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Building Sale Proposed for Immigrant Advocacy Organization in Little Village

A vacant, former branch of the Chicago Public Library would be sold to an immigrant advocacy organization for \$1 under a plan proposed to City Council today by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Latinos Progresando, a nonprofit that provides low-cost legal aid to Chicago's immigrant population, will rehabilitate the vacant structure at 2724 W. Cermak Ave. to use as offices and community meeting space.

Additionally, the basement will be renovated to provide space for two tenants. The first is Esperansa Health Center, a healthcare provider that will offer behavioral and mental health services. The second is Lincoln Park Zoo, which will run educational programming for the Southwest Side community out of the space. It will be the zoo's first remote office.

The cost of the renovation is \$2.1 million. Beyond the \$250,000 land write-down, additional City support includes a \$250,000 grant from the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund.

Public benefits include low-cost legal service for at least 850 people annually, free services for immigrant victims of domestic violence, community education on immigration issues, and a commitment to hire at least a fifth of its workforce from residents who live in nearby ZIP codes.

The two-story, 9,330-square-foot building has been vacant since 2009, when the Marshall Square Branch Library closed and was replaced by the Little Village Branch at Kedzie and 23rd.

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Artist Residences Proposed for West Town

A 24-unit affordable apartment complex for artists would be developed in West Town through financial measures introduced today to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

The \$11.8 million Nancy Franco-Maldonado Paseo Boricua Arts Building at 2709-15 W. Division St. would target artists and their families and include commercial space and a "black box" performance theater on the first floor.

The five-story structure would be developed as a partnership between Brinshore Development and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center. City assistance would include a \$4.2 million loan, \$4.2 million in TIF, and \$261,000 in Low Income Housing Tax Credits that would generate \$2.5 million in equity for the project. Other financing would include a private mortgage loan.

All of the residential units would be rented to households at up to 60 percent of area median income. Amenities would include a community room, management office, parking, and informal gallery space on each floor for artists to display their creations.

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