



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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MAYOR EMANUEL, CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT CELEBRATE NEW PLAYGROUNDS IN AVALON AS PART OF CHICAGO PLAYS! PLAYGROUND RENOVATION PROGRAM

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Chicago Park District Superintendent and CEO Michael P. Kelly and Alderman Michelle Harris joined community members today to celebrate the completion of two refurbished playgrounds at DeBow Park and Lorraine Dixon Park in the Avalon neighborhood as part of Mayor Emanuel's Chicago Plays! program.

"Regardless of their neighborhood, every child deserves a safe place to play and stay active, which is why I've committed to building and refurbishing hundreds of playgrounds throughout Chicago," said Mayor Emanuel. "The investments we're making in parks and playgrounds today will strengthen our communities and enrich the quality of life for all Chicagoans."

The Lorraine Dixon Park playground features a playground with slides, swings and climbing equipment. The DeBow Park playground features a playground with slides, swings, spinners and climbing equipment.

The Chicago Plays! playground renovation program was launched in the spring of 2013 by Mayor Emanuel, who announced that over the next five years, the Chicago Park District will rebuild, repair and/or refurbish 300 playgrounds in communities across Chicago. This year, the Mayor announced that 77 playgrounds will be completed as part of the program. More than half of these 77 have already been completed; to date this year, 45 playgrounds have been completed and opened. In 2014, 103 playgrounds were refurbished, and in 2013, 61 playgrounds were rehabilitated through the program.

"Neighborhood playgrounds are valuable resources," said Superintendent Kelly. "Through Mayor Emanuel's Chicago Plays! program, we are not only investing in these resources but also the children, families and communities of Chicago."

Mayor Emanuel's Chicago Plays! program invests over \$125,000 in new playgrounds equipment at each park location for an estimate program cost of \$37,500,000, allowing to provide a broader investment in capital projects throughout the city.

"Having clean, vibrant, and functional parks in our communities are an invaluable resource afforded



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to our children," said Alderman Harris. "Because of Mayor Emanuel's Chicago Plays! program, our kids will have beautiful, safe parks where they can engage in constructive, healthy activity within walking distance of their home."

Today's celebration underscores 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.

On Thursday, the Mayor announced a new pilot program in Little Villages' La Villita Park to increase positive community engagement and prevent violence. The pilot program brings together the Mayor's Office, the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Police Department and community leaders in Little Village to offer an unprecedented level of partnership and programming, developed based on feedback from residents, to boost usage of safe spaces for families to gather and play.

For more information, visit www.chicagoparkdistrict.com or call 312.742.PLAY, 312.747.2001 (TTY).

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The Chicago Park District is the 2014 Gold Medal Award winner, recognized for excellence in park and recreation management across the nation. For more information about the Chicago Park District's more than 8,300 acres of parkland, 585 parks, 26 miles of lakefront, 12 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.