



★ CHICAGO

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# ‘Hoopademix’ Summer Basketball Camp Brings Chicago Kids Together — At A Distance

By Hannah Alani



Kandace Miggins and Dietrich Ziegler/Provided

BUCKTOWN — Coronavirus canceled many children’s activities this summer, but one basketball camp is still underway, bringing kids from across the city to Bucktown.

Hoopademix, a youth basketball instruction and mentorship program, is meeting for outdoor practices at **Fleet Fields**, a set of soccer fields on the Bucktown side of the Lincoln Yards megadevelopment. Developer Sterling Bay lent the fields, 1397 W. Wabansia Ave., to the camp for free.

Marpray “Coach Pray” Monson founded **Hoopademix** in 2013. Before the coronavirus pandemic, Hoopademix had 200 players spread between 22 teams. They played indoors in a variety of gyms.

The pandemic shut down the camp, however.

To keep the campers active, Monson sent out workouts via email and text, but students and their parents asked if there was a way he could safely coach kids in-person.

Knowing camp would have to be outdoors, Monson thought about his memories of playing basketball outside in 90-degree heat during childhood trips to Mississippi. He thought about where in Chicago he could make outdoor courts from scratch.

Monson sent emails to about 40 people and toured a handful of sites before connecting with Sterling Bay, a developer with a lot of land in the middle of the city.

The developer was willing to convert Fleet Fields, formerly publicly available soccer fields, into what Monson needed for Hoopademix.

The North Lawndale resident and Chicago Public Schools educator created the program to bring kids from different backgrounds together through basketball — a mission that became even more critical during nationwide protests after police killed George Floyd in Minneapolis.



“I wanted to use the game of basketball to destroy the institution of racism,” Monson said. “To weed out insecurities these groups have. ... Being able to put everybody under the same umbrella at an early age ... it’s a really different, beautiful thing when you get a kid from the Gold Coast mixed with a kid from Englewood.”

Socially distanced summer camp looks a lot different than a typical Hoopademix season.

All campers are playing in groups of no more than six children. Basketballs are sanitized between use and players wash their hands every hour. Players are temperature checked upon arrival.

“We want to provide a contactless camp, a distanced camp,” Monson said. “We compete at 6 feet. I think we say ‘6 feet’ over a thousand times a day.”



Kandace Miggins and Dietrich Ziegler/Provided

Players show up in three-hour blocks: Younger children play 9 a.m.-noon and 1-4 p.m. while high schoolers play 5-6:30 p.m.

The first 20 minutes of camp is “open play,” but no one-on-one play is allowed. The next hour and a half is spent on cardio exercises and individual skill development. The final hour is game competition, but games are contactless — “knockout,” for example.

About four weeks into camp, these protocols were put to the test when one camper tested positive for coronavirus. The camper’s sibling had tested positive, as well, after the family returned from a trip, Monson said.

The day Monson learned about the positive case, he shut down camp and ordered rapid testing and send-away testing for each of his coaches and staff. The children in the sick player’s group were tested, as well. Every person tested was negative and camp has since resumed.

Monson credited his safety protocols and the “blessing from God” for protecting campers and staff.



Kandace Miggins and Dietrich Ziegler/Provided

## ‘We Become The Bridge’

Monson, 37, played for his team at Farragut Career Academy High School. Nothing like Hoopademix existed in Chicago when he was in school, he said. His program has helped create a safety net for students from disinvested neighborhoods.

About 60 percent of the program’s 200 players pay program fees; they come from families who can afford the costs of uniforms and travel. The remaining 40 percent of participants do not pay a dime, Monson said.

During regular seasons, the program pays for those players to get to and from practices, as well as for uniforms, equipment and transportation to games, which can take place in the suburbs or as far as Las Vegas.

The average cost to support these students is about **\$1,250 per season or \$3,750 annually**. Hoopademix relies on donations, sponsorships and volunteers to offset costs.

