



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 24, 2017

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES ANDREA ZOPP TO HEAD WORLD BUSINESS CHICAGO

*Move Builds on the Mayor's Work to Drive Inclusive Growth in Every Corner of the City,
Strengthens Chicago's Bid for Amazon's Second Headquarters*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced he has tapped Deputy Mayor Andrea Zopp to serve as the next CEO of World Business Chicago (WBC) – a move that will build on the Mayor's efforts to drive economic growth in neighborhoods throughout Chicago. The move will allow current WBC CEO Jeff Malehorn to focus his time and efforts exclusively on the city's efforts to bring Amazon's second headquarters, and 50,000 new jobs, to Chicago.

Since joining the Emanuel administration, Zopp has overseen a suite of neighborhood economic efforts, including the creation of the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund which uses funds generated by downtown businesses to support economic development on the south, west and southwest sides of the city. To date the Fund has used \$3.2 million in funding to support 32 businesses across the city, including a vegan restaurant in Chatham, a plant nursery in North Lawndale and an art gallery in West Humboldt Park. A second round of \$2.5 million in funding was just announced earlier this month.

"Andy is an incredible asset to my administration and a great partner in our work make sure that as Chicago grows, every resident benefits," said Mayor Emanuel. "This role is the next step in our work towards inclusive economic growth in every neighborhood across the city."

"I have spent my career working on behalf of Chicago's neighborhoods," said Zopp. "I'm excited to continue that work with Mayor Emanuel to leverage the full weight of World Business Chicago to build thriving neighborhoods."

Malehorn, who has led WBC since 2013, will spearhead WBC's efforts to support the Chicago bid for Amazon's HQ2. His record at WBC makes him uniquely suited for the role. Through Malehorn's work with Mayor Emanuel, Chicago has been the top city in the nation for four straight years for corporate relocations, has led the nation in direct foreign investment for five straight years, and has been the best Sister Cities Organization twice. Malehorn's drive to focus WBC on Inclusive Economic Growth set the stage for Zopp's leadership.

Additionally, Mayor Emanuel announced a series of key hires within his office.

Victoria Watkins will serve as Senior Advisor. Watkins has headed up the Mayor's Springfield legislative team since 2013 and has worked for the City since 2011. She played a key role in the passage of the new state education funding formula, the overriding of multiple gubernatorial vetoes and the passage of legislation authorizing the construction of the Obama Presidential Center. In her new role, she will advise the Mayor and lead efforts related to neighborhood policy, external affairs, legislative issues and other key initiatives. Watkins is a lifelong Chicagoan who grew up in the Austin neighborhood.

Roderick Hawkins will serve as Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Engagement. Hawkins has been Director of the Mayor's Office of Public Engagement since July 2016. In his newly expanded role, Hawkins will partner with faith leaders and community leaders across Chicago on a wide range of public safety, education and neighborhood growth efforts. He will also oversee Chicago's actions to remain a Welcoming City to immigrants across the world. Hawkins will work closely with Vance Henry, who has served as a trusted advisor to Mayor Emanuel on faith based initiatives since 2011. Hawkins is a resident of South Shore.

Aarti Kotak will serve as Deputy Chief of Staff for Neighborhood Economic Development. Kotak brings deep experience in neighborhood economic development to the Mayor's office through her current role as the Managing Deputy Commissioner of the Economic Development Bureau in the city's Department of Planning and Development. She has overseen economic development efforts in Austin, Back of the Yards, Bronzeville, Englewood and Pullman and has played a key role in turning vacant lots and boarded up buildings into thriving economic corridors throughout the city. Kotak is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Stanford Law School.

###