from 2014-2018 to create, improve, and preserve more than 41,000 units of housing.

Large Lots applicants are required to own property on the same block; be current on property taxes; and have no financial obligations to the City, among other requirements.

The program's first phase was launched last spring in greater Englewood, where approximately 300 parcels were sold through the program. An additional 11 lots in Englewood will be included for approval with the East Garfield Park properties.

Applications were also accepted for lots in the Austin community through January. For more information, visit LargeLots.org.

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Sale of City Land in Englewood Will Support New Whole Foods Store

A new Whole Foods store will be constructed in Englewood through a City-owned land sale approved today by City Council.

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

The 18,000-square-foot store will be part of a 48,000-square-foot, four-building retail complex planned for the vacant, northwest corner of 63rd and Halsted streets. Valued at \$3.1 million, the 5.4-acre site will be sold for \$1 to the project developer, Englewood Square LP.

The City purchased the site more than 10 years ago to help foster an eventual retail-oriented redevelopment project. Construction could be completed in 2016.

More than seven acres of largely vacant, City-owned land adjacent to the site are also being prepped for sale and mixed-use redevelopment.

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TIF Approved for a Pair of CTA Blue Line Station Renovation Projects

Improvements to a pair of Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) Blue Line stations on the Northwest Side will be assisted with up to \$9 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) under a plan approved today by City Council.

The \$13 million rehabilitation of the Grand Avenue subway station at 502 N. Milwaukee Ave. in West Town will be supported with \$4 million in TIF funds. Planned improvements include canopies over two street-level entrances, new finishes on the mezzanine and passenger platform, new stairs, a new escalator, improved lighting, signage and furniture. The station, which hasn't been significantly renovated since opening in 1951, serves about 700,000 riders annually.

The \$25 million rehabilitation of the Jefferson Park station at 4917 N. Milwaukee Ave. will be supported by \$5 million in TIF. Planned upgrades include an improved bus turn-around and new canopies, lighting, escalators and stairs. The station opened in 1970 and accommodates 2 million passengers annually as an intermodal facility serving CTA, Metra and Pace riders.

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Sears, Roebuck & Co.'s Former West Side Headquarters Confirmed as Landmark District

Sears, Roebuck and Co.'s former world headquarters complex in North Lawndale was approved as an official City of Chicago Landmark district by City Council today.

The Sears, Roebuck and Co. District includes the company's former Administration Building, Printing/Merchandise Development and Laboratory (MDL) Building, Merchandise Building Tower, and Power House. An original park and pergola built for

approximately 9,000 complex employees and nearby residents will also be included in the designation.

The four buildings and pergola were designed by the architectural firm of Nimmons & Fellows and constructed between 1905 and 1907. Located near the intersection of South Homan Avenue and West Arthington Street, they housed executive offices, financial and marketing operations, order processing, product manufacturing and shipping facilities for what was then the country's premier mail-order company. Designed in the Classical style, the structures exemplify a rare, intact group of early 20th century corporate campus buildings and landscape design. They retain all of their historic features, including their entrances, windows, and decorative detailing with stone columns and terra-cotta masonry, friezes, medallions and belt courses.

Sears was founded in Chicago in 1894 as a mail-order retailer catering to rural America. It opened free-standing stores starting around 1925 and by the 1960s was the largest retailer in the world.

When Sears moved to the Sears Tower in 1973, most of the North Lawndale facility was vacated. Sears merged with Kmart, another national retailer, in 2005 and is today part of the Sears Holding Corp.

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150 Affordable Family Apartments Approved for West Elsdon

Financial measures approved today by City Council will enable the construction of a 78-unit, affordable apartment complex at 5001 S. Lawndale Ave. in the West Elsdon community.

The \$26.4 million Park Place Family Apartments will consist of 14, three-story buildings containing one- to three-bedroom apartments. City support to the developer, PP Family LLC, will include a \$6.6 million loan, \$1.68 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits that will generate \$17 million in equity for the project, and \$875,000 in donations tax credit equity. Other funding sources will include a \$1 million community development grant from Bank of America and a private mortgage loan.

