



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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**WHOLE FOODS MARKET® AND MAYOR EMANUEL BREAK GROUND FOR NEW
MIDWEST DISTRIBUTION CENTER IN CHICAGO'S PULLMAN NEIGHBORHOOD**

The new facility continues the Company's commitment to Chicago's South Side neighborhoods

CHICAGO – (July 26, 2016) – Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Whole Foods Market today broke ground on a 150,000 square-foot Whole Foods Market Midwest distribution facility in the Pullman neighborhood on Chicago's South Side. Expected to open in early 2018, the new Whole Foods Market Midwest distribution center will initially employ 150 people and serve as many as 70 Whole Foods Market locations in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska and Iowa, and the Canadian province of Ontario.

"There is a renaissance happening in Pullman and this Whole Foods center will only make it stronger," Mayor Emanuel said. "By investing in our neighborhoods and supporting projects like this distribution center, we are creating economic opportunities for families throughout Chicago. I want to thank Whole Foods for their continuing commitment to Chicago and our neighborhoods."

Relocating from the current Whole Foods Market distribution center in Munster, Indiana, the new location offers a building double the size of the current facility. Investing in additional space to grow as the company expands its reach in Chicago and beyond, this new facility is expected to bring real, long-term economic benefits to Chicago's Pullman neighborhood.

"We are thrilled to begin construction of our new distribution center," Whole Foods Market Midwest Regional Vice President, Bobby Turner said. "We've grown so much since opening our first Midwest store in Chicago in 1993 and as our growth continues, this distribution center helps us continue our mission of providing access to fresh, healthy foods and supporting the communities where we do business."

The new distribution center will occupy previously empty land and allow Whole Foods Market to join two major suppliers, Method and Gotham Greens, in the Pullman neighborhood.

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It also builds on the company's plan to serve Chicago's South Side including a recently-opened location in Hyde Park and a location in Englewood that will open in the fall. Additionally, the company is hosting a Whole Foods Market Job and Employment Resource Fair for the new store in Englewood, July 29 and July 30. South Side residents can apply and interview for available positions as well as attend employment development workshops, sign up for childcare and meet with workforce support organizations. Other businesses with employment opportunities such as Starbucks will also take applications from interested residents.

The new center is among more than \$225 million in public and private projects moving forward in Pullman, including: the community's 2015 designation as a National Monument by the U.S. Park Service for its historic affiliation with industry, land use planning, and workers' rights; the 2015 construction of Method Products' first U.S. factory and Gotham Green's rooftop greenhouse; the 2014 construction of the \$135 million Pullman Park retail development; the current construction of a \$15 million community center; and improvements to dozens of historic homes and other properties.

"With major projects like this Whole Foods distribution center, the Pullman/Roseland area is reclaiming its history as a thriving hub for manufacturing and innovation," Alderman Anthony Beale (9th) said. "As this facility grows it will add even more jobs and have an even stronger impact in the 9th ward."

To ensure the site was competitive with the existing facility in Indiana, City Council approved up to \$8.4 million in TIF assistance to help pay for site preparation costs, including grading, demolition, and utility installation.

About Whole Foods Market®

Founded in 1980 in Austin, Texas, Whole Foods Market (wholefoodsmarket.com, NASDAQ: WFM), is the leading natural and organic food retailer. As America's first national certified organic grocer, Whole Foods Market was named "America's Healthiest Grocery Store" by *Health* magazine. The company's motto, "Whole Foods, Whole People, Whole Planet"™ captures its mission to ensure customer satisfaction and health, Team Member excellence and happiness, enhanced shareholder value, community support and environmental improvement. Thanks to the company's more than 85,000 team members, Whole Foods Market has been ranked as one of the "100 Best Companies to Work For" in America by *FORTUNE* magazine for 19 consecutive years. In fiscal year 2015, the company had sales of more than \$15 billion and currently has more than 439 stores in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

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