“They come from neighborhoods that have little to no social programs. We become the bridge between the kid and the school, between the kid and the community, the kid and their parent,” Monson said.

Hosting Hoopademix this summer provided a healthy outlet for several students from neighborhoods experiencing high levels of gun violence and coronavirus case rates, Monson said.



Kandace Miggins and Dietrich Ziegler/Provided

During a typical year, there are three travel seasons. In the fall and winter, kids in second through eighth grade play. High schoolers join them in the spring.

Grade checks and attendance checks are a big part of being in Hoopademix, Monson said. The program’s name is a mix of “hoops” and “academics” — the public school teacher’s two passions.

In all, about 300 students try out each year, Monson said.

“I try not to cut, but because of the gym rental space in Chicago, it’s like an endangered species,” Monson said. “I can only keep so many teams.”

There are three weeks left of summer camp and Monson is not currently at capacity, so players can still sign up if interested. **Learn more online.**

Those who want to donate or become a sponsor can **learn more online**. Hoopademix is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.



Kandace Miggins and Dietrich Ziegler/Provided

## Clean-Up Crews Prep Site for \$6B Lincoln Yards

By Cindy Riley - CEG Correspondent



Before work can begin on Chicago's \$6 billion Lincoln Yards, crews must complete a major cleanup. (R W Collins photo)

A \$6 billion project known as Lincoln Yards will transform a former industrial site in Chicago's North Branch Corridor into a mixed-use community that includes new and improved infrastructure and transportation, businesses and residences, parks and open spaces. Before work can begin, however, crews must complete a major cleanup.

"Our remediation efforts at Lincoln Yards North and Lincoln Yards South are currently under way, and crews are making great progress in preparing the land for continued development," said Sterling Bay spokesperson Julie Goudie. "The remediation efforts at Lincoln Yards are very important, and quite a big effort, as the land has been used for industrial purposes for [more than] 100 years. We're committed to reversing the effects of the site's previous use, and transforming it into healthy, active open space that Chicagoans can enjoy for generations to come.

"Lincoln Yards is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform 50+ acres of former industrial land located along the Chicago River into a vibrant community that works for our city. The project will create new park space, recreational space, an activated riverfront and multiple new connections between some of the city's most iconic neighborhoods, including Lincoln Park, Bucktown and Wicker Park."

Goudie said Lincoln Yards will have a significant impact on the local community.

"The Lincoln Yards project will bring life-changing benefits to the city of Chicago, by putting tens of thousands of people to work, and generating hundreds of millions of dollars in annual tax revenue."



Chicago-based RW Collins Co. provided contaminated soil excavation and impacted waters removal and disposal at Lincoln Yards North, while Cabeno Environmental Field Services and Redox Tech LLC supported several in situ cleanup actions. Heneghan Wrecking Co. provided the heavy demolition needed to prepare the site and open the ground to remove contamination.

V3 Companies is the environmental engineer investigating, establishing remediation plans and providing the oversight and verification of cleanup at Lincoln Yards. V3 also is providing the civil engineering and permitting to support demolition and remediation.

"The land has an industrial legacy that spans more than 100 years," said Keith Oswald, P.E., director of environment and geosciences of V3 Companies. "Former industrial operations included [more than] 20 acres that had housed the A. Finkl and Sons steel mill, a Standard Oil petroleum depot, a tire recycling facility, a five-acre scrap metal recycling site, the Gutmann tannery and 25 acres that were once part of Illinois Steel's North Chicago Rolling Mill from the mid-1850s and then later occupied by a Chicago Fleet and Facility Management maintenance operation."

One of the biggest challenges on the job concerns the limited facility drawings dating back to the early 1900s.

"A lot of research and investigations were performed trying to understand not only the nature and limits of contamination, but the altered subsurface environment beneath the site," said Oswald. "Even then, a host of unforeseen obstacles arose at the former Finkl steel mill when unidentified, heavy tooling foundations and other subsurface structures were encountered during remediation. A lot of heavy demolition for unforeseen obstacles and storage tanks with capacities exceeding 100,000 gallons was needed to access and remove impacted soils."

