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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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FOR INFORMATION CALL

October 21, 2016

Alderman Michael J. Murphy  
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## **Nature-themed Enderis Playground makeover is a shining success**

*Ceremony set for this Sunday (2:30 p.m.) to open new and improved Enderis  
Playground*

Alderman Michael J. Murphy has worked to improve deteriorated and underutilized public and park spaces. The most recent iteration of this work is the MKE Plays initiative, which seeks to reconstruct those city parks most in need of improvement.

One of these projects, **Enderis Playground**, has special significance because of a unique partnership between MKE Plays, the City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works, MPS Milwaukee Recreation, the Enderis Park Neighborhood Association, and the Woman's Club of Wisconsin. All of these entities came together in collaboration to create **a new nature-themed playground** that reflects the needs and interests of local residents engaged at community meetings and events. EPNA facilitated this engagement, MKE Plays and the City of Milwaukee managed the project with oversight and financial assistance from Milwaukee Recreation, and The Woman's Club of Wisconsin Foundation provided \$100,000 for playground equipment and surfacing improvements.

**A special ceremony and celebration for the reopening of the Enderis Playground will take place at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, October 23 at the park -- 2938 N. 72nd St.** Alderman Murphy will be joined by representatives from The Woman's Club of Wisconsin, EPNA, DPW, and Milwaukee Recreation at the ceremony.

**More-**

## **Enderis Playground reopens/ADD ONE**

Since 1876, the Woman's Club of Wisconsin has been a gathering place for thoughtful and socially conscious women in the greater Milwaukee area. The Club's founding members were leaders with foresight who recognized the need for a place to gather for social and intellectual exchange. Their gift celebrates the 140th Anniversary of the club while honoring Dorothy Enderis, who turned Milwaukee Public Schools Recreation Division into an internationally recognized model for municipal recreation and adult education.

At a time when shrinking budgets necessitate tough conversations about the allocation of public funding, this gift, and this project reveal that Milwaukeeans still value recreation in the same way Ms. Enderis did.

"I grew up on Milwaukee's playgrounds – they provided refuges of fun when I was a kid," Alderman Murphy said. "My family couldn't afford vacations or summer camps, so for my siblings and me, playgrounds became our places of play and refuge. I owe a great deal of my success today to the lessons I learned at those wonderful play spaces -- conflict resolution, communication, strategy, the list goes on and on."

Alderman Murphy said all kids growing up in Milwaukee should have the same play options. "It shouldn't matter where you live in the city, ALL of our youth deserve a high-quality playground that supports their positive physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development," he said. "MKE Plays is an opportunity to reinvest in youth, and promote the value of play."

Understanding that funding for city-owned play areas has diminished steadily in recent years, and that community engagement is necessary for the sustainable use and maintenance of these spaces, Murphy's MKE Plays initiative seeks private financial support and resident participation in the park reconstruction process. While the initial goal for MKE Plays was to reconstruct 12 parks over three years (2015-17) and raise \$1 million for these projects, in just 18 months the program has leveraged more than \$1.4 million to be used at 14 locations across the city.

Such funding has come from local donors -- the Zilber Family Foundation, Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Burke Foundation, Bader Philanthropies, Woman's Club of Wisconsin, Potawatomi Hotel & Casino's Heart of Canal Street, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, Fund for Lake Michigan, Northwestern Mutual Foundation, Milwaukee Bucks Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, and individual donors.

**-More-**

## **Enderis Playground reopens/ADD TWO**

**Betsy Prinz**, president of The Woman’s Club of Wisconsin, said the Woman’s Club has a long history of commitment to the community, often in ways that benefit children. “In 1899 we participated in the Vacation School Movement, which eventually became part of the MPS Recreation Department, so ably administered by Dorothy Enderis. In 1908, Club members realized the urgent need of playground equipment at the Sixth District School and donated \$500 to purchase that equipment. So in celebration of the Woman’s Club’s 140th anniversary, contributing to the transformation of Enderis Park playground is a donation that honors our past, celebrates our present, and speaks to our continued support of the Milwaukee community,” Ms. Prinz said.

**Scott McGroarty**, president of the EPNA, said EPNA board members and neighbors put in significant hours of “labor filled with love” – including seeking consultant advice – to help move the playground rehabilitation project forward. He said Alderman Murphy and Lynn Greb of MPS Milwaukee Recreation helped reduce what would have been years of work to mere months.

“Now, the playground I played on when I was a tot as my Dad played baseball in the City League is a place for our future generations to bring their kids and grandkids to make lasting memories,” Mr. McGroarty said. “We, Enderis Park, are very thankful and appreciative of the support and partnerships we have within this great City of Milwaukee! Together we made this happen. What a wonderful success for all!”

(Please go to [Milwaukee.gov/mkeplays](http://Milwaukee.gov/mkeplays) to learn more about the MKE Plays initiative).