



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 13, 2023

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CITY OF CHICAGO ANNOUNCES CHICAGO FIRE FOOTBALL CLUB AND CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY SIGN LEASE ON NEW NEAR WEST SIDE TRAINING FACILITY

New performance center and training fields will create economic opportunities, employment, recreational activities, and affordable housing resources for the community

CHICAGO — Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, the Chicago Fire Football Club, Alderman Jason Ervin (28th Ward), and the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) today announced the signing of a ground lease for a new training facility for Chicago's Major League Soccer (MLS) team in the Roosevelt Square neighborhood on the Near West Side.

As part of the long-term lease agreement, the Fire will finance the development of the multi-million-dollar facility and provide an \$8M community investment to be used for the rehabilitation and preservation of nearby CHA housing and the creation of indoor and outdoor community spaces. Additionally, the Fire will provide long-term employment for community members, resources for minority and women-owned businesses, free sports programming for local youth, community green spaces, and more.

The lease is estimated to generate \$40M in revenue for CHA over the next 40 years, and CHA will use proceeds to invest in its housing mission, including ABLA Brooks Homes, Loomis Courts, and William Jones. Construction on the training facility is anticipated to begin later this spring.

"The Chicago Fire, one of our city's greatest sports teams, deserves to have a high-quality training facility that not only meets their needs but fosters the growth of talented athletes," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This new facility will both fulfill this need and provide the surrounding West Side community with job opportunities, recreational activities, and community gathering spaces. Additionally, the millions of dollars in rental income generated by this project will support the CHA's efforts to rehabilitate and build affordable housing in the surrounding areas."



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The new facility will feature a 53,000 square-foot, two-story performance center, two-and-a-half hybrid grass pitches and three synthetic turf pitches, providing a world-class training environment for the Fire’s professional and Academy players and staff. The hybrid grass pitches will feature a hydronic heating system, and the turf pitches will be protected by an insulated dome from November to March each year.

“I am excited to move forward in this effort to utilize open space to support affordable housing, employment, and recreation opportunities on the Near West Side, for the residents of the 28th ward and the ABLA community,” said Alderman Jason Ervin, 28th Ward. “This economic investment in our community by the Chicago Fire Football Club will create substantial community benefits for generations to come, and I look forward to our ongoing collaboration with the Chicago Fire and Chicago Housing Authority to ensure these benefits are fully realized.”

The 23.3-acre site is generally bounded by Roosevelt Road, Ashland Avenue, 14th Street, and Loomis Street. The site was previously occupied by portions of CHA’s former ABLA Homes, which is already in the process of being replaced by the mixed-income Roosevelt Square community as part of CHA’s ongoing commitment to develop mixed-income, mixed-use housing. In January, CHA and its development partner, Related Midwest, broke ground on Roosevelt Square Phase 3B, a \$172M project that will include 222 new homes and 184 renovated apartments. CHA will continue efforts to develop mixed-income housing in the area on nearby vacant CHA parcels, private land, and City-owned land.

“Being a part of and giving back to Chicago is at the heart of the Chicago Fire Football Club ethos, and we are excited to put down roots on the Near West Side in the Roosevelt Square community,” said Chicago Fire FC Owner and Chairman Joe Mansueto. “The development of our new facility will provide a state-of-the-art training environment for our players, coaches, and sporting staff. Our facility will also serve as a community programming home to the next generation of Chicagoans, bringing our city together through the sport of soccer. We look forward to getting underway and continuing our work with local residents on this project.”

The lease signing comes after an intensive public engagement process to discuss the proposal, including community meetings hosted or co-hosted by the CHA, Department of Planning and Development (DPD), the Fire, and Alderman Jason Ervin (28th Ward). The Fire held numerous meetings with various community organizations to ensure that local residents and stakeholders were able to contribute to the planning process. CHA also received approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the project.

“At CHA, our goal is to help families unlock their economic power and seniors thrive.



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We know that all residents — including those who use housing subsidies — benefit from mixed-use, mixed-income communities with access to quality public schools, outdoor recreation, jobs and career opportunities, healthcare, and more,” said CHA CEO Tracey Scott. “This new partnership with the Chicago Fire will secure substantial funds to improve aging public housing at ABLA Brooks and Loomis Courts and create long-term employment opportunities for CHA residents. It will serve as a catalyst for future growth on the Near West Side for years to come.”

The Chicago Fire Football Club was founded on October 8, 1997, on the 126th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire. The Fire have won six major domestic championship titles, including the 1998 MLS Cup, the 1998, 2000, 2003 and 2006 Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cups, as well as the 2003 MLS Supporters’ Shield. The Club’s charitable arm, the Chicago Fire Foundation, was recognized as ESPN’s 2019 Sports Humanitarian Team of the Year. The Fire plays their home matches at historic Soldier Field. For more information, visit chicagofirefc.com.

Documents related to the lease deal are posted online at: <https://www.thecha.org/lease-proposal-chicago-fire-football-club-training-facility>.

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