A second challenge is the dense urban environment.



“Adjacent railroads, roadways, utilities, river walls and an historic swing bridge all required protection during the larger cleanup operations. In some cases, earth retention systems were used to allow excavations. In other cases, in situ remediation techniques have been required to avoid compromising the integrity of existing river walls and railroad facilities.”

Regarding the most time-consuming part of the work, said Oswald, “Most environmental cleanups include upfront site investigations, design and regulatory approval of cleanup plans and permitting needed to implement remediation. With the complicated industrial legacy of the land, all these factors were in play. Site investigations, regulatory cleanup approvals and permitting took more than a year at Lincoln Yards North, while the bulk of the cleanup actions were performed over the course of about six months. The ongoing cleanup process for Lincoln Yards South is occurring on similar timelines.

“There also were some setbacks that extended the overall duration of remediation. The final remedial action at Lincoln Yards North continued over more than six added months, due to challenges diagnosing the movement and extent of contaminants, and overcoming logistical constraints of removing heavy oils that had migrated along large foundations and structures that remain at the site.”

The development plan calls for new public infrastructure including new roadway alignments, relocated utilities and new bridges that cross the Chicago River. Because of the size and complexity of the redevelopment, the master plan, development phasing and different ownership structures divide the overall development into north and south sections.

RW Collins Co. performed the bulk of the Lincoln Yards North cleanup efforts. Crews were tasked with removing 25,000 tons of soil contaminated with petroleum products and volatile organic compounds.

“Up-front soil investigations were performed by V3 Companies to delineate soils that would require removal and to determine areas that would require earth retention systems to allow excavation,” said Oswald. “In many cases, demolition of underground obstructions, including large reinforced concrete tooling foundations, also was required to access and remove the

soils. Access constraints also include the logistics of excavation and soil removal around the historic railroad swing bridge and foundation.

“V3 directed excavation and performed confirmation soil sampling and analysis to verify when the required limits of excavation were achieved. RW Collins provided coordination and execution of an excavating and hauling plan to optimize production rates. All work was done in accordance with a site-specific health and safety plan to ensure worker safety.”



The contaminated soils and waters hauled from the property were classified as non-hazardous for disposal, but to achieve proper cleanup, they could not stay on site. With the landfill more than 50 mi. west of Lincoln Yards, RW Collins had to carefully plan each day’s tasks to ensure production goals were met and trucks came in and out of the site efficiently and safely.

Oswald said that if left unaddressed, the materials and related contaminant concentrations could represent health risks to future users if there were repeated exposure over time. Some of the materials were saturated with oils and were addressed to prevent the potential for adverse impacts to groundwater and the water quality of the Chicago River.

As part of the work, crews had to treat 200 cu. yds. of hazardous lead soils.

“V3 Companies specified a mix design and loading rates for the addition of Free Flow 200 treatment reagent to affected soils. The addition of the soil reagent is a relatively simple process. Grids were laid out across the treatment areas. RW Collins then added a predetermined weight of reagent and used a backhoe to uniformly mix the reagent into the affected soils. The soils were subsequently sampled by V3 Companies to confirm that they had been rendered non-hazardous.”

Removing and disposing of 30 underground storage tanks containing petroleum products also was required. The contractor obtained permits from the Chicago Department of Public Health prior to removing each of the tanks, and had a city inspector on site for each removal. Since many of the tanks were very old, large-capacity concrete tanks, they required careful pumping, power washing and disposal of their concrete casing.



The project called for recycling 200,000 gal. of petroleum-impacted water and 30,000 tons of clean concrete.

“RW Collins utilized vacuum pumper trucks to properly remove, haul and dispose of petroleum impacted water as a non-hazardous waste at a licensed facility,” said Oswald. “Concrete was carefully segregated on site, and much of the clean concrete was used as backfill material.”

