

---

Common Council President



10<sup>th</sup> District Alderman

---

**Michael J. Murphy**  
*City of Milwaukee Common Council*

---

September 25, 2015

**Council President Murphy**  
(414) 286-3272

## **Greater Milwaukee Foundation supports MKE Plays with special centennial gift**

*Three city playgrounds to be rebuilt through \$200,000 investment; kickoff event set for Tuesday*

As a permanent gift to the Milwaukee community, the **Greater Milwaukee Foundation** is partnering with the City of Milwaukee to replace three neighborhood playgrounds identified through the **MKE Plays** initiative.

In celebration of its 100<sup>th</sup> year of service, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation is providing regional gifts to help create lasting public spaces in each of the four counties it serves. The Foundation's centennial gift of \$200,000 will support reconstruction of parks at North 67<sup>th</sup> Street and West Spokane Street, at North Long Island Drive and West Custer Avenue, and Foundation Park near North 37<sup>th</sup> Street and West McKinley Avenue. The first two parks are located in neighborhoods participating in the Foundation's Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative (Foundation Park was left severely deteriorated following a fire that occurred several years ago).

**A special groundbreaking ceremony will take place at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, September 29** at the playground at N. Long Island Dr. and W. Custer Ave. **Common Council President Michael J. Murphy** will be joined at the ceremony by **Mayor Tom Barrett** and officials from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation.

-More-

## Foundation gift/ADD ONE

“Reconstructing these playgrounds will leave a lasting legacy in Milwaukee neighborhoods while providing families with quality destinations for recreation in areas where play options are limited,” said **Ellen M. Gilligan**, president and CEO of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. “MKE Plays engages residents in designing the play areas so they reflect community wishes while leveraging strong public, private and nonprofit partners to make it happen.”

With funding for recreational facilities declining steadily during the last 15 years, Common Council President Murphy conceived MKE Plays as a public-private collaborative solution to the deterioration of city parks.

“Play is an important part of the healthy physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of young people, and city parks are meant to provide youth with a safe play environment,” President Murphy said. “Yet, the poor condition of too many of these parks limits their potential to inspire.”

By engaging local residents in the design, reconstruction, and maintenance of city play spaces, MKE Plays aims to increase youth access to quality play experiences while strengthening community activism and self-perception.

With the help of the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and other local partners such as the Zilber Family Foundation, Bader Philanthropies, Northwestern Mutual, and the Fund for Lake Michigan, MKE Plays has raised nearly \$800,000 of private contribution.

**Alderman Ashanti Hamilton**, whose 1<sup>st</sup> Aldermanic District includes the Long Island Dr./W. Custer playground, said the generous gift from the Foundation will “spark hope, engagement and healthy fun” among city children and families.

“This is a wonderful investment in neighborhoods that will have a positive effect for years to come,” Alderman Hamilton said. “I look forward to seeing the creative ideas that come out of this process and want to thank all involved for recognizing the impact city parks can have on local communities.”

The community engagement process for each of the three parks funded by GMF will begin this fall, with construction targeted for summer 2016.

-More-

## **Foundation gift/ADD TWO**

### **About the Greater Milwaukee Foundation**

For a century, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation has helped individuals, families and organizations realize their philanthropic goals and make a difference in the community, during their lifetimes and for future generations. The Foundation consists of more than 1,200 individual charitable funds, each created by donors to serve the charitable causes of their choice. The Foundation also deploys both human and financial resources to address the most critical needs of the community and ensure the vitality of the region. Established in 1915, the Foundation was one of the first community foundations in the world. Ending 2014 with more than \$841 million in assets, it is also among the largest.

**-30-**

