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CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS  
FOR CITY-OWNED VACANT LAND**

*The City is seeking Solar Developers to design, install, own, operate and maintain ground-mounted solar panels on large parcels of underutilized City-owned vacant land.*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the Chicago Solar-Ground Mount initiative, a multi-site solar energy development project for city-owned vacant lands. Approximately 30 acres of land in the communities of Austin, Englewood, West Pullman, Riverdale and South Deering are being offered for solar development.

"From moving to 100 percent renewable energy in our public buildings, to supporting our private partners as they work to reduce emissions, Chicago is showcasing to the world the impact that cities can have on climate change for their residents," Mayor Emanuel said. "This project takes vacant land and transforms it into something that will positive for the community, keeping us one step ahead in our commitment to renewable energy sources."

This project highlights the City's commitment to renewable energy sources and demonstrates the viability of solar projects within Chicago. Following City leadership's 2017 pledge to transition municipal buildings to 100% renewable energy by 2025, this project will serve as a renewable energy catalyst, furthering the Mayor's commitment to solar power generation within City limits.

A request for proposal (RFP) will be issued by Chicago Infrastructure Trust (CIT) on October 1 to solicit developers of ground-mounted photovoltaic solar electric generation systems. Construction is planned to begin in 2019. For more information on the RFP visit [www.chicagoinfrastructure.org/initiatives/csgm](http://www.chicagoinfrastructure.org/initiatives/csgm).

Chicago Solar-Ground Mount encourages the development of underutilized city-owned vacant brownfields that have no slated plans for future development. The selected developer(s) will own, operate and maintain the ground-mounted solar systems on the vacant land at no cost to the City. Respondents are requested to meet Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) participation and Workforce Development goals. For this project, the MBE and WBE goals are set at 26% and 6% respectively. For all construction work, a minimum of 50% of the total work hours

must be performed by City Residents, at least 7.5% of which, must be performed by Project Area Residents.

"Through this initiative Chicago will leverage private sector innovation and funding to activate dormant resources in communities that for too long have been left out of the green economy," said City Treasurer Kurt Summers, chairman of the Infrastructure Trust's Board. "These new solar resources will not only enable our city to run at lower cost and lower impact to the environment, it will also empower residents throughout the city with jobs and skills to thrive as leaders in the future of our regional economy."

The recently enacted Illinois Future Energy Jobs Act, is expected to drive a significant increase in PV solar installations across the state and in Chicago. New programs are designed to incentivize and promote solar industry growth in Illinois and create opportunities for low income residents and environmental justice communities to access and participate in the clean energy economy. This will require an expanded and qualified workforce. Preparing individuals from diverse communities to join this workforce is a major objective of the City's solar developments. As is the provision of opportunities for economically disadvantaged residents to subscribe to community solar initiatives, which may allow them to benefit from reduced cost electric bills.

"ComEd is committed to a clean energy future, and believes partnerships, including ComEd's community microgrid in Bronzeville and the City's municipal solar program will spur growth for the city, create local jobs and help provide opportunities for low-income communities," said ComEd Senior Vice President Fidel Marquez, Jr. "The mandated solar industry growth in Illinois along with the City's commitment creates a unique opportunity for ComEd to encourage and support solar developers to bid on this RFP and future RFP's that provide solar for all and to further develop a renewable energy workforce in the City of Chicago."

The City and its sister agencies have already made significant strides to green their energy supply. In 2013, the City eliminated coal fueled power from the over 1 billion kilowatt hours of electricity it buys on an annual basis. A dozen CPS schools have had solar arrays installed since 2009, while the Park District and City Colleges currently procure large portions of their energy use from renewable sources.

Today's announcement builds on the City's strong environmental track record, commitment to clean energy, and emissions reductions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced the City of Chicago earned a 2017 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year Award. It is given annually to honor organizations that have made outstanding contributions to protecting the environment through energy efficiency. Additionally, the Chicago Smart Lighting Project, also procured on behalf of the City by the CIT, is on track to convert 270,000 of Chicago's outdoor lighting fixtures to LED, reducing the City's street lighting electricity consumption by over 50%.

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