

MONEY

Redevelopment of Rogers Park's Werner Brothers building set to start next year

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An affordable housing project in Rogers Park that's been years in the making is moving forward after securing essential state tax credits.

The development team behind The Werner at Howard & Paulina was awarded more than \$1.6 million in low-income housing tax credits in June, a key piece of financing for the \$56 million project.

The project will redevelop the Werner Brothers Storage Building at 7613 N. Paulina St. The 1920s building, designed by George S. Kingsley, has an intricate terra cotta design and was on Preservation Chicago's list of the city's most endangered buildings in 2023.

Housing For All and Visionary Ventures NFP are leading the project alongside JTE Real Estate. This was the development team's second time applying for the funds, according to Crystal Rollins, director of business development and marketing strategy at JTE Real Estate. The award was essential for moving the project forward.

"We've been working on this project for several years," Rollins said. "That really did hinge on receiving the tax credit awards."

Their plans for the Werner include demolishing the one-story building next to the Werner Brothers structure to make way for an eight-story residential building. Rollins said the one-story property has largely been vacant.

Between the new eight-story property and Werner Brothers building, the project will create 80 affordable housing units for households earning between 30% and 80% of the area median income.

"There is a definite need for affordable housing in the ward," Rollins said. "A lot of the housing that exists there today is naturally occurring affordable housing, which means that it's at risk of potentially going away ... we're really looking to lock something in that will be affordable for years to come for the community."

The Werner will include studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units. Amenities will include a common room, fit-



ABOVE: The Werner Brothers Storage Building at 7613 N. Paulina St. in Rogers Park. LEFT: Rendering of the Rogers Park affordable housing project called The Werner at Howard & Paulina.

ANTHONY VAZQUEZ/SUN-TIMES (ABOVE); COURTESY OF CORDOGAN CLARK & ASSOCIATES (LEFT)

The Werner will encompass the addresses 7603-7619 N. Paulina St. and 1646-1660 W. Howard St. The developers hope to start construction in summer 2026 and have its first move-ins in the second half of 2027.

The Werner was one of 16 projects that received the tax credit and one of two projects from Chicago, according to a list of awardees from the Illinois Housing Development Authority. The second Chicago project was the Leland Apartments II by Mercy Housing, while a renovation project in Evanston also received tax credits.

'Fantastic Four: First Steps' scores Marvel's first \$100M opening of 2025

BY LINDSEY BAHR AND ITZEL LUNA
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Marvel's first family has finally found box office gold. "The Fantastic Four: First Steps," the first film about the superheroes made under the guidance of Kevin Feige and the Walt

Disney Co., earned \$118 million in its first weekend in 4,125 North American theaters, according to studio estimates Sunday.

That makes it the fourth biggest opening of the year, behind "A Minecraft Movie," "Lilo & Stitch" and "Superman," and the biggest

Marvel opening since "Deadpool & Wolverine" grossed \$211 million out of the gate last summer. Internationally, "Fantastic Four" made \$100 million, adding up to a \$218 million worldwide debut. The numbers were within the range the studio was expecting.

Red Line's Howard station.

"It is utilizing an area of the city that has been underutilized for several years," she said. "I think it's really going to change the feel of the corridor. It's within a block of one of the busiest L stations in the city."

The film arrived in the wake of another superhero reboot, James Gunn's "Superman," which opened three weekends ago and has crossed \$500 million globally. That film, from DC Studios, took second place with \$24.9 million domestically.

The box office success of "First

Steps" and "Superman" means "the whole notion of superhero fatigue, which has been talked about a lot, can I think be put to rest. I always say it's bad movie fatigue, not superhero fatigue," said Paul Der-garabedian, senior media analyst for data firm Comscore.