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TIF INVESTMENT PROPOSED FOR NEW BALLFIELD LIGHTING AT PORTAGE PARK

The Chicago Park District's \$400,000 lighting improvement project in Portage Park on the Northwest Side would be funded through Tax Increment Financing under a proposal introduced today to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

The new LED lighting system at 4100 N. Long Ave. in the Portage Park community would illuminate three baseball fields and provide more flexible scheduling for games and practices.

The system would also increase safety for users of other recreational resources in the 36.5-acre park, including a pair of baseball fields, tennis courts, swimming complex, playground, dog-friendly area, nature walk, and football and soccer fields.

The park's ballfields currently support approximately 425 youth of different ages participating in various leagues.

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URBAN FARM EXPANSION PROJECT PROPOSED FOR SOUTH SIDE

Improvements to Honore Street Farm in Englewood would be supported through a City-owned land sale introduced today to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Located on the 5800 blocks of South Wolcott and Honore streets, the half-acre farm would be expanded onto .16,680 square feet of adjacent land at 1844 W. 59th Street. Appraised at \$37,000, the land would be sold for \$1 to Growing Home Inc., an organic agriculture business that provides farm-based job readiness training to individuals with employment barriers. The expansion would help increase food production and expand the farm's training program from 52 to approximately 60 participants.

Growing Home's Honore Street Farm and the nearby Wood Street Farm are the first and only USDA-certified organic, high-production farms in Chicago. They annually produce more than 35,000 pounds of USDA-certified organic produce that is sold to local residents and at farmer's markets.

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FORMER JOHNSON PUBLISHING BUILDING PROPOSED FOR LANDMARK STATUS

The former South Michigan Avenue headquarters of the Johnson Publishing Co. would be designated as an official City of Chicago landmark under a recommendation submitted to City Council today by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks.

Located at 820 S. Michigan Ave., the 11-story building was completed in 1971 for the company founded in 1942 by influential African-American entrepreneur John H. Johnson, who over the next six decades turned the organization into the largest Black-owned company in the nation. Johnson's "Ebony" and "Jet" magazines celebrated achievement and success by African Americans, who were largely ignored or stereotyped by the mainstream media throughout the 20th century. In addition to publishing, the company branched out into fashion, cosmetics, radio and television.

The international style, 110,000-square-foot building was designed by African-American architect John Warren Moutoussamy, who studied architecture under Mies van der Rohe at the Illinois Institute of Technology. He later became the first African-American to become a managing partner at a large Chicago architecture firm when he joined Dubin, Dubin, Black & Moutoussamy.

"The Johnson Publishing Building is an important part of Chicago's and our nation's history and this landmark designation will ensure its story is remembered for generations to come," said Alderman Sophia King, co-sponsor of the designation.

The designation, which was recommended by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in October 2017, would protect all exterior elevations and rooflines fronting Michigan Avenue and the iconic "Ebony Jet" sign on the roof.

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