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**MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL ANNOUNCES CONTINUED INVESTMENTS IN LIBRARY BRANCHES ON
THE SOUTH AND WEST SIDES**

In partnership with Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White and the City, Legler Library will be transformed into a regional branch for the west side

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Library today joined city and state officials on the south and west sides to announce continued investments to transform the Henry E. Legler Branch Library into a regional library, and to renovate and modernize South Shore Branch Library. More than \$14 million will be invested as part of the Library's "Branching Out: Building Libraries, Building Communities" campaign.

"Chicago libraries are community anchors, family gathering spots, places for students to get help with homework and job-seekers to connect with life-changing opportunities," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "These renovations will bring Legler and South Shore into the 21st century, and provide strengthening the fabric of neighborhoods across Chicago for generations to come."

Under the "Branching Out: Building Libraries, Building Communities" campaign nearly \$300 million in new investments have been made to develop and modernize community libraries throughout the city since 2011. Branching Out focuses on investing in key areas of neighborhood libraries including: modern facilities and infrastructure, and high quality programming with librarians and administrators.

"Modern library facilities at Legler and South Shore will give our patrons a place to search and apply for jobs, engage in book discussions, access the internet and connect with their neighbors," said CPL Commissioner Brian Bannon. "We are thrilled to work with the Mayor, city and state officials and our communities to bring the innovative programming for children, teens, adults and families to neighborhoods across Chicago."

In partnership with Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White, the Henry E. Legler Branch Library will be transformed into a regional library for the west side. The transformation of Legler Library, located at 115 S. Pulaski, into a state-of-the-art regional library branch will be fully funded with a \$4 million investment from the Illinois State Library to support technology infrastructure and a \$7.5 million investment from the City of Chicago to support building upgrades and the expansion of hours and services for the west side community.

“As Secretary of State and State Librarian, I am proud to support this important project for the Legler branch,” said White. “These funds will allow for important technological upgrades and program enhancements that will strengthen lifelong learning for the residents of the west side of Chicago. I applaud Mayor Emanuel and the Chicago Public Library for recognizing the need to establish a regional library on the west side and working to make it a reality.”

Beginning this summer, the 36,000 square-foot library will undergo significant renovations to improve the building, update the technology infrastructure and upgrade programs and services. Interior and exterior improvements will include a reconfiguration of the existing floor plan; the addition of new program, community and study spaces; an increase in collections and technology; accessibility and life safety improvements; and parking lot and security enhancements.

“A regional library branch on Chicago’s West Side will provide a vital community anchor for our residents, and a significant down-payment on a more equitable future for the entire west side,” said Alderman Jason C. Ervin, 28th Ward. “Thanks to Mayor Emanuel and Secretary of State Jesse White for partnering to bring our residents the 21st Century learning opportunities, services and technology that will benefit Chicagoans for generations to come.”

Effective this spring, the Legler branch will add Sunday hours and expanded weekday hours, consistent with other regional libraries.

Once the renovation of the Legler regional library is complete, Kerry James Marshall’s monumental painting “Knowledge and Wonder” will be reinstalled. Legler will also serve as the first CPL location to introduce an “Artist in Residence,” creating a studio space where a community artist will develop art projects and host adult, teen and family arts programs.

The South Shore Branch Library, located at 2505 E. 73rd Street, will undergo a \$2.5 million to renovate and modernize the 18,000 square-foot space. The renovation will include repairs and upgrades to the building envelope and exterior walkways, roof and windows; interior renovation of the first and second floors including the addition of an Early Learning space and dedicated area for young adults; additional power and data for technology enhancements; new flooring and paint throughout, and a new Circulation Desk.

“As alderman, I work tirelessly to advocate for investments in my ward,” said Alderman Greg Mitchell, 7th Ward. “It is my pleasure to bring this \$2,500,000 investment to the South Shore Library as I continue my redevelopment efforts in this historic neighborhood.”

South Shore renovations, which will be managed by the Department of Fleet and Facilities Management (2FM), will provide the neighborhood with a modern library space that continues to serve as an essential community anchor, providing critical services and resources to meet a variety of local needs. Construction is scheduled to begin in March.

Each branch will offer additional programs and services to meet the residents they serve. Both library locations will offer an Early Learning Play Space, designed to support parents and caregivers in developing their child’s early literacy skills through play; a YOUmedia space for teens to explore digital design, music and recording, technology, 3D and 2D making and more with the help of skilled mentors; and dedicated workforce development support and technology tutors called

CyberNavigators for adults hoping to learn basic computer skills or apply for a job online. CPL will continue to partner with expert workforce organizations to deliver trainings on additional skills, such as resume writing, interview prep and industry-specific skills. The branches will also continue to have traditional library programs, such as book clubs for seniors and intergenerational educational and cultural programming.

Through City investment and innovative partnerships, CPL will have 12 new library buildings and 18 additional locations with major renovations and expansions complete by the end of 2019.

About Chicago Public Library

Since 1873, Chicago Public Library (CPL) has encouraged lifelong learning by welcoming all people and offering equal access to information, entertainment and knowledge through innovative services and programs, as well as cutting-edge technology. Through its 80 locations, the Library provides free access to a rich collection of materials, both physical and digital, and presents the highest quality author discussions, exhibits and programs for children, teens and adults. CPL received the Social Innovator Award from Chicago Innovation Awards; won a National Medal for Library Services from the Institute for Museum and Library Services; was named the first-ever winner of the National Summer Learning Association's Founder's Award in recognition of its Summer Learning Challenge; and was ranked number one in the U.S., and third in the world by an international study of major urban libraries conducted by the Heinrich Heine University Dusseldorf in Germany. For more information, please call (312) 747-4050 or visit chipublic.org. To follow CPL on social media, visit us on Twitter ([@chipublic](https://twitter.com/chipublic)) or Facebook ([Chicago Public Library](https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoPublicLibrary)).