The project is the first phase of a planned development that will include affordable senior apartments, for-sale townhomes, a community center, and a park on the 14.2-acre site. Apartments will be leased to households earning up to 60 percent of are median income.

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Open Space Improvement Projects Approved for Four Communities

Financial measures approved today by City Council will provide open space improvements in four Chicago neighborhoods.

Alcott College Prep, 2625 N. Orchard St.

Alcott College Prep, located at 2625 N. Orchard Street in Lincoln Park, will be reimbursed \$600,000 in Open Space Impact Fees for the second phase of its “Field of Dreams” school improvement project, which includes the construction of a 28,000-square-foot artificial turf field, running track, and permeable play area and basketball court. The balance of the \$1.5 million project, which will include asphalt removal and a new drainage system, will be funded by a state grant and school fundraising campaign.

“This project has been a long time coming, and I am thrilled that this project is moving forward so that Alcott College Prep will have a state of the art space for recreational opportunities,” said Alderman Michele Smith.

The Friends of Alcott foundation has been instrumental in getting the turf project done. Since 2011, they have worked closely with Alderman Michele Smith, Congressman Mike Quigley and Representative Ann Smith to source funding and complete the project.

“We are grateful to the City of Chicago for their commitment to parks and outdoor recreation across the city, which allows us to further our progress in building a new turf field and outdoor sports facilities at Alcott College Preparatory School,” said Alcott College Prep Principal Elias Estrada. “We look forward to the completion of the Field of Dreams at Alcott, which will benefit not only our students and families, but will serve as a centerpiece for the entire community.”

Open Space Impact Fees are collected by the City of Chicago from new residential developments to help expand the amount of open space in each of the city's 77 community areas.

Buckthorn Park, 4347 S. Calumet Ave.

The \$1.68 million expansion of Buckthorn Playlot Park in Grand Boulevard will be supported by \$200,000 in TIF assistance. Currently a playlot, the space is being expanded to two acres. The TIF funds will be in addition to the \$1.1 million in Open Space Impact Fees approved last year for paving, fencing, water features, a dog friendly area, and other amenities. The remaining cost will be paid by the Chicago Park District and \$200,000 in surplus funds from the 2012 NATO summit. The Park District intends to rename the park in honor of Hadiya Pendleton, a 15-year-old King College Prep student who was shot and killed in 2013 in a case of mistaken identity.

New Horizon Center, 6727 W. Forest Preserve Ave.

A City-owned vacant lot on the northwest corner of Irving Park Road and Oak Park Avenue in Dunning will be sold and incorporated into a 1.2-acre open space and recreation project by the New Horizon Center for Children and Adults with Developmental Disabilities and Autism. The land, appraised at \$160,000, will be sold for \$1. Founded in 1967, New Horizon Center provides a learning environment and activities for people with developmental challenges. The \$600,000 open space project will accommodate the recreational needs of the center's clients.

Dvorak Park, 1119 W. Cullerton St.

Planned improvements to the field house, pool building, and grounds at Dvorak Park on the Lower West Side will be supported by \$996,000 in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance. The 5.6-acre site park is named for the famous Czech composer Anton Dvorak and was designed by the landscape architect Jens Jensen.

Upgrades will include new windows, doors, HVAC system, exterior masonry work, and the addition of a new playground at the northeast corner of the park. The total project cost will be \$1.5 million. The balance of the project was going to be paid by state park funding that had previously been awarded to the Chicago Park District. However, last week, the Park District was instructed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to immediately freeze state grants awarded for park improvements, including the planned improvements at Dvorak Park. A total of 27 Chicago projects at 25 parks across Chicago stand to lose \$28 million for improvements if this funding is not restored.

“Governor Rauner’s decision to suspend grants for new parks across Chicago – including the Dvorak Park facility renovation – will hurt every child who wants to play, and is a slight to every parent who wants their child to have a safe, community-oriented place to enjoy,” said Mayor Emanuel. “These previously awarded funds must be restored so that we can continue to build a better Chicago, community by community.”

The Park District is proceeding with the design phase of the project, but the final scope of the construction will be dependent on if the state funding is restored.

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