



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES LONG TERM GROUND LEASE AGREEMENT FOR BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF CHICAGO**

*The two to three-story Club building will occupy approximately 25,000 square feet of land that will be leased by the City for \$1 per year for 55 years, with potential for two 10-year extensions.*

**CHICAGO** – City Council today passed a ground lease agreement for Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago's portion of the City's new Joint Public Safety Training Campus (JPSTC) currently under construction in the 4400 block of West Chicago Avenue. The privately funded \$8 million-dollar 25,000 square foot youth development facility will have programming designed to help five to 18-year-olds transition successfully into adulthood.

"Here in our city and across the country, Boys & Girls Clubs provide critical spaces and resources for young people to grow, thrive and chart out a successful path into adulthood," said Mayor Lightfoot. "I am thrilled to have this opportunity to launch a new Club location on our West Side, which would greatly benefit young people living in historically disinvested neighborhoods, and I am looking forward to City Council's collaboration in making this project a reality."

The Boys & Girls Club is the most recent community-oriented project to be added to the 34-acre JPSTC campus at 4443 W. Chicago Ave and the first to be built in Chicago in a generation. Two Black-owned restaurants, with a shared outdoor dining area, Peach's and Culver's, will open adjacent to the JPSTC main building by the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2022.

"Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago is enormously grateful to the City Council - and especially to Alderman Emma Mitts - for approving a ground lease that will allow us to build our first new Club in a generation on the West Side of Chicago, entirely with privately raised funds," said Mimi LeClair, President and CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago. "The Austin, West Humboldt Park and West Garfield Park communities have told us that they want more resources for their young people, and we are excited to become their neighbor and deliver the high-quality programming and opportunities that our youth deserve."



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The new Club will provide members with the emotional, educational, physical, and cultural resources that allow them to enjoy their childhood and thrive in adulthood. When they walk through the Club's doors, children and teens will find caring mentors, avenues of opportunity, and the tools they need to prepare for great futures, LeClair added. With an estimated capacity of 400 at any given time, it will serve well over 1,000 children and young adults every year.

"The Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago have all the tools a young Chicagoan needs to excel in and outside the classroom," said Alderman Mitts, 37th Ward. "The new location for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago brings so much opportunity for the children in my ward. My heart is filled with excitement to watch these children grow up into young leaders for their community."

The two to three-story Club building will occupy approximately 25,000 square feet of land that will be leased by the City for \$1 per year for 55 years, with potential for two 10-year extensions. The lease agreement was introduced to City Council last month. Club construction could be completed in early-to-mid 2023 through the funding and support of Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago's generous donors.

The JPSTC will mark a major advancement in the training of new and current police officers, firefighters, and paramedics, creating critically needed space for the teaching and practice of emergency response skills and joint training exercises in realistic scenario settings. Up to 900 first responders will use the various training components daily, 7-days a week, once the \$85 million complex opens in late 2022.

Founded in 1902, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago operates over 20 club sites in the city, serving nearly 20,000 young people every year. The last Club, the James Jordan Boys & Girls Club, opened August 1, 1995.

**About Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago**

Serving Chicago families since 1902, Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago (BGCC) uses a comprehensive blend of mentoring and programming to provide youth ages 5 to 18 the tools they need to become well-rounded and successful adults. Filling the out-of-school hours, which can be the most dangerous for young people, BGCC offers academic, social, and leadership activities for students in some of Chicago's most challenged neighborhoods. Youth are matched with professional adult mentors, giving kids a safe place to learn, grow, and succeed. Learn more at: <http://www.bgcc.org>.

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