Work on the north section required the use of several large excavators, an end-loader and bulldozer. This included two Caterpillar 336 hydraulic excavators, Cat 966 and Cat D-6 dozers, among other smaller pieces of machinery. Similar equipment will be used during the ongoing Lincoln Yards South cleanup. However, one of the larger cleanup actions in the south section will be performed by in-place thermal remediation, a less intrusive process requiring limited heavy equipment.

Oswald said the industrial heritage of Lincoln Yards South included steel making and, most recently, a Chicago Fleet and Facility Management maintenance operation. All identified underground storage tanks were removed in late 2018 and early 2019. The cleanup that remains includes small hotspots of hazardous lead requiring treatment, discrete areas of petroleum and volatile organic compounds impact to be excavated and disposed. An area of solvent contamination will be remediated using in situ thermal treatment to avoid compromising the river wall.

“The design and permitting of the in situ thermal remediation system is ongoing, and should be complete by early 2020. Installation of the treatment system should start winter of 2020, with system operation extending to late summer when in situ remediation should be complete. Smaller contaminated soil treatment, removal and disposal actions should be complete by summer of 2020, in conjunction with the demolition of existing concrete slabs and foundations.”

The in situ thermal remediation of the solvent impacts will be performed using a method referred to as electrical resistance heating (ERH).

“This technology relies on the placement of electrodes in the affected area and creating a flow of alternating current to heat up the soil and groundwater to the boiling point of water, essentially

cooking the volatile contaminants out of the subsurface. As the contaminants are freed from the soil and groundwater, they are captured by a subsurface vapor recovery system in air and vapor. The captured contaminants are sent through a treatment system at the surface.”

The thermal electrodes are spaced and organized in a grid pattern that optimizes the electrical current and heating. The density and pattern of the electrode grids depends site-specific considerations, with the spacing and operating time adjusted to the most efficient configuration to achieve the desired cleanup time and lowest remediation cost.

A fair amount of planning and research was required before work could be carried out on the overall project.

“Many historical documents were obtained and reviewed to better understand the former industrial operations,” said Oswald. “One of the more difficult site features to work around was a 175-ft. plate girder railroad swing bridge constructed in the late 1800s, known as Z-6, which was used to cross the Chicago River. Cleanup plans required work along the foundation of this bridge, but no documents could be located locally. After some notable online research, the swing bridge foundation drawings were found in an engineering journal article from 1899.



“A host of environmental site investigations were performed, including soil and groundwater sampling. Electromagnetic [EM] and ground penetrating radar [GPR] geophysical surveys were performed to map subsurface features and to locate petroleum underground storage tanks for later removal.”

As for dangerous conditions at the job site, Ryan Hartley, V3 remediation manager noted that some chemical hazards are present, but the environmental professionals and remediation workers have the appropriate OSHA safety training and experience to safeguard against exposure risks.

“The potential for exposure to chemical hazards is mitigated with the use of personal protective equipment, and by following the procedures specified in a site-specific health and safety plan established for the cleanup operations.”

Oswald said performing the cleanup of Lincoln Yards is critical in preparing for the eventual construction of the urban redevelopment project.

“Many of the V3 Companies professionals working on this project live within minutes of Lincoln Yards, and have been neighbors during the property’s industrial days. It’s extremely satisfying for all of us to play our part in helping transform it from an underutilized industrial state to a vibrant neighborhood that invites the community to enjoy new public spaces and a long-neglected stretch of the Chicago River.” CEG

## Sterling Bay plans Lincoln Yards life sciences hub

By Danny Ecker



A rendering of a 320,000-square-foot life sciences lab building Sterling Bay aims to build at Lincoln Yards.

Sterling Bay has had so much early success luring biotech companies to its new Lincoln Park lab space that it's planning for the life sciences sector to jumpstart its Lincoln Yards megaproject.

