



## **UNITED YARDS AND BACK OF THE YARDS WORKS COMMUNITY Q&A**

**December 18, 2022**

### ***How many jobs will be created by this development?***

We expect to have over 300 temporary construction jobs created by this development and at least 60 permanent high quality jobs maintained within the properties once it is in operation.

### ***Are you looking for off market land to build new construction on or properties to rehabilitate?***

We are looking at all available properties immediately surrounding the United Yards site, but our primary focus is on the development of the existing properties in our current plan. Exceptions would be made for properties that are immediately adjacent to our sites or where parking could be made affordably available to our retail tenants/residents.

### ***What is the overall project timeline?***

Our expectations are for construction to begin on the retail space in the Goldblatts building in March 2023, and on the Justine Street site beginning in April 2023. The first retail space would be open in winter 2024 and residential apartment would be first available by the summer of 2024. We expect at all of the components of Phase One would be completed by mid year 2025. These dates are subject to public approvals and closing on financing in the coming months.

### ***How will you assure that apartments are affordable to people already living in Back of the Yards?***

We have committed that 100% of our apartments would be income-restricted meaning kept affordable throughout the 30-year compliance period of this project. Further, we have taken the step of reducing rents to a level that will be affordable to residents of the Back of the Yards community by tracking average rents in the immediate market area (which currently fall below low income rent restrictions for the City as a whole) and further discounting those by 20%. Our presentation materials with the 20<sup>th</sup> Ward provide a rent schedule that reflect rents in real amounts well below standard affordable restricted rents. 12 apartments will offer extremely low rents at 15-30% of the area median income.

### ***Will apartments be prioritized for residents from Back of the Yards?***

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 mandates that we must market these units and make them available to anyone who needs the eligibility requirements, but we will make every effort to market and solicit applications from local residents interested in the new apartments. Our property management firm is very experienced in working within the City of Chicago on such efforts and we have every hope that local residents will be able to access this property when it opens.

### ***Will snow be removed from the properties?***

Our team has budgeted to provide snow removal for the entire property spanning from the new building at Justine Street and West 47th all the way west to the retail building at Marshfield and West 47th. Snow removal and other maintenance/custodial services will be provided on a daily basis as needed.

### ***Will security be provided for the businesses?***

There already is 24-hour staffing at the Goldblatts building in the lobby of the New City Supportive Living development, but we expect to have full-time staff at several locations within this development. Appropriate security services will be provided during business hours, and, if necessary at other times.



***Are the apartments going to be set aside for Section 8 or Chicago Housing Authority residents?***

No, there are no project-based Section 8 or public housing units in this development. Voucher holders will be welcome to apply for units. These apartments will carry income restrictions, but no other limitations, in terms of who they may be rented to.

***Parking is already an issue in the 20<sup>th</sup> Ward and you would be adding 86 units of family housing in addition to many new businesses. How do you plan to handle parking needs from your tenants and businesses? Will you add any new parking?***

This property qualifies under the Chicago Equitable Transit-Oriented Development ordinance so there is no required off-street parking. That said, to accommodate staff and customers as well as tenants to the best of our ability we will try to assemble off-street parking for 60-75 spaces. 19 parking spaces will be built at the Justine Street site and 8 parking spaces are being provided at the Marshfield site. 45° parking will be added along Marshfield Avenue to increase the density of parking options on the street. The team and City are pursuing several other off-site parking options in the immediate surrounding area to meet the needs of commercial tenants.

***A nearby grocery store is closing and there are already limited food options in the 20<sup>th</sup> Ward and nearby. With over 50 new families moving into the property on Justine will you bring additional fresh food options to the community?***

There is an Aldi supermarket immediately across the street from the Justine Street building, but we agree that the Back of the Yards will benefit from additional fresh food resources. We are partnered with Star Farm, a Back of the Yards-based non-profit, focusing on urban farming, landscaping, and access to organic, fresh produce through pop ups and markets. It is our intention to include a storefront marketplace for Star Farm to sell fresh produce as a part of the first phase of United Yards.

***The site proposed for the brewery is one block away from Chavez Elementary School and there is a moratorium on new development of bars and liquor stores close to schools. Are you asking for approval from the 20<sup>th</sup> Ward for this part of the project now?***

The retail building being built at Marshfield and West 47th is proposed to be built out as a brewery and community meeting space. At present that proposal is in conceptual stage and the space being developed could be used as any type of retail. As the plans for this development are further solidified, the team will work with the 20th Ward and the community for input to consider this use. To be clear, we are not asking for approval of a brewery or liquor license at this location at this time.

***Will the brewery serve food?***

Yes. The brewery will have a kitchen, but also feature food from nearby restaurants for delivery.

***Will the health center have mental health services provided for the community?***

Yes, the Federally-Qualified Health Center (FQHC) tenant will provide mental health services as a part of its standard offerings at this location.

***How many apartments are you proposing to build in total?***

We have committed to 86 total units in our application for this development from the City of Chicago and the community. 51 will be included in Phase 1A and at least 35 units will be included in Phase 1C. It is our hope to assemble additional adjacent properties to increase the number of units in total to close to 125 in Phase 1.



***Is the United Yards project coordinating with CDOT regarding improvements to traffic safety at the intersection of 47th and Ashland?***

The team is coordinating with the CDOT and DPD teams to make sure that we are working in coordination with the Ashland/47<sup>th</sup> Viaduct working group to make sure the infrastructure is only renovated once and that traffic, parking, and pedestrian safety is emphasized.

***You say you will commit to keeping the rents affordable for at least 30 years, but how do you propose to keep them in good condition and well managed throughout this period?***

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, which will be accessed to fund a portion of this development with private equity, requires a minimum of 15 years of low-income restrictions, and the City Of Chicago will require that we commit to maintaining that same level of affordability through 30 years. Our development team is comprised of affordable housing practitioners and it is our intention to meet these requirements and exceed them.

***Will there be any further public information sessions?***

We expect to have several meetings and information forums in 2023 to further inform and take input from the community. These meetings will be hosted by the development team and, hopefully, with the participation of the City of Chicago, the 20th Ward, and our community partners.

***Who do we contact to buy the empty lot?***

There are no empty lots within this development, but please go to [www.unitedyards.com](http://www.unitedyards.com) for any specific questions. You can also go to the City of Chicago website for information on the Block Builders Initiative at [www.Chicago.gov/BlockBuilder](http://www.Chicago.gov/BlockBuilder).

***Will there be regular community meetings given how complex this project is?***

It is our plan to have several community meetings in 2023 to update the Back of the Yards community on the status of the development and to continue to solicit feedback or additional questions. Please continue to visit [www.unitedyards.com](http://www.unitedyards.com) for more information.

***Will this project impact local property taxes?***

No. This project is funded entirely by privately raised financing and previously committed support from the City of Chicago.

***How will tenant selection be handled and include diversity and inclusion initiatives?***

Tenant selection will be handled in adherence to Federal Fair Housing Act as well as requirements from the City of Chicago Department of Housing. This development team is significantly experienced in tenant selection in Chicago and will ensure the marketing and leasing approach that is available to all eligible residents and screens for criminal background and credit concerns.

***How will this project be like projects in nearby neighborhoods that bring above average wages and improved conditions?***

United Yards is intended to be developed as a high-quality development with affordable rents at several tiers and at a very high quality. Temporary and permanent employment opportunities will be high-quality and at the Chicago living wage level.