



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 4, 2003**

**Contact: Eve Earles, WCDC
(773) 753-2470 x271**

**Derek Hill, CHA
(312) 907-2414**

**Janina Castillo, DOH
(312) 745-2148**

**WOODLAWN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORP., CITY'S DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & CHA
ANNOUNCE GROUNDBREAKING FOR SOUTH PARK PLAZA
Affordable housing development with some units reserved for former CHA residents**

The Woodlawn Community Development Corporation (WCDC), the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and the Chicago Department of Housing broke ground earlier today for South Park Plaza, a new affordable housing community located on the near South Side. The event was held on Calumet, just south of 26th Street.

The new South Park Plaza development will be constructed in two phases. Phase 1 will consist of 134 units located in two four-story buildings and four townhouse clusters.

"This is a first for our organization. The transformation of former public housing sites into affordable housing for our city is what progressive community planning is all about," said Dr. Leon D. Finney, Jr., chairman of WCDC.

When completed, South Park Plaza will consist of 238 units. All the units will be reserved for affordable and low-income families making 50-60 percent of area median income. The project was made possible through a partnership between local community organizations and government agencies, including the Chicago Department of Housing, which played a key role in financing the affordable housing development by providing \$8.8 million in bond funding and \$9.7 million in secondary loan funds and other funds.

This project is part of the city's overall effort to create more affordable housing, an issue that is extremely important to 4th Ward Alderman Toni Preckwinkle.

"I am a strong advocate for affordable housing and appreciate the Woodlawn Community Development Corporation's good work in this arena," said Alderman Preckwinkle.

"South Park Plaza will establish itself as the vibrant community long envisioned by residents," said Housing Commissioner John Markowski. "This development will pave the way on the Southside for the transformation of other public housing into communities that meet the diverse housing needs of its residents."

The Prairie Courts development, a CHA city-state property managed by WCDC, once stood on the site. Twenty-five percent, or 34 units, will be reserved for former public housing residents.

(MORE)

“This groundbreaking is another crucial step towards providing low-income families with affordable housing,” said Terry Peterson, CHA CEO. “It also offers some CHA residents a chance to return to an area that, for so long, they called home.”

South Park Plaza is located at the corner of 26th Street and Martin Luther King Drive, extending west to Prairie Ave. and south to 29th St. With its prime location near the lakefront, green space, shopping and public transportation, South Park Plaza residents will have access to the amenities other Chicago residents enjoy.

About WCDC

Formed in 1972 as the redevelopment arm of The Woodlawn Organization, Woodlawn Community Development Corporation has rehabilitated or constructed more than 1,700 apartment units and homes for low and moderate income families, individuals, seniors and physically and mentally challenged residents.

The Woodlawn Community Development Corporation has been dedicated to the transformation of the area now known as South Park Plaza, working closely with 4th ward residents, Alderman Toni Preckwinkle and community groups like the Local Area Advisory Council (LAC) to gain community input and support.

###