Bolstered by the third lease signed at the facility it is building out at 2430 N. Halsted St., the Chicago developer unveiled plans to build an eight-story, 320,000-square-foot life sciences research center on the southern edge of what it hopes will become a 55-acre mixed-use campus along the North Branch of the Chicago River.

According to a Sterling Bay spokeswoman, the project is slated to break ground early next year at the southeast corner of Dominick Street and Concord Place once those road extensions are built for the southern portion of Lincoln Yards. Financing for the project is still to be determined, according to the spokeswoman. The developer is feeling bullish about the sector after snagging its latest tenant at the former Stanley Manne Children's Research Institute on Halsted, which Sterling Bay is redeveloping into multi-tenant lab space.

Bringing that building to 50 percent leased, molecular engineering technology company Evozyne has inked a deal for 30,000 square feet, the company announced. It joins neurological disorder research firm Vanqua Bio and Northwestern University spinout Exicure as Sterling Bay's first tenants at its first life sciences property, dubbed the Labs.

Those leases and Sterling Bay's plans to seed a medical innovation district at Lincoln Yards signal a solution in the making for Chicago's real estate problem when it comes to

retaining life sciences startups. Though many biotechnology and pharmaceutical breakthroughs take root at Chicago-area universities, the companies that grow out of them have historically moved to more mature life sciences markets like Boston, San Francisco and North Carolina to grow because Chicago lacks a centralized cluster of life sciences lab space that those companies need to scale their businesses.

Even though vacancy at existing Chicago-area lab space is hard to find, real estate investors have been hesitant to build more of it because it is very expensive and hard to repurpose after tenants move out.

But some developers, encouraged by demand for life sciences research amid the COVID-19 crisis, have more recently shown a willingness to roll the dice on such projects in Chicago. In addition to Sterling Bay, which launched its life sciences division last year, Dallas-based Trammell Crow recently broke ground on Fulton Labs, a 400,000-square-foot life sciences research facility in the trendy Fulton Market District.

"Sterling Bay is committed to developing leasable, high-quality lab space so that forward-thinking life science companies like Evozyne have a place to grow and can continue to attract talent to the city of Chicago to make lasting scientific advancements," Sterling Bay CEO Andy Gloor said in a statement.

If Sterling Bay can help cultivate life sciences companies in Lincoln Park and move them to the Lincoln Yards facility as they grow, it could help give the \$6 billion megaproject a shot of momentum. The developer won City Council approval last year for the 14.5 million-square-foot project between Lincoln Park and Bucktown, but needs to sell its vision to companies to anchor a sprawling new riverfront development.

Evozyne, which is slated to move into its space on Halsted in early 2021, foresees long-term ties with the developer. "We have assembled top life science talent from across the country and look forward to expanding our footprint in Chicago—both in Lincoln Park and at Lincoln Yards—in the years to come," Evozyne Chief Business Officer Aris Theologis said in the statement.

Evozyne is the eighth independently run portfolio company to become part of Paragon Biosciences, the Chicago-based biotech incubator led by Jeff Aronin. The company was founded last year and aims to design synthetic proteins that could be used to solve challenges such as reducing a drug's side effects in patients and increasing the nutritional value of food, according to the company's website.



★ CHICAGO

Sep 24, 2019, 1:40pm CDT

## Cleaning up Lincoln Yards and General Iron will transform Chicago's north branch

By Jay Koziarz



Crews perform remediation work at the former Finkl Steel complex along the Chicago River's north branch. Photo by RW Collins, courtesy Sterling Bay

The massive **Lincoln Yards development** might be years or even decades from completion, but the project is already having a positive impact as crews clean up the 55-acre formerly industrial brownfield site.

Developer Sterling Bay is working to reverse the environmental impact of more than a century of use by steel mills, tanneries, recyclers, and other heavy industries that once occupied the riverfront between Lincoln Park and Bucktown. And, with a plan to clean up and eventually close the nearby General Iron scrap yard moving forward, the future of Chicago's north branch corridor looks bright.

