



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
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**Mayor Emanuel and Alderman Dowell Launch Construction on XS Tennis World-Class Facility in Washington Park Community**

*\$16.9 Million Facility Will Allow XS Tennis Programs to Reach More than 4,000 Chicago Youth*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Alderman Pat Dowell (3<sup>rd</sup>) launched construction today on the XS Tennis 150,918-square-foot world-class facility in Washington Park. The state-of-the-art tennis facility will house 12 indoor courts, a fitness center, running track, training space and classrooms. Chicago's XS Tennis is the largest, most successful minority-owned tennis organization in the nation, serving more than 2,000 Chicago Public School (CPS) students through its free in-school Tennis XSpress program and more than 2,300 Chicago youth and residents annually.

"This indoor recreation center will provide youth with spaces to train and compete year round, increasing the potential to earn college scholarships," said Mayor Emanuel. "XS Tennis has been a tremendous success and serves as an example of how athletics and education can come together within our communities to support Chicago's youth. Partnering with Alderman Dowell and community stakeholders ensure that children can build bright futures in Washington Park and throughout the 3<sup>rd</sup> ward, strengthening the entire City of Chicago."

The Tennis XSpress program is a mobile tennis program created by XS Tennis and Education Foundation. The program provides after-school and in-school activities while teaching the values of team work, self-confidence and sportsmanship, all while growing the game of tennis. The opening of the XS Tennis Village in the Washington Park neighborhood will double XS Tennis Foundation's investment in their CPS programming, increasing the number of participating schools from 10 to 20 and exposing more than 4,000 CPS students to the sport of tennis and the habits of an active and healthy lifestyle.

"This is an important project for the city of Chicago, the Washington Park, and the national tennis community," said Kamau Murray, President and Founder of XS Tennis and the XS Tennis and Education Foundation. "So many people and organizations have come together to make this happen in a way that is thoughtful, impactful, and sustainable. This center will provide the XS Tennis and Education Foundation greater opportunity to expand its proven pathway, and partner with other organizations to deliver a variety of opportunities for Chicago's youth."

In addition to doubling the Tennis XSpres program, XS Tennis will also expand its community outreach by committing \$300,000 in tennis scholarships to Chicago residents and CPS youth.

“Today marks a new chapter and creates new opportunities for residents of the 3rd ward and the broader community. As a result of the tireless work from countless stakeholders, this facility is an example of what is possible when people come together to support our youth,” said Alderman Pat Dowell (3rd).

The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Board of Commissioners and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development approved the sale of vacant CHA land at the site of the former Robert Taylor Homes to XS Tennis LLC, for \$2 million with an agreement for an additional \$2.6 million in commensurate benefits that include reserving 60 scholarships for CHA youth in XS Tennis programs annually and reserving two to three jobs for CHA residents.

“CHA recognizes that in order to build healthy, vibrant communities we need to invest in community anchors like XS Tennis so that we can provide opportunities to our residents and the people who live in the surrounding neighborhood. Along with other community assets CHA is supporting, XS Tennis will become an integral part of the redevelopment of the South Side,” said CHA CEO Eugene Jones, Jr.

The XS Tennis Foundation also works to provide academic and financial support to promising junior tennis players in local communities and looks to close the divide between sports and education, with 34 players from XS Tennis having received scholarships to play college tennis since the club was founded in 2008. The Foundation has partnered with the University of Chicago to provide student athletes with free tutoring and homework assistance.

Unexpected environmental remediation delayed the start of construction while additional funding to finance the remediation was secured through a combination of private donations and loans from CHA and non-profit lender IFF.

This \$16.9 million investment will be made with \$2.9 million in TIF support. Construction is expected to be complete by next fall. Renderings are attached.

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