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**MAYOR EMANUEL, ALDERMAN TUNNEY AND CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCE
RENOVATION AND MODERNIZATION OF MERLO BRANCH LIBRARY**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, 44th Ward Alderman Tom Tunney and Chicago Public Library Commissioner Brian Bannon today announced the renovation and modernization of the approximately 15,000 square-foot Merlo Branch Library, located at 644 W. Belmont Avenue. Investments will be made to the facility, and in library programming to provide a modern, state-of-the-art branch to the Lakeview community.

"Libraries are vital community anchors where children and families go to read, learn, discover, and explore," said Mayor Emanuel. "I am proud to stand alongside Alderman Tunney as we invest in the Merlo Branch Library and make sure our libraries and our communities continue to grow."

"The renovation and modernization of Merlo Branch will help children, families and seniors grow in an already a tremendous community asset, said Alderman Tom Tunney, 44th Ward. "I look forward to seeing the library bustle with residents from Lakeview and across the city for years to come."

Improvements also include an early learning play space for children, a dedicated teen space, additional seating, additional meeting and study spaces and refreshed collections. The Merlo Branch will have digital skills training available to patrons of any age through the Library's CyberNavigator program.

"We are thrilled to renovate this neighborhood branch and modernize its offerings for the 21st century," said Commissioner Brian Bannon. "The expanded building will provide more space for children to learn, teens to create, and adults to gather as community members."

Merlo Branch renovations, which will be managed by the Public Building Commission, 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. Pending PBC board approval, the branch will be designed by Ross Barney Architects. The anticipated scope of the

modernization and renovation includes restoration to the façade, introducing energy efficient mechanical systems, lighting and roofing.

“We look forward to performing the renovation on the existing facility,” Carina E. Sanchez, Executive Director, PBC said. “This project will enhance the quality and architectural design of the neighborhood, provide jobs during the construction period and leave the community with enhanced library resources.”

Merlo Branch opened to the public on September 14, 1942 at its current location, and underwent major renovations in 1988. In June 1993, the branch was renamed for John M. Merlo, a local community leader and longtime Chicago politician.

Over the past six years, Chicago Public Library has witnessed one of the largest capital investments in recent history. Through City investment and innovative partnerships, the Library has seen over \$200 million of new capital projects and investments in the people and programs that activate our community anchors. By the end of 2018, CPL will have 11 new library buildings and 14 additional locations with major renovations and expansions. Embedded in these locations and other locations citywide is the Library's innovative way to serve children and teens. CPL will have added new early learning play spaces at 28 locations and new teen spaces at 19 locations.

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)).

About the Public Building Commission of Chicago

The Public Building Commission of Chicago manages construction and renovation projects for the City of Chicago and its sister agencies. Mayor Rahm Emanuel serves as the PBC's chairman. Carina E. Sanchez serves as the Executive Director of the PBC. Additional information about the PBC and its projects can be found at www.pbccchicago.com. You can also follow the Public Building Commission of Chicago on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.