### Cleaning up Lincoln Yards is no small task

Everything about Lincoln Yards is big, and that too applies to ongoing efforts to mitigate lingering pollution and other contaminants. So far, Sterling Bay has remediated 25,000 tons of polluted soil and 200,000 gallons of contaminated water, recycled 30,000 tons of concrete, and removed 30 underground storage tanks containing petroleum products.

The effort has been underway since November 2017—more than a year before Sterling Bay won **zoning approval** for its massive 14.5 million-square-foot mixed-use project. The work is mostly complete on the parcel's northern portion and will continue on the site's southern end in the coming months.

According to the developer, the process meets or exceeds the state's environmental requirements and is being completed to "residential standards" to ensure the safety of the surrounding communities and neighbors.

Additionally, existing utility infrastructure will be brought up to modern standards for efficiency. The changes will help Lincoln Yards achieve a targeted LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) certification across the entire project.



A tank containing petroleum products is removed from the site. Photo by V3 Companies, courtesy Sterling Bay

A piece of heavy machinery sitting next to a riverbank lifts an oblong rusty storage tank out of the ground.

### The developer is footing the bill

Although much has been **argued** about Lincoln Yards' controversial deal for **\$1.3 billion tax increment financing (TIF)** struck between Sterling Bay and City Hall in the final days of Mayor Rahm Emanuel's administration, the environmental remediation is not TIF eligible. It will instead come out of the developer's pocket.

"Sterling Bay and its partners have—at their own expense—spent \$6.2 million on remediation efforts to date," a company spokesperson tells Curbed Chicago. "An estimated \$3.2 million will be spent in continued remediation, again at the expense of Sterling Bay and its partners."

The developer will, however, receive reimbursement through the city's TIF program for infrastructure improvements planned for the sprawling north branch property such as new roads, bridges, river walls, and an eastward extension of The 606 trail.



Earlier this summer, Sterling Bay brought **new soccer fields** and an **alphabet-themed series of murals** to the Lincoln Yards site. The first new buildings at Lincoln Yards are planned at the parcel's northern edge, near the C.H. Robinson headquarters.

## General Iron cleans up its act

As remediation continues at Lincoln Yards, neighboring General Iron is being held accountable before it leaves for a new location on Chicago's Southeast side at the end of 2020. For years, the scrap yard and metal recycler drew objections from nearby residents who said the facility was responsible for hazardous pollution including metallic dust, oily films, and acrid smells.

Alderman Brian Hopkins worked with Mayor Lightfoot to negotiate the terms of General Iron's move from 1909 N. Clifton Avenue as well as enact a legally binding agreement requiring the company to comply with federal and state environmental regulations in the meantime.

"[The agreement] means an emission reduction of at least 81% of volatile organic compounds and complete containment of fugitive particulate matter within the site," said the 2nd Ward alderman in a **recent email** to residents. "Ongoing monitoring will be conducted to ensure compliance."

## What's next for General Iron?

It's unclear what comes next for the 21.5-acre General Iron site. While some neighbors and local officials have advocated turning the parcel into a public park dubbed the **North Branch Park Preserve**, developers—and possibly Sterling Bay—are likely to take a hard look at such a large site so close to Lincoln Yards.

The General Iron land could **fetch as much as \$100 million** by some industry estimates. Either way, the site will need significant environmental remediation of its own before it finds a new use.

"Neither Sterling Bay nor its joint venture partners own or control the General Iron property," a company spokesperson tells Curbed. "We're excited to be doing our part to revitalize the property we control along the north branch of the Chicago River into an active, healthy waterfront experience for all Chicagoans to enjoy."

When eventually complete, the Lincoln Yards development will support an estimated 23,000 jobs, 6,000 residential units, and 21 acres of publicly accessible open space.

"We are thrilled to see the land along the north branch cleaned up," said Margaret Frisbie, executive director of nonprofit Friends of the Chicago River, in a statement. "Creating a clean slate is a huge step forward in fulfilling Sterling Bay's commitment to transform the old industrial corridor into nearly a mile of natural riverbanks and open space that will provide places for people to play and wildlife to thrive."



