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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 11, 2013

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**MAYOR EMANUEL, PARK SUPERINTENDENT BREAK GROUND AT HARDING PLAYGROUND,
ANNOUNCE THE FIRST 50 CHICAGO PLAYS PLAYGROUND REHAB SITES**

*Playgrounds are First of 300 Aging Playgrounds to be Rebuilt as Part of New Investments in Parks,
Playgrounds and Recreational Areas Throughout the City*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Superintendent Michael P. Kelly today broke ground on a new playground at Harding Playground, located at 3921 W. Division Street. Harding Playground was chosen as one of the first 50 of 300 aging playgrounds that will be completely rehabilitated as part of the *Chicago Plays* playground renovation program. Last March, the Mayor announced that over the next five years, the Chicago Park District will rebuild, repair and/or refurbish 300 playgrounds in communities across Chicago.

“Throughout Chicago’s neighborhoods, we continue to invest in better public spaces and build stronger communities,” said Mayor Emanuel. “The *Chicago Plays* playgrounds rebuilding program is just one example of efforts to build a new Chicago, and create a better quality of life and urban experience for every Chicagoan.”

In order to prioritize equipment replacement, the Chicago Park District worked with the Friends of the Park organization to seek community input and determine those parks and neighborhoods in greatest need.

“Community members are an important part of understanding the neighborhood assets, how the space functions, and critical issues,” said Superintendent Kelly. “The input from residents is a giant step toward building community involvement with their local park.”

The program targets the replacement of equipment at over 300 aging playgrounds throughout the city. Immediate work plans currently scheduled include the completion of 50 playground upgrades by fall, 2013.

The ground breaking of *the Chicago Plays* program underscores the major announcements the Mayor has previously made regarding parks, including that every child in Chicago will live within a ten-minute walk from a neighborhood park.

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