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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND ILLINOIS HOUSE SPEAKER MADIGAN CELEBRATE THE OPENING OF A
NEW PLAYGROUND AND SPRAY FEATURE AT LAWLER PARK**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, Chicago Park District Superintendent Michael Kelly, Alderman Marty Quinn and community members of the Clearing community today gathered to celebrate the opening of the new playground and two spray features at Lawler Park, 5210 W. 64th Street.

The new playground is part of Building a New Chicago program, a comprehensive \$7.3 billion infrastructure renewal program put forward by Mayor Emanuel. Last year, the Mayor announced a comprehensive plan to build and improve parks throughout the city, so that every Chicagoan is within a ten minute walk of a park.

"Parks and green spaces play a key role in improving the quality of life for Chicagoans and serve as anchors of strong communities," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "I am excited to celebrate the opening of the new Lawler Park playground and I look forward to the seeing the positive affects it has for the children and families of Chicago."

"Lawler Park has been an important asset for many decades, said Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan. "These improvements will add to the vitality of our neighborhood."

"The Emanuel Administration continues to give community improvements a top priority," said Alderman Marty Quinn. "The Lawler Park project continues that commitment."

Approximately \$550,000 has been invested in Lawler Park to include a new playground, spray features, pathway improvements, lighting and landscaping. The new, state-of-the-art playground meets or exceeds ADA accessibility guidelines, including ramps where possible. The walking paths surrounding the playground have also been repaved with new concrete.

“The Chicago Park District takes great pride in creating new play areas to meet the needs of the communities that they serve,” said Michael Kelly, Chicago Park District General Superintendent and CEO. “Our goal is to provide safe places for children to play and enjoy the outdoors,”

Lawler Park is part of Chicago Park District’s current five-year capital improvement plan identifies more than 800 projects located in all of the city’s wards. Program highlights include the construction of 20 new playgrounds that will impact 100,000 children between the ages of 2-14 years.

More information on the Chicago Park District is available at www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or at 312-742-PLAY.

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Photo Caption 1-2: Mayor Emanuel joins Speaker Madigan and community members to celebrate the opening of a newly restored playground at Lawler Park.

Photo Credit: City of Chicago // Brooke Collins