★ CHICAGO

Dec 27, 2019, 1:06pm CST

## City creates community councils to guide development at Lincoln Yards, The 78

By Jay Koziarz



A rendering of The 78, the massive mixed-use megaproject proposed for the south branch of the Chicago River.

The debates over zoning and controversial TIF subsidies for the **Lincoln Yards** and **The 78** megadevelopments are over, but city officials have decided they still want to hear from neighbors when it comes to the decades-long process of building both massive mixed-use projects.

Last week, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot announced the creation of two community advisory councils that will work the developers and local aldermen representing each project. The groups will be made up of neighborhood volunteers, community leaders, design professionals, and subject-matter experts. Suggestions will be made on an “advisory basis” and implemented into the projects “where possible,” according to a statement from Lightfoot’s office.

The 14-member Lincoln Yards Community Advisory Council will provide suggestions to Sterling Bay regarding its \$6 billion, 53-acre development over the next three years. The North Branch megaproject has zoning for 14 million square feet of new commercial and residential development. It includes 21 acres of park space, an extension of the **606 trail**, a restored street grid, and new bridges over the Chicago River. Youth soccer fields opened at Lincoln Yards this summer, and **environmental clean-up efforts** continue.

Meanwhile, The 78 Community Advisory Council will have 17 members and will collaborate with developer Related Midwest on its 62-acre, 13 million-square-foot Near South Side project. The transformative \$7 billion development includes a university-

affiliated innovation center and 12 acres of open space, and the plan is expected to take 20 years to complete. A **Wells-Wentworth** road extension is already under construction at The 78 and the site’s **planned Red Line subway station** recently won the **approval** of the Chicago Plan Commission.

The two CAC groups will convene quarterly, beginning in early 2020. Community volunteers interested in joining the **Lincoln Yards Community Advisory Council** and **The 78 Community Advisory Council** can submit an online application to the city.

In addition to the formation of the two advisory bodies, City Hall planners have also introduced new **Master Planned Development guidelines** that will bring additional layers of community engagement and oversight when it comes to upcoming, yet-to-be-approved megadevelopments.

Under consideration by the Chicago Plan Commission, the revised rules would require at least one city-initiated community meeting before a zoning application is filed, an internal meeting with city planners to review proposed changes pursuant to community input, a community meeting to present those changes, and one or more follow-up community meetings after the zoning application is filed.

If approved, the guidelines would apply to proposed megaprojects including the multiphase redevelopment of the former **Michael Reese Hospital site** in Bronzeville, the massive **One Central** high-rise project proposed just west of Soldier Field, and the long-awaited redevelopment of the vacant **U.S. Steel South Works site** on Chicago’s Far South Side.

## Sterling Bay, Davis Theater and Facets join forces for a pop-up drive-in at Lincoln Yards

By Michael Phillips



Sterling Bay plans to break ground in early 2021 on the \$6 billion Lincoln Yards megadevelopment on Chicago's North Side. The first planned building is this eight-story office and laboratory facility at the south end of the 55-acre site, along the west bank of the Chicago River. (Gensler rendering / HANDOUT)

Sterling Bay plans to break ground on the \$6 billion Lincoln Yards megadevelopment early next year, starting with an eight-story, 320,000-square-foot building along the Chicago River.

The building, which will house offices and lab space, will be at the south end of the sprawling former industrial site, CEO Andy Gloor said. The Gensler-designed building will be just north of a Home Depot store at 1142 W. North Ave., which is not part of the 55-acre Lincoln Yards parcel.

Work on the long-anticipated and controversial project, expected to bring thousands of employees and residents to the property, is nearing despite a pandemic that has all but stopped new real estate projects from getting underway.

No tenants are signed but Gloor said interest from biotech tenants gave Sterling Bay the confidence to begin work on the project.

