



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Initiative Will Help Improve Food Quality, Appearance of Convenience Stores**

A pilot program to expand healthy food choices and improve the aesthetics of neighborhood convenience stores was co-sponsored by Alderman Lona Lane of the 18<sup>th</sup> Ward and approved by City Council today.

The “Healthy Corner Store Pilot Project” will provide a \$40,000 grant to the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN) to work with select retailers on expanding fresh produce and dairy products as part of their stores’ regular inventory. IMAN will also market various City of Chicago programs that help store owners to improve the appearance and operation of their places of business.

“We know there can be a cultural disconnect between store owners and the people they serve, especially when it comes to healthy food options. This pilot program will help owners to incorporate and leverage fresh food and store improvements as part of their business plans,” Mayor Emanuel said.

The year-long pilot will provide training, technical assistance, and business resources to IMAN’s existing network of Muslim store owners, along with other store operators, that operate in low-income sections of the West, Southwest, and South sides of the city. The work will include assistance with the procurement of fresh produce from Chicago-based farms and fresh food distributors.

IMAN is a community-based 501(C)(3) organization founded in 1995 to address business, social and cultural issues involving Muslims in Chicago. In 2007, it launched a “Campaign for Health, Wellness and Healing,” which sought to mitigate cultural tensions between certain store owners and customers. The Healthy Corner Store program will expand the premise of that initiative by helping owners with alternative business planning, access to healthy food, and resources for facility improvements. IMAN will provide a first-quarter, mid-year and final report to the Department of Planning and Development that details the number of stores that adopt and sustain program objectives. Funding for the program will come from the City’s corporate budget.

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### **New TIF Districts Proposed for North and South Sides**

A pair of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts will be designated on the North and South sides under a plan approved today by City Council.

The 107<sup>th</sup>/Halsted district includes 887 acres of commercial and residential properties in portions of the Morgan Park and Roseland communities. The district is intended to provide resources for property rehabilitation, to address foreclosure issues in the area, and to support improvements to infrastructure and other public amenities. The district is generally bounded by 107<sup>th</sup>, State, 115<sup>th</sup>, and Green streets.

The Foster/California TIF district includes 24 acres of institutional buildings and other properties in the Lincoln Square community. The primary purpose of the district is to provide resources for healthcare improvements at Swedish Covenant Hospital, along with upgrades to area infrastructure and other public amenities. The district is generally bounded by Carmen, Farragut, Francisco and Lincoln avenues.

New property tax growth in each of the districts will be used to support improvement projects in the respective areas for the next 23 years.

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### **Landmark Status Approved for Former North Side Elementary School**

The former Mulligan Public School building in Lincoln Park was approved as an official City of Chicago landmark by City Council today.

Featuring Italianate and Queen Anne-style decorative details, the 114-year-old building at 1855-63 N. Sheffield Ave. is a significant example of late 19<sup>th</sup> century school architecture in Chicago, when handsomely designed school buildings included a variety of ventilation and sanitation standards to encourage student achievement.

The school was designed by Board of Education architect Charles Rudolph and named for James A. Mulligan, a Chicago lawyer who served as a Union Army colonel during the Civil War.

The designation was recommended by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in February 2014.

The masonry, four-story building is currently being rehabilitated into market-rate apartments by 1855 Sheffield LLC.

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### **Property Tax Incentives Approved for Two Northwest Side Commercial Projects**

Property tax incentives approved today by City Council will support a pair of commercial redevelopment projects on the Northwest side.

#### **Market Properties, 501 N. Sacramento Blvd.**

A Class 6(b) property tax incentive will help Market Properties Inc. renovate a 492,000-square-foot building in the Kinzie Industrial Corridor for its food and paper wholesale businesses and for lease to other tenants. The \$515,000 project includes new lighting, loading dock improvements, and other upgrades. The company relocated to the building in January 2014 and currently employs 17 people. It will create an additional eight positions and save an estimated \$913,000 in property taxes over the next 12 years through the incentive.

#### **Royal Industries Inc., 4100 W. Victoria St.**

The renewal of a Class 6(b) tax incentive for Royal Industries Inc. in the Peterson Pulaski Industrial Corridor will help the company complete a \$150,000 reconfiguration of its production space within the building. The original Class 6(b) incentive, issued in 2004, supported the purchase and renovation of the 77,000-square-foot structure for the company's operations as a distributor of furniture and food service projects. The estimated \$752,000 in tax savings through the 12-year renewal period will support the addition of 10 new jobs.

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### **Land Acquisition Process Authorized For Former Rail Yard**

City Council approved the City's acquisition authority for 62 acres of vacant land on the Near South Side today.

Bounded by Roosevelt Road, Clark Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Street and the Chicago River, the site was last used as a rail yard. It is currently owned by General Mediterranean Holdings.

The site's mixed-use redevelopment was one of the primary goals of the River South TIF district, which was established in 1997. In lieu of no development project moving forward, the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) intends to issue a request for proposals (RFP) to develop the site. The chosen respondent to the RFP will fund the acquisition costs.

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