



Greater Auburn-Gresham
Development Corporation
1159 W. 79th Street
Chicago, IL 60620

G A D C

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17TH WARD

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Deliver To:

HRAIL Update 2006 Home Repairs for Accessible and Independent Living

Twenty-three homes and 2-flats from the 17th, 21st, and 15th Wards were approved by the City of Chicago's Department of Housing for **FREE** minor home repairs. Environmental clearances were performed on all approved homes followed by an assessment of work specifications and cost analysis by the GADC project manager and Team Construction.

During the month of May, two senior citizens' homes in the 21st Ward received minor repairs. Team Construction began the repairs on these homes installing and replacing several damaged fixtures, fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide and smoke detectors.

Throughout the 2nd quarter, six additional homes were completed; adding safety, security and accessibility features with widened doorways, vinyl replacement windows, security and interior doors, exterior wrought iron handrails, kitchen counter tops, cabinets, sinks and faucets.

Our seniors are ecstatic about HRAIL opportunities and GADC has a growing waiting list with over 300 names.

Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation (GADC) is a delegate agency for the City of Chicago's Department of Housing.

For More Info Contact The GADC Office @ 773-483-3696

The Vision newsletter sponsored by: **National City**

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GADC The VISION

2nd and 3rd
Quarter 2006



The mission of the Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation (GADC) is to foster and promote revitalization of the Auburn-Gresham community, which includes Auburn-Gresham, Englewood, and West Chatham.

Mayor Daley Visits Auburn-Gresham to Recognize Achievements of the 79th Street Streetscape Project



It was a warm and beautiful day in the Auburn-Gresham neighborhood as Mayor Richard M. Daley joined community residents and leaders at the corner of 79th and May to commemorate the 79th Street Streetscape project. The Mayor graciously acknowledged the accomplishments of several community leaders, elected officials, and local business owners to include (from left to right): Fr. Michael Pfleger of the Faith Community of St. Sabina, Alderman Howard Brookins (21st), Alderman Latasha Thomas (17th), Debra Moore of Neighborhood Housing Service (NHS) of Chicago, Carlos Nelson of Greater

Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation (GADC), Andrew Holmes of State Representative Milt Patterson's office (D-32), Betty Swanson – President of the 79th and Carpenter Block Club, Acting Commissioner Cheri Heramb of the City of Chicago's Department of Transportation (CDOT), and State Senator Jacqueline Y. Collins (D-16).

"This is going to attract more people to 79th Street to shop, eat and meet their friends," said Mayor Daley. "When more people show up, more businesses follow – and that's how you build up a business district."

Alderman Latasha Thomas commented on the beautification saying, "The 79th Street CTA bus route is the busiest in Chicago and many people have an opportunity to see the beautification on 79th Street."

Alderman Howard Brookins said, "There is an improved quality of life for residents now because of the beautification of 79th Street." He also eluded to more retailers coming into the community.

Alderman Latasha Thomas spoke again to acknowledge the efforts of GADC, Cleanslate, and made special reference to 79th and Carpenter as an example for Auburn-Gresham blocks and block clubs in the city of Chicago. She then introduced Betty Swanson and talked about her national recognition as a block club president.

Ms. Swanson then spoke and said, "The 79th and Carpenter Block Club has experienced a 180 degree turn for the positive. It used to be that no one would want to visit or drive on our block because of the crime. That's not so today. We are proud of our accomplishments on 79th and Carpenter."

What's New in the Neighborhood

- Bank of America Higher Standards**
69th & Ashland
Opened August 8, 2006
- THE SALVATION ARMY**
69th & Morgan
Opened September 5, 2006
- citi**
79th & Damen
Opened September 19, 2006
- Food 4 Less**
71st & Ashland
Opened September 20, 2006
- BEST BUY**
87th & the Dan Ryan
Opening October 27, 2006

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Oct 27th & 28th: African-American Fest.**
Thurgood Marshall Library
7506 S. Racine, Friday 10am/Saturday 10am
- Oct 29th: Daylight Saving Time End**
Set your clocks back 1 hour
- Nov 3rd: Pre-Veterans' Day Celebration**
For God and Country-Commitment
Leo High School
7901 South Sangamon, 11:00 am
- Nov 7th: Election Day**
- Nov 11th: Veterans' Day**
- Nov 14th: Business Sub-Committee Mtg**
6th District Police Station (Community Room)
7808 S. Halsted, 10:30 am
Discussion of community business issues.

Community Spotlight Bank of America comes to West Englewood



The grand opening of West Englewood's first new full-service bank in 50 years took on a red-carpet-like atmosphere.

Political dignitaries including Congressman Bobby Rush (D-1), State Senator Jacqueline Y. Collins (D-16), State Rep. Mary Flowers (D-31), Ald. Latasha Thomas (17) and even hip hop star Common all made appearances to welcome Bank of America to its new home at 69th and Ashland Ave.

But for Thomas, who has made re-

vitalization of 69th street a priority, the celebration marked a turning point for the area, which suffered from years of disinvestment.

"Eight years ago on 69th street we had plenty of vacant lots, abandoned buildings, and social services were gone. The only thing we had were stores with no fresh fruits, no fresh foods, and no meats – fresh meats at least," Thomas said. "Currency exchanges were the number one way we got our money and paid our bills."

