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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 6, 2012

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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES \$6.5 MILLION IN NEIGHBORHOOD PARK INVESTMENTS WITH NATO LEGACY AND PARK DISTRICT CAPITAL FUNDS

Six Parks, Four Boathouses and the Bloomingdale Trail will Become NATO Legacy Projects

Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today that \$6.5 million in NATO legacy and Chicago Park District capital funds will be invested in neighborhood and transformative park projects across the city.

"Parks are a central part of Chicago's communities and neighborhoods, and feed directly into the lifeblood of the city," said Mayor Emanuel. "These investments will help a generation of Chicagoans enjoy their city for years to come, and are a fitting and lasting tribute to the way Chicago came together in support of the NATO summit."

From the outset, Mayor Emanuel committed that Chicago taxpayers would not be responsible for any of the costs associated with hosting the NATO Summit. Federal funds and private funds raised by the NATO host committee were used to pay for the costs associated with hosting the summit, and those costs came in under budget. The remaining private funds are being used where they are needed most – directly in Chicago's communities, to the direct benefit of Chicago's residents. \$5.5 million in NATO legacy funds will be leveraged with \$1 million in Chicago Park District capital funds to enhance park investments. The \$5.5 million investment is approximately 60% of the remaining surplus of privately-raised funds for NATO.

Five parks will be substantially rehabilitated – some with signature playground installations – with \$2.5 million, including Riis Park, Jackie Robinson Park, Cornell Square, Pleasant Point Park, and Bronzeville-Buckthorn Park. The investments will also include \$2 million for the Park Districts four new neighborhood boathouses and \$2 million toward the new Bloomingdale Trail that will connect several Chicago neighborhoods.

"These investments will have a direct impact on families throughout Chicago, allowing our children a safe place to play in our neighborhoods and giving our families more ways to

enjoy our city together," said Ald. Carrie Austin. "A spirit of community allowed Chicago to put on a great summit for the world, and these legacy projects will carry this spirit well into the future."

Earlier this 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 from their house.

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