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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT CELEBRATES ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF INVEST
SOUTH/WEST ON ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

Mayor's signature initiative has laid the foundation for equitable, long-term economic development in 10 South and West Side communities and catalyzed nearly \$400 million of committed investment

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined Department of Planning and Development Commissioner Maurice Cox along with local and community leaders and private sector and philanthropic sector representatives at the Ogden Commons development in North Lawndale to celebrate the accomplishments of the first year of the Mayor's signature INVEST South/West initiative. Announced in October 2019, this pioneering program has brought government, businesses, philanthropies and community leaders together to lay the foundation for the long-term revitalization of ten underinvested neighborhoods on Chicago's South and West Sides. In its first year, the City has invested more than \$70 million in public resources into these corridors and mobilized more than \$300 million in private and philanthropic commitments.

"Over the past year INVEST South/West has marshalled the combined powers of Chicago's government, private, philanthropic and community sectors to bring about real, visible opportunity and change to our residents and neighborhoods that have been historically disinvested for generations," said Mayor Lightfoot. "But our work is only getting started. As we move into our second year, we're going full steam ahead with new partnerships, RFPs, minority developer supports, and much, much more as we continue our shared mission to build the city where everyone has an equal shot at success and ability to live their dreams."

The INVEST South/West initiative comprehensively focuses planning and funding tools along 12 commercial corridors in ten neighborhoods that have historically served as focal points for pedestrian activity, retail, services, transportation, public spaces, and quality-of-life amenities for local residents. One year after the announcement, and nine months after the formal launch of the program, the City has



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already invested over \$70 million in public funds to begin revitalizing these neighborhoods.

These investments have led to noticeable enhancements in many locations throughout the communities, including new park facilities, streetscapes, CTA improvements, Regional Business Centers to serve small business needs in the neighborhoods, and the new Artists in Residence program that will embed full-time artist in four INVEST South/West neighborhoods. City investments have also supported the 4400 Grove mixed-use development in Bronzeville, the recently-announced VOA housing development in Englewood and the 1000 Homes Project, a Department of Housing-led development project that will bring infill housing to the North Lawndale neighborhood, in partnership with United Power.

“These initial community-driven investments are strategically focused where they’ll have the biggest impact on local residents and businesses,” said DPD Commissioner Maurice Cox. “With our neighborhood partners, we’re going to build on their momentum to ensure INVEST South/West resonates for years to come.”

Private organizations have listened to the rallying cry and demonstrated their partnership with the INVEST South/West initiative by committing over \$300 million to programs aligned with the goals of Mayor Lightfoot’s marquee neighborhood development initiative. This includes a combination of philanthropic and corporate commitments to small business grants and loans in INVEST South/West neighborhoods such as commitments from JP Morgan, Fifth Third Bank, BMO Harris, and Starbucks, funds such as the Chicago Community Trust’s newly-launched Pre-Development Fund, and private development project costs planned or started on the corridors. Many of these commitments will be critical to the success of projects including the Chicago Prize finalist projects and the development of parcels the City is bidding out to developers throughout the communities and the city. These commitments show that the private sector is heeding the call for collaborative investment and, when combined with targeted public investments, is leading to the catalytic change designed by the INVEST South/West model.

“Thanks to INVEST South/West, the North Lawndale community is on the path towards transformational revitalization,” said Michael Scott, Jr., Alderman of the 24th Ward. “We’re beginning to see the fruits of our labor, and I want to thank Mayor Lightfoot for pushing for catalytic change in the neighborhoods that need it most.”

The City has prioritized community engagement and collaboration as part of the INVEST South/West initiative to ensure that local stakeholders guide the development process. On Friday, Mayor Lightfoot announced the selection of community-based organizations that will coordinate public and private investments



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along INVEST South/West’s neighborhood commercial corridors. This Corridor Manager program is emblematic of the City’s commitment to revamp processes to ensure greater community participation in decision-making. The City has also looked internally to create change in their own processes, such as Requests for Proposals (RFPs) issuances to ensure that community engagement and community wealth-building are key components of the efforts. The City’s launched a series of monthly Neighborhood Roundtables in each corridor to serve as the forum to bring together business owners, aldermen, and community organizations to discuss the ongoing projects and how they can best serve the needs of the neighborhood.

“INVEST South/West has lofty goals that will be achieved through community engagement and local decision making,” said Craig Chico, Executive Director of the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council. “As Corridor Manager for the New City priority community, I am thrilled to support Mayor Lightfoot’s marquee economic development initiative and excited for the future of my community.”

In addition to the \$70 million of public funds already invested, DPD in August issued the first RFPs as part of the INVEST South/West initiative. The RFPs seek developers for key, underutilized properties in three targeted neighborhoods: Auburn Gresham, Austin and Englewood. These developments will be assisted by City funds and will create pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use projects that address local development needs while fostering additional investment on adjacent blocks. DPD is expected to announce the winners early next year, and the next round of RFPs for INVEST South/West developments will be announced by the end of the year.

Today’s announcement took place at the Ogden Commons construction site, a \$200 million multi-use development project that will be completed by 2026. This will be the marquee new development at the north end of the North Lawndale INVEST South/West corridor, and will include ground floor retail headlined by Ja’ Grill and Steak ‘n Sheak, two minority-owned and run businesses that received grants through the City’s Neighborhood Opportunity Fund. This is part of the City’s commitment through INVEST South/West to utilize all City sources to support locally-driven development that prioritizes minority representation.

“The City’s Neighborhood Opportunity Fund and Mayor Lightfoot transformative vision for North Lawndale has made it possible for me to bring my business to Ogden Commons,” said Melvin Buckley, owner/franchisee of the Ogden Commons Steak ‘n Shake. “This development will be a cornerstone of the neighborhood and I am excited to have this opportunity.”

Included in the Ogden Commons development is Mt. Sinai’s North Lawndale Surgical Center & Ambulatory Care Center, which received a \$7 million grant from the City in



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June. Along with a \$4 million grant to the Auburn Gresham Health Lifestyle Hub, these investments, which were paid for via the CARES Act, are part of Mayor Lightfoot's commitment to address health care deserts within the INVEST South/West corridors and align with the City's [Violence Reduction Plan](#), released earlier this fall.

The ten INVEST South/West Neighborhoods are the following:

- Auburn Gresham
- North Lawndale
- Austin
- Englewood
- Humboldt Park
- Quad Communities/Bronzeville
- New City
- Roseland/Pullman
- South Chicago
- South Shore

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