All that has changed now with the

redevelopment of a former Chicago Transit Authority bus barn into a seven-acre retail strip anchored by a Food 4 Less grocery store on one end and Bank of America at the other.

"Bank of America is glad to be part of the 69th Street redevelopment and the first new bank Englewood has had in 50 years," said its Illinois President John Brennan. The branch is one of 60 banking centers the financial institution plans to open by the year's end.

"To be able to provide leadership around this is something we are very comfortable doing as an institution," Brennan said. "We are willing to take the first step, and we think this is good business to make the investment."



Community Spotlight Leaders Break Ground for Popeyes' Training Center



Nearly 50 residents and leaders in Chicago's Auburn-Gresham neighborhood joined business owner Woodrow "Woody" Hall and the Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corporation on August 23, 2006, to break ground for a 7,000-square-foot training center for Popeyes Chicken & Biscuits.

The new center and an adjacent Popeyes restaurant, at the redeveloping corner of 76th and Racine, will

serve Popeyes' five-state Chicago region, which includes 120 restaurants. Hall owns eight Popeyes franchises on Chicago's South Side, making him the region's third-largest franchisee.

"I could have built this somewhere else, but I believe in the South Side of Chicago," said Hall, of Norcross, Georgia. "This was an opportunity to support the community and bring back some jobs to the area."

The \$1.6 million project will include administrative facilities for Hall's company, THG Restaurant Group, LLC, training rooms and a renovated restaurant and kitchen facilities next door to show employees and managers how to prepare and present new products.

The project will create about 20 construction jobs and 21 permanent

jobs, of which roughly half will be middle-management positions.

17th Ward Alderman Latasha R. Thomas praised Hall's decision to invest in the area, noting that it would be the first corporate training center in "the mighty 17th Ward" and another example of African-American business owners committing to the community.



Safety in Numbers Auburn-Gresham Sets up for Summer Safety

Nearly 80 people came together at a Common Ground Forum on May 18 to discuss safety and other issues in the Auburn Gresham community, and before the evening was over, they had agreed to stay organized and active through a series of summer



events and meetings.

The Common Ground gathering included strong representation from block clubs, school principals, residents, Chicago Police (6th District), churches and community organiza-

tions. The meeting was convened by the Greater Auburn-Gresham Community Development Corporation (GADC) in partnership with 6th District Police Commander John Doty.

The moderator of the forum, GADC executive director Carlos Nelson, said the meeting would focus on two things: how to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood, and how to maintain safer streets.

Cmdr. Doty said the meeting was a pilot effort within the police department to develop stronger communication with neighborhoods. "We know that collaboration goes a lot farther than individual commitment," he said. And with the recent catastrophic incidents in nearby Englewood – the death of two young girls from stray bullets – it is appropriate for Auburn Gresham to be alert and ready.

"We are at the beginning of the summer season. There should be a



6th District patrol officers line up for inspection at an outdoor roll call at 85th and Hermitage.

sense of urgency to get things done," he said.

The meeting concluded with a series of announcements about future meetings and events. Among the final words were these, from Cmdr. Doty:

"Action, action, action, action! There has to be something that we are going to do . . . at Oglesby School or 79th Street or on your block . . . If you've got a problem on your block then let's do something about it. We (the police) will stand with you."

Hot times at 79th Street Renaissance Festival



The inaugural Auburn-Gresham 79th Street Renaissance Festival on July 29, 2006 was a tremendous success. Led by the Greater Auburn-Gresham Development Corp. (GADC) along with business members of the 79th Street Special Service Area #32, and elected officials such as State Senator Jacqueline Y. Collins (D-16), Aldermen Latasha Thomas (17) and Howard Brookins (21), the festival

used four city-owned vacant lots and the Chicago Park District's Renaissance Park to promote Auburn Gresham as a great place to do business, live, work and play.

To give the seniors in attendance a break from the heat, more than 150 senior citizens and volunteers were given free lunches in the air-conditioned Elder's Village community room and GADC volunteers raffled off prizes donated by Walgreen's. GADC purchased the food for the free, buffet-style lunch from several of the 79th Street restaurants to promote "doing business within our community."

Along with food for the seniors, 70 vendors participated in the festival to include a farmer's market, a *Taste of 79th Street Restaurants*, merchandisers, and service oriented businesses.

Back at the main stage, the Jesse White Tumblers kept people oooing and aahing with their acrobatic stunts, bringing traffic to a stop.

Then the South Shore Drill Team continued the display of Chicago talent, once again causing traffic to halt

on 79th Street as they performed their routines to the latest Hip Hop and R&B sounds, culminating with a grand finale choreographed to Jackson 5 songs.

As the sun dipped toward the horizon, the ancient sounds of African drums were heard as if to pay homage to the Sun God. Concluding the festival was the Ayo Children's Dance troupe. This group of African dancers and drummers kept everyone's heart pumping and hands clapping to the talents of the children performing.

With an estimated 1,500 to 2,000 participants, this first annual Auburn-Gresham 79th St. Renaissance Festival was truly a memorable experience. A long time resident, Mrs. Hart stated, "I have lived right here in the same house near 79th Street for 37 years, and we have never had anything like this!"

