



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 17, 2014

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR EMANUEL, CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT BREAK GROUND ON THREE ROGERS PARK
PLAYGROUNDS AS PART OF CHICAGO PLAYS! INITIATIVE**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Chicago Park District General Superintendent Michael Kelly and the Rogers Park community broke ground on three new playgrounds in Lazarus Park, Matanky Playlot Park and Paschen Park. These three playgrounds are part of the 103 neighborhood playgrounds that will be refurbished or built across the City in 2014.

“Over the past three years, we’ve worked to dramatically expand our park system, which includes building and rehabbing playgrounds for children in neighborhoods all over the City,” said Mayor Emanuel. “Park District playgrounds are often community hubs, and by rehabbing and building new playgrounds, even more children and families will have access to safe places to have fun and stay active.”

The *Chicago Plays!* playground renovation program was launched last Spring by Mayor Emanuel, who announced that over the next five years, the Park District will rebuild, repair and/or refurbish 325 playgrounds in communities across Chicago. Last year, 50 playgrounds were rehabilitated through the program. Additionally, 11 soft surface playgrounds were rehabbed by the Park District. In order to prioritize equipment replacement, the Park District worked with Friends of the Park to seek community input to determine which playgrounds were in greatest need of repair.

“Mayor Emanuel’s *Chicago Plays!* initiative was developed in effort to ensure that families across the city can access colorful and inviting playgrounds,” said Chicago Park District General Superintendent Michael Kelly. “We are thrilled to be able to renovate more playgrounds and impact more communities than expected this year.”

The program invests approximately \$125,000 in new playground equipment at each park location for a total program cost of \$37,500,000, providing a broad investment in capital projects throughout the City.

Mayor Emanuel’s *Chicago Plays!* program underscores the major announcements the Mayor has previously made regarding parks, including a comprehensive plan to build and improve parks throughout the city, so that every Chicagoan is within a ten minute walk of a park.

###

For more information about the Chicago Park District's more than 8,100 acres of parkland, more than 580 parks, 26 miles of lakefront, nine museums, two world-class conservatories, 16 historic lagoons, nearly 50 nature areas, thousands of special events, sports and entertaining programs, please visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or contact the Chicago Park District at 312/742.PLAY or 312/747.2001 (TTY). Want to share your talent? Volunteer in the parks by calling, 312/742.PLAY.