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All Saints Neighborhood Park on the Way for Southwest Community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Short Form:

A Detroit neighborhood will celebrate a new community park on June 18, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. The Wayne County Board of Commissioners approved a contract on July 1, 2004 to construct the All Saints Neighborhood Park at Longworth and Mullane in the Springwells Village neighborhood of southwest Detroit.

Neighborhood Centers Incorporated (NCI) will own and operate the park as a companion facility to its All Saints Neighborhood Center across the street. The 28,800 square foot park will be a first in terms of County creation of a Detroit neighborhood park. (The County also created a water park in the City's east side Chandler Park.) It will feature a paved trail for in-line skating and walking, a shelter and a playscape. A grass playfield will be ready for use later in the year. Supporters of this project include the Edw. C. Levy Co., ABC Demolition, Greening of Detroit, the Kurz family of Troy, and neighborhood residents. For more information contact Dennis Nordmoe, Executive Director, NCI, at 313-841-4447 or County Commissioner Ilona Varga at 313-843-1998.

Long Version:

Detroit, Michigan: All Saints Neighborhood Park in southwest Detroit will be dedicated this Saturday, June 18 at 1:00 p.m. at a community block party celebration. Earlier last year, Neighborhood Centers Incorporated (NCI), secured a budgetary commitment at the level of \$200,000 from the Wayne County Board of Commissioners and the Parks and Recreation for the construction of the new park on land purchased by private donors. On April 30, 2005, the

Greening of Detroit completed the planting of 36 trees in the park with help from local merchants and volunteers from the area.

NCI is a nonprofit organization operating in the Springwells Village neighborhood. The late Frank Sall, NCI board member and former Mayor of Lincoln Park, brought this project to the attention of County Commissioner Ilona Varga in 2003. Varga then became a strong project advocate and helped secured County involvement with the support of other commissioners.

The funds from the County supported design and construction of the park on the corner of Longworth and Mullane streets. The new park will include a shelter, a playscape, full fencing, lighting and a paved trail for in-line skating and walking. A grass playfield for children's softball and soccer games will be ready for use later in the year. The formal dedication is scheduled for June 18, 2005 at 1:00 PM.

This 28,800 square foot park is part of a greater effort on the part of NCI to support people of many cultures and backgrounds working together to accomplish the common goal of transforming vacant land into solutions for youth idleness and frustration. It will also serve as an important milestone in generating momentum for further development of the area. The neighborhood increased in population recently; 30% of the population is aged 14 or younger.

"We are extremely pleased to be involved with this project," Dennis Nordmoe, Executive Director of NCI stated. "Our neighbors are encouraged that this means a better life for their children." He added that residents worked hard to get this park started with pledges of volunteer help for maintenance and with fundraising efforts.

Robert A. Ficano, Wayne County's CEO, said "The County's community parks program permits the County to build parks and then turn them over to community groups to manage. We were impressed by the effort made by people in the All Saints area in raising funds and preparing the site. This is the kind of effort the county wants to support." NCI bought the land with support from the Kurz family of Troy and, as owner, will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the park.

Neighborhood Centers Incorporated, founded in 1997, supports "successful families in healthy neighborhoods" by promoting the development of productive and healthy urban environments, nurturing safe, positive and productive lifestyles in children and adults, and connecting families and individuals with resources that address their needs and aspirations.

The All Saints Neighborhood Center, across the street from the park, is also operated by NCI. It is as a pilot project for action in other under-served, low-income areas. The center provides adult education (GED, English as a Second Language, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy) four mornings and evenings a week with bilingual Spanish/English instructors. It provides youth services five days a week. It will also provide licensed child care after completion of the current renovations to the interior of the center this summer.

The center began in a closed church building in 1997 in cooperation with the All Saints Catholic Parish, community residents, local businesses, universities, and other collaborating agencies. The center's building, a 1920 structure, was restored to its historic exterior appearance in 2004.

NCI received Internal Revenue Services 501c3 recognition in 1998. The NCI website, located at www.e-nci.org, offers a wealth of information about the neighborhood, the center and the park.