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Park and School Garden Projects Planned for West and North Sides

A variety of park, garden, and green space improvement projects will move forward across the Near West, West, and North sides through financial measures approved today by City Council.

"Parks and gardens, no matter how big or small, can make a world of difference to the livability of local neighborhoods," Mayor Emanuel said. "Each of these projects will reinforce what it means to be a Chicagoan and the many ways that people experience the city outside their homes, schools, and work places."

Westhaven Park

A new park will be developed on 1.75 acres of land at 1900 W. Washington St. through \$3.1 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance. Owned by the Chicago Housing Authority, the vacant, Near West Side site will be transferred to the Chicago Park District, which will use the funds to add a playground, landscaping, walkways, benches and lighting. The park will serve as an open space amenity for the CHA's Westhaven residential complex, a mix-income development that is replacing the former Henry Horner Homes public housing project.

Penn and LaSalle II Magnet Elementary School Gardens

Vegetable and flower gardens will be developed on the grounds of North Lawndale's Penn School and West Town's LaSalle II School through \$307,000 in Open Space Impact Fees (OSIF).

Approximately \$187,000 of the fees will be allocated to transform a .09 acre asphalt lot into a growing area at Penn, 1616 S. Avers Ave. The remaining \$120,000 will be used to create a garden on a .25-acre site at LaSalle II, 1148 N. Honore St. Both gardens will be constructed by Openlands conservation agency and maintained by students, teachers, parents, and community residents. The OSIF program collects fees associated with the construction of new residential projects to apply to the open space needs of surrounding neighborhoods.

Jacob Playlot Park

Lincoln Square's Jacob Playlot will be expanded onto .26 acres of adjacent land at 4658 N. Virginia Ave. through \$206,000 in Open Space Impact Fees. The funds will pay for site preparation, new fencing and landscaping costs. Last year, the Park District purchased the vacant parcel, located next to the Brown Line commuter rail tracks, from the Chicago Transit Authority.

Skinner Park

An additional \$195,000 in Open Space Impact Fees will support the conversion of a vacant lot at 1358 W. Monroe St. on the Near West Side into a .40-acre dog-friendly extension of Skinner Park, located across the street. Last year, the City Council approved \$525,000 in TIF assistance and \$250,000 in OSIF to pay for soil improvements, fencing, and other features. The additional funding will support site improvement costs.

Ellen Gates Starr Park

An outdated playground at Starr Park, 2306 W. Maypole Ave., will be replaced with ADA-compliant equipment and surfaces. The project will be entirely financed with \$730,000 in TIF assistance.

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Woodlawn Affordable Housing Project to Enter Third Phase

The third redevelopment phase of Woodlawn's Grove Parc apartment complex will move forward under a plan approved today by City Council.

Planned by Preservation of Affordable Housing Inc. (POAH) at 6116-44 S. Cottage Grove Ave., the \$24.3 million project will create 64 apartments for seniors. City financial assistance will include a \$2.8 million loan and \$1.4 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits that will generate \$14.4 million in equity for the project.

"This is another great residential facility for the seniors of Woodlawn and another step forward for the entire community," Mayor Rahm Emanuel said.

Additional financing includes a \$5.1 million Choice grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and \$500,000 in energy grants from the State of Illinois, among other sources.

The five-story "Woodlawn Park Senior Apartments" building will include one- and two-bedroom units, an onsite management office, community resource center, and laundry facility on each floor. All of the apartments will involve project-based Section 8 vouchers and be made available to seniors earning 60 percent or less of the area median income.

Grove Parc was a 504-unit, HUD-assisted housing development built in the 1960s on the 6100 to 6300 blocks of South Cottage Grove. It is being demolished in phases and rebuilt as a mixed-income

development known as Woodlawn Park. Sixty seven units were completed in 2011 as part of the Woodlawn Center South Apartments and 33 units recently opened at The Grant at Woodlawn Park.

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Tax Incentive to Enable Rehab of Boul Mich Landmark

A historic Michigan Avenue skyscraper will undergo a \$47 million rehabilitation project through a property tax incentive approved today by City Council.

333 Building Corp. will use the Class L incentive to help offset the costs of rehabbing the 35-story, Art Deco-style building at 333 N. Michigan Ave. Designed by Holabird & Roche, the property was completed in 1928. It was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1997.

Intended to improve the 363,000-square-foot building's commercial viability, the planned exterior work will include cleaning and masonry repair, a reconfigured entrance on Michigan, roof repairs and the installation of accent lighting. The interior work will include lobby and elevator improvements, building system upgrades, and the installation of new sprinklers.

Exclusively available for landmarks designated by City Council, the Class L incentive will reduce property taxes on the property by \$ 5.5 million over the next 12 years.

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TIF Approved for New Hyde Park Mixed-Use Project

A new retail and apartment complex in Hyde Park will move forward through \$11.3 million Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance approved today by City Council.

Planned for a 2.08 acre site on the southwest corner of Hyde Park Boulevard and Lake Park Avenue, the \$115 million City Hyde Park development will include 120,000 square feet of retail space, 180 apartments and underground parking for 350 cars. Thirty six of the apartments will be made available at affordable rates. The retail portion will be anchored by a 30,000-square-foot Whole Foods Market.

The TIF assistance will be provided to the developer, 1525 HP LLC, in annual installments following project completion and the fulfillment of all TIF requirements, including ongoing employment and occupancy requirements.

The complex will create approximately 200 permanent retail jobs and more than 200 temporary construction jobs. Construction will begin in 2014.

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