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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 19, 2018

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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES PLANS TO CREATE RIVERWALK COMMUNITY MARKETPLACE

New Program Will Enhance Existing Concessions Program and Highlight Minority and Women-Owned Neighborhood Businesses

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) and the Department of Fleet and Facility Management (2FM) today announced plans to develop the Riverwalk Community Marketplace, a new concessions program to highlight existing vendors in the City's culturally diverse communities. Minority and women-owned Chicago-based businesses are strongly encouraged to respond. The program is part of Mayor Emanuel's effort to expand opportunities for small business in every corner of the city and will feature a mix of food, beverage and retail facilities.

"The Riverwalk Community Marketplace will complement the success of the Riverwalk," Mayor Emanuel said. "It will highlight small, neighborhood businesses and give Riverwalk visitors a chance to experience the rich cultural diversity that the City has to offer."

2FM today issued an RFQ for marketplace vendors for the 2019 Riverwalk season. The primary goal of the RFQ is to provide existing businesses the opportunity for visitors to experience what their community business has to offer and encourage them to visit the brick and mortar location.

"We want locals and tourists that come to Riverwalk to get a taste of everything Chicago's vibrant neighborhood retailers have to offer," said Rosa Escareno, BACP Commissioner. "That's why we encourage applications from retailers, restaurants, artisans, and bakers, any vendor looking for an opportunity to take their business to the next level."

As part of Riverwalk East development plans, 2FM will begin construction this fall on the Chicago Riverwalk Community Marketplace Corridor, located between Michigan Avenue and Wabash Avenue. This includes the expansion of the existing path to create a corridor for the placement of kiosks.

"2FM is proud to continue to develop the concession program and maintain the Chicago Riverwalk," 2FM Commissioner David Reynolds said. "We are excited to further develop this section and create opportunities for more local, minority and women-owned businesses to take part in the concessions program and add to the success of the Riverwalk."

Opportunities for the operations of concessions are available within kiosks to be provided by the City. There are also two interior spaces available: adjacent to the Michigan Avenue and Chicago River and Bridgehouse Museum on the west side of the Michigan Avenue and Dusable Bridge and a kitchen space in the Jetty on the east side of the Franklin Street bridge. Earlier this year, Mayor Emanuel announced improvement plans for the Riverwalk East section of the Riverwalk. The creation of the new Marketplace and updating the Michigan Avenue plaza was included in those plans.

"Bringing the great diversity of our communities to downtown while creating more opportunities for women and minority-owned small businesses is double-win for Chicago," said Alderman Roderick Sawyer. "This is exactly the kind of investment we should be making as a city and I proud to see it become a reality."

"Chicago is a city of neighborhoods and our community businesses have so much to offer," Alderman Pat Dowell said. "By creating this space along the Riverwalk, we are creating the opportunity to bolster our vibrant minority and women-owned business community."

"I'm pleased to be part of the development of the Riverwalk Community Marketplace," Alderman Gilbert Villegas said. "Bringing small, minority-owned neighborhood businesses downtown on the Riverwalk will ensure that it is an engine that drives economic growth across all Chicago neighborhoods."

The City plans to activate up to ten different kiosks as part of the Community Marketplace concession program by spring of 2019 to establish the Community Marketplace Corridor as a Riverwalk destination. All proposals are due no later than September 28.

More information can be found at:

<https://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/dps/ContractAdministration/Specs/2018/Spec855559.pdf>.

This new Riverwalk expansion is part of slate of small business initiatives that Mayor Emanuel announced at the end of April in his "[Small Business Brief](#)" to support Chicago's entrepreneurs. On June 27, the first of the Mayor's small business ordinances was passed by City Council, creating a start-up license fee and allowing sidewalk cafés to operate year-round. The start-up license fee permits all new Limited Business Licensees to obtain a two-year license for a one-year price. In the coming months, the City will be creating a license inspection checklist to reduce confusion for new

business owners and roll-out night and weekend inspection shifts to better accommodate business owners.

These new initiatives are part of the Mayor's ongoing commitment to make small business growth a priority of his administration, including:

- Reducing the fees for numerous licenses, benefiting 10,000 business owners.
- Cutting the total number of business licenses from 117 to 40.
- Streamlining inspections to help reduce the number of inspections for more than 2,000 businesses and helping businesses open an average of 30 days faster.
- Doubling health inspection passage rates and helping participating restaurants open an average of 45 days earlier through the Restaurant Startup Program.
- Working with more than 70 delegate agencies to bring indispensable business support to neighborhoods.
- Investing more than \$11 million in 108 South and West Side businesses through the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund and Retail Thrive Zones programs.

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