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LAND SALE WOULD ENABLE NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAIL YARD EXPANSION

Project Will Create 300 Jobs

Norfolk Southern railroad would approximately double the size and capacity of its 47th Street intermodal facility through a City-owned land sale proposed to City Council today by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, which will create more than 300 jobs through its lifetime.

The sale would involve 105 vacant, City-owned lots that are located throughout Norfolk Southern's planned expansion area: a 20-block section of the Englewood community generally bounded by Garfield Boulevard, 61st Street, Wallace Street, and Stewart Avenue.

Along with other private and public properties simultaneously being acquired by the railroad, the land would be used for Norfolk Southern's ongoing expansion of its 47th Street terminal.

"In reinforcing Chicago's transportation infrastructure, this project will help local manufacturers, distributors, and other companies that depend on cost-effective and convenient options to ship and receive goods," Mayor Emanuel said. "That means more efficiency for local businesses and more jobs for area residents.

The City-owned lots encompass 11.8 acres of land. They were acquired by the City, in some cases decades ago, through demo liens, tax liens, and other methods. Previous efforts to sell the lots for residential redevelopment or other purposes were unsuccessful. For their proposed sale to Norfolk Southern, the lots were appraised for manufacturing uses, their highest and best use. Most are valued from \$2 to \$2.25 per square foot. Their collective sale price is proposed at \$1.1 million.

Norfolk Southern would also contribute \$3 million to an infrastructure fund that would support local economic development initiatives and the company would work with elected officials and residents to support local hiring goals.

The \$28.7 million first phase of the expansion project could start later this year. The final phase is projected to be completed by 2021.

Approximately 500 operational jobs are currently affiliated with the 47th Street facility, which handles approximately 480,000 intermodal containers every year.

Norfolk Southern's 63rd Street terminal in Chicago Lawn expanded in 2004 and 2010 through similar sales of vacant City-owned land.

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