The Lincoln Yards plans are moving forward after Sterling Bay signed molecular engineering technology firm Evozyne to a 30,000-square-foot lease at a separate life sciences building it owns at 2430 N. Halsted St.

The 120,000-square-foot facility is more than 50% leased and is expected to be full by the end of the year, Gloor said.

The facility is expected to serve as a tenant pipeline for Lincoln Yards, which also expects to sign large, well-established biotech and pharmaceutical companies, Gloor said.

"We think there can be millions of square feet" leased to biotech firms in Lincoln Yards, he said. "The demand is there."

Some tenants in the life sciences building are expected to grow large enough to expand into Lincoln Yards a mile west. That is the expectation of Evozyne, which has fewer than 25 employees but anticipates having more than 100 by year's end, said Jeff Aronin, chairman and CEO of Paragon Biosciences, Evozyne's parent company.

"We expect this company and this office to grow rapidly," Aronin said.

Sterling Bay is one of the few developers to kick off a big project during the coronavirus pandemic, after last month securing construction financing for a 47-story apartment and hotel tower at 300 N. Michigan Ave.

Lincoln Yards has been in the works for years, and Sterling Bay last year won city approval to build as much as 14.5 million square feet of mixed-use buildings on the sprawling riverfront site along the Lincoln Park and Bucktown neighborhoods. The City Council approved up to \$1.3 billion in tax increment financing to help pay for infrastructure such as new roads and bridges on and around the project.

Even before the pandemic, Sterling Bay was among several Chicago developers looking to tap into the costly to build but underserved sector of life sciences lab space.

Sterling Bay bought the five-story Halsted Street building from Lurie Children's Hospital, which has since moved research workers to its Gold Coast campus, for almost \$20.5 million in October 2018.

Other tenants signed in the building are Exicure and Vanqua Bio. CBRE broker David Saad represents Sterling Bay in leasing the building.

Evozyne, founded by Aronin last year, creates biotechnology, agricultural, industrial and sustainable energy products. Innovations include using synthetic enzymes to create a range of products including drugs for rare genetic diseases, new types of batteries, pesticides and seeds.

Aronin declined to disclose revenue figures for Evozyne, but he said it will become profitable next year.

Previous companies Paragon has launched in Chicago have moved to cities including Paris and Philadelphia in order to expand, Aronin said.

"We've had to leave Chicago because Chicago didn't have the facilities we needed," he said. "Now that Sterling Bay and other companies are building them, we think Chicago is an emerging global city for innovation."

## **Sterling Bay, Davis Theater and Facets join forces for a pop-up drive-in at Lincoln Yards**

By Michael Phillips

Chicago's increasingly crowded map of pop-up drive-in theaters just acquired another location in this strange summer of 2020.

The Drive-In at Lincoln Yards opens June 25 with "Ferris Bueller's Day Off." The project is a collaboration of real estate development giant Sterling Bay, the for-profit Lincoln Square landmark Davis Theater, and the nonprofit media organization Facets.

It'll be a boutique-scaled pop-up, designed for 30 to 40 cars per showing, taking up one corner of the vast 55-acre development. "We can really spread the cars out that way," said Sterling Bay communications manager Julie Goudie, "which allows people to get a real tailgate-style experience." (No outside food and beverages, though.)

Programming for the rest of the summer remains in progress, though the second-week offering has been secured with another familiar 1980s Chicago title: "The Blues Brothers," opening July 2. The movies will be shown 8:30 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays, with revenue split between the Davis and Facets and participating food vendors. Food and snack options include hot dogs provided via on-site delivery by DMK Restaurants' Ada Street. Mellos popcorn and peanuts are also on the menu.

The presence of Facets suggests some more adventurous and independent film offerings later in the calendar, Goudie said. Depending on customer demand, the Lincoln Yards drive-in may increase its vehicle capacity later in the summer.

The entrance is 1684 N. Throop St., near the Chicago River North Branch. Tickets are \$35 per car.