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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCE "BRANCHING OUT:
BUILDING LIBRARIES, BUILDING COMMUNITIES"**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined Chicago Public Library Commissioner Brian Bannon to announce the "Branching Out: Building Libraries, Building Communities" strategy to develop and modernize community libraries throughout the city. This plan follows the successful 21st century transformation of Chicago's library system, which has seen over \$250 million in new investments in capital, people and programs since 2011.

"We are not just writing the next chapter in the history of Chicago Public Library, we are strengthening the fabric of neighborhoods across Chicago," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "Our libraries are community anchors, family gathering spots, places for students to get help with homework and job-seekers to connect with life-changing opportunities. Investments in the future of our libraries are investments in the future of Chicago."

Branching Out focuses on investing in key areas of neighborhood libraries including: modern facilities and infrastructure, and high quality programming with trained teachers, librarians and administrators. Since 2011, 6 new libraries have been built, and significant updates have been made at 14 branches. By 2019, an additional 5 new libraries will be built, and renovations at 4 libraries will be complete.

"It is an exciting time for Chicago Public Library to see the results of all the recent library investments, with capital projects taking place in communities throughout the city," said CPL Commissioner Brian Bannon. "This gives us the ability to continue to strengthen every neighborhood making 21st century services and programs available to help patrons invest in their lives."

CPL has built out co-located locations in order to best address critical needs identified by the community. In 2013, CPL completed the 8,300 square-foot Back of the Yards Branch, adjacent to the new Back of the Yards College Preparatory High School. The neighborhood library serves as a community campus with enhanced teen-focused collections and digital learning amenities to support the work of the high school. Breaking from the standard,

cookie-cutter designs that are common to government buildings, CPL entered an innovative interagency partnership, with the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) to develop and build provide three new mixed-income housing developments with co-located libraries. These three projects – Taylor Street Apartments and Roosevelt Branch Library, Independence Apartments and Independence Branch, and the Northtown Apartments and Northtown Branch – will strengthen communities with affordable housing and community anchors that support life-long learning. The architecture firms were selected based on a design competition to identify the most innovative ideas that will ensure that each community has a design that best reflects its needs. The projects will be complete by the end of 2018. A new branch library will be built in CHA's Altgeld Gardens community as part of a new 40,000 square foot community resource center to serve residents of the Far South Side neighborhood.

Significant renovations and modernization projects have been made at community branches throughout the city. The Chinatown branch was the first branch to break away from previous library designs. With a world-renowned 21st century design it has now become one of the most rewarded buildings for design excellence throughout the city. The redesigned 24,000 square foot innovative Thomas Hughes Children's Library at Harold Washington Library Center, which opened in 2017, now serves as a model for branches across the city. Major investments were also made to the Woodson and Sulzer regional branches.

CPL will continue building, expanding, updating and renovating neighborhood branches throughout the city. Once built, the West Loop branch will serve as Chicago's 81st branch, and will serve the fastest growing neighborhood in the city. The Whitney M. Young, Jr. Library is currently undergoing a complete renovation and modernization including incorporating the exterior walls of the existing structure into the envelope of the new building to create a modern, state-of-the-art branch. Additional renovation projects at Merlo, Douglass and South Shore will be complete by 2019. Renovations were made at Chicago Bee, Kelly, Blackstone, Austin and Legler.

There are continued plans to expand library branches into additional neighborhoods throughout the city. Included in these plans are the public library branch located in the future Obama Presidential Center. Once complete, this first-of-its-kind unique partnership will provide almost every South Side resident with access to a public library within walking distance.

In addition to supporting traditional library services in all neighborhood branches, CPL has shifted focus to developing 21st century programs and services that support the evolving information needs of the patrons they serve. CPL has been able to support the rapid, sustained expansion of these highly-effective programs and facilities, including Homework Help, YOUmedia, the Summer Learning Challenge, and CyberNavigators. Due to these

investments, 22 branches now house dedicated YOUmedia spaces for teens and 31 libraries will offer dedicated early learning play spaces.

CPL provides adults with the support to pursue economic advancement through new skills and jobs and to build stronger communities through shared cultural experiences. CyberNavigators, which helps build digital literacy and technology skills for adults and seniors, has led to at least 1,000 people find new jobs in each of the past two years, according to self-reported numbers. Additional staff will continue to be trained to connect job-seekers to best-in-class career services provided by workforce development organizations and educational institutions. CPL will also continue to partner with expert workforce organizations to deliver trainings on additional skills, such as resume writing, interview prep and industry-specific skills.

Library programs focus on supporting students with opportunities to improve learning and postsecondary outcomes for youth. The YOUmedia program, which provides teens with access to technology, resources, and classes that inspire exploration, creativity and learning, now engages nearly 4,500 students across Chicago. Through CPL's Teacher in Library program, nearly 100,000 sessions were supported in the 2016 – 17 school year. According to Chapin Hall research, students accessing these programs are likely to be less academically proficient than their peers.

The development of library programs and technology initiatives at CPL is supported through the Chicago Public Library Foundation. The Foundation was founded in 1986 as a true public/private partnership with the City of Chicago to ensure the margin of excellence for Chicago's outstanding Library. Through the support of many civic-minded individuals, corporations and foundations, the Foundation provides on-going funding for collections and a range of community-responsive programs, including Teacher in the Library, CyberNavigators, YOUmedia and One Book, One Chicago.

“At the Foundation we understand the true value of the enriching programs provided at libraries across the city, said Bob Winslow, Chicago Public Library Foundation Board President. “With the help of our funders we can continue to serve the community with access to innovative and cultural opportunities.”

Chicago Public Library serves 9.9 million people a year.

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