

Woodland School Lands Sports Complex

A groundbreaking ceremony took place on Friday, April 22, at the Woodland Elementary school, located at 711 Woodland for the new Chamption Sports complex.

Third District Councilwoman Sandra McFadden Weaver and Councilman Troy Nash

announced \$300,000 in PIAC funds to assist in the funding of the "Champions Sports Complex" for inner city youth.

This spring, construction will begin on a multi-use recreational complex at Woodland Elementary school. The complex will replace a concrete play area and a large vacant lot at 9th and Woodland.

Councilwoman Weaver said, "Investments such as this affords urban core youth the opportunity not only to participate in sports activities but to

experience the rewards and feeling of accomplishment achieved through the art of competition. We couldn't be more delighted by the positive impact that a development like this will provide for our youth in the inner city."

The athletic facility will provide a unique opportunity for high quality, well-organized sports and character building programs for children, ages 7-14.

The concept of the "Champions Sports Complex" evolved from a proposal created by the Twelfth Street Heritage Development Corporation (TSHDC).

In addition to the City's contribution, TSHDC was initially awarded a \$100,000 grant by the NFL Grassroots Program, a partnership of the NFL, Youth Football Fund and

the national office of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) for hard costs associated with the development.

"Instead of vacant lots being dumping grounds for trash and used for crime, this type of land use transformation into productive, useable open space, is exactly the type of changes we all want to see in the inner city. This project is the best of all that a public-private partnership has to offer," said

Nash.

Those in attendance at the ceremony included state Rep. Sharon Sanders Brooks, James Wilson, Board of Police Commissioners, Councilwoman McFadden Weaver, Councilman Troy Nash, Mrs. Helen Ragsdale, School Board member, and Dr. Bernard Taylor, School District Superintendent.

The start up costs for the complex will be approximately \$500,000 for construction and \$1,500,000 for program costs.



GROUND BREAKING FOR NEW SPORTS COMPLEX... Community leaders and elected officials gathered on Friday, April 22, at the Woodland Elementary school, located at 711 Woodland Ave., for the groundbreaking ceremony of the new \$1.5 million sports complex, which will be built next to the school. A total of \$300,000 will come from proceeds earmarked by Councilwoman Sandra McFadden Weaver and Councilman Troy Nash. Among those in attendance were Councilwoman McFadden Weaver, Mrs. Helen Ragsdale, school board member, Dr. Bernard Taylor, Superintendent; State Representative Sharon Sanders Brooks and Councilman Troy Nash. -- CALL photo by Eric L. Weason