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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES NEW FIELDHOUSE AND RENOVATED LIBRARY
COMING TO BRONZEVILLE**

Investments among the latest in neighborhood revitalization

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined Alderman Pat Dowell (3rd), the Chicago Park District and the Chicago Public Library to announce a new fieldhouse at Williams Park and significant upgrades to the Chicago Bee library branch. These investments come on the heels of ongoing development in the neighborhood, including the recently announced Parade of Homes residential housing initiative.

"We are bringing together every component to build a strong neighborhood from community anchors like libraries and parks to housing and retail," Mayor Emanuel said. "What Bronzeville will become someday is now today. I look forward to the additional growth and development of this historic community."

The Williams Park Fieldhouse, 2820 South State Street, will be nearly 10,000 square feet and feature a half-court gymnasium and multi-purpose club rooms for art, education, performances, meetings and exercise.

"The Chicago Park District strives to make modern state of the art facilities available to Chicago residents" said General Superintendent and CEO Michael P. Kelly. "The new community center will do exactly that, while also providing safe learning and gathering spaces, for the children and families of this community."

Two floors of the three-story property at Chicago Bee will be rehabilitated to improve library services. YOUmedia, a digital media space, will be built specifically for teens where they can connect with skilled mentors to explore career opportunities. The branch will also feature an area dedicated to early learning. Traditional library programs, such as book clubs and educational and cultural programming will also be offered, as well as computer classes and one-on-one coaching to build digital literacy, technology and job-seeking skills for adults and seniors.

"Our libraries serve as anchors in the community, where families and people of all ages come together," said Library Commissioner Brian Bannon. "Chicago Bee renovations will bring the best in library services to the Bronzeville community."

Chicago Bee branch is located within a landmark building, the former space of the Chicago Bee, a weekly newspaper published for the Bronzeville community from 1925-1947. Chicago Public Library began operating the Chicago Bee branch in 1996.

“I’ve fought tirelessly for these much needed improvements to the Chicago Bee library branch,” Alderman Dowell said. “I am excited for the new field house coming to the 3rd ward as well as other development in the area. This is a new era for Bronzeville.”

Other recent investments in the area include the new Mariano’s grocery store, the 35th Street pedestrian bridge and the Ellis Park Arts and Recreation center. Bronzeville is among several neighborhoods including Englewood and Woodlawn undergoing a resurgence of public and private investments under the Mayor’s leadership.

The new fieldhouse and community center at Williams Park is a key component in Building on Burnham, the Mayor’s comprehensive plan to invest in the Lakefront, the Chicago River, natural areas and recreational opportunities in neighborhoods across the city. This plan follows the Mayor’s successful expansion of Chicago’s park system in his first mayoral term, which has already added 750 acres of new parkland, 327 new playgrounds and more than \$800 million in capital investment from neighborhoods and private sources.

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