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PRESS RELEASE:

July 6, 2016

CITY OF GARY HOSTS THE COUNSEL GENERAL OF JAPAN

Gary, Indiana-Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson and members of her staff recently welcomed the Counsel General of Japan to Gary. Consul General Toshiyuki Iwado spent a day in Gary, meeting with the Mayor and other city officials.

The day began with an official welcome at City Hall followed by a bus tour. The Counsel General was particularly interested in having dialogue with the Mayor and looking at possible industrial and airport opportunities to partner with the city and the Gary/Chicago International Airport. The Counsel General visited the airport, the Jet Center and the B. Coleman Hangar. The airport tour was followed by a driving tour of the steel mills and the city's lake shore and other possible development sites.

During a luncheon, Mayor Freeman-Wilson presented Counsel General Toshiyuki Iwado the Key to the City.

Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson said, "The time spent with Counsel General Toshiyuki gave us an opportunity to share a great deal of information relative to Gary's history, current initiatives and strategies to revitalize our community. We also talked about successes and challenges we are faced with in American urban communities."

Japan's Counsel General Toshiyuki Iwado said, "I want to thank Mayor Freeman-Wilson and her staff for their hospitality during my recent visit. I was very impressed with the developments in the infrastructure and security of the city, as well as the beautiful view of Chicago from the Gary lakefront. I also was surprised and pleased to learn of Gary's Japanese bridge that represents the friendship between Japan and Gary. Like that bridge, I look forward to building a stronger relationship between the City of Gary and Japan in the years to come."

Garry Petersen, Senior Economist of William-Lynn-James, Inc. who helped to coordinate the visit said, "It was a big week for Gary, Indiana with the Mayor returning from China and the visit

by Japanese Consul General Toshiyuki Iwado. It shows that under the Mayor's leadership, the City is stepping back onto the global stage."

SEH of Indiana, LLC also joined the Mayor and team during the visit. Dan Botich, Senior Economic Development Professional said, "Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson and Airport Executive Director Dan Vicari have positioned the airport as a catalyst for various development platforms including facilities usage, growth and land development related to businesses that require or prefer aviation proximity. The site visit was an awakening as to the quality of facilities and services currently available to the aviation industry, but also to the potential of the Gary/Chicago International Airport as a whole to our regional economy."

Freeman-Wilson concluded, "Many U.S. cities have successful economic partnerships outside of our country's borders. I presented the Counsel General with the key to the city. The door is open."

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