



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**MAYOR EMANUEL, RAY LAHOOD & CITY OFFICIALS CELEBRATE COMPLETION
OF EXPANDED CHICAGO RIVERWALK**

New three block stretch from LaSalle Street to Lake Street is now open

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, officials from the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Department of Fleet and Facilities Management (2FM) and Friends of the Chicago River to celebrate the completion of the third phase of the Chicago Riverwalk from LaSalle Street to Lake Street. The transformative Chicago Riverwalk project now provides a 1.25 mile promenade through the heart of the City.

"For far too long, the riverfront was a forgotten part of our City, but we have reclaimed this space to transform the river into Chicago's next great recreational frontier," said Mayor Emanuel. "Building on Daniel Burnham's vision, the riverfront investments we're making throughout the City are increasing river access and recreational opportunities while also promoting economic growth."

The Riverwalk demonstrates the Mayor's commitment to increase access to and recreational opportunities on the river, as outlined in both his [Building on Burnham plan](#) and [Our Great Rivers](#), a forward looking action agenda for Chicago's three rivers.

"CDOT is very proud to have constructed the Riverwalk, which is the latest example of Chicago's long history of commitment to design excellence that touches the lives of all Chicagoans," said CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld. "It fulfills Daniel Burnham's plan, which envisioned a riverside promenade that would make the River accessible to residents of Chicago."

To celebrate the completion of the Riverwalk, Mayor Emanuel, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), CDOT and 2FM hosted a day of free family fun on the Riverwalk, which included music, face painting, balloon artists and festive Halloween processions.

The technically challenging project, which involved extending the south bank of the Chicago River out by 25 feet, was constructed by CDOT. The ecologically sensitive design aids in improving water quality, enabling people to interact with the river as they have never been able to before. Forty years ago, there were just seven aquatic species in the river. Today, according to the Friends of the Chicago River, there are 75 and counting.

The three new sections, or "rooms," of the Riverwalk include:

- **The Water Plaza:** A water feature for children and families to engage with water at the river's edge. (From LaSalle to Wells.)

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

- **The Jetty:** A series of piers and floating wetland gardens with interactive learning about the ecology of the river, including opportunities for fishing and identifying native plants. (From Wells to Franklin.)
- **The Riverbank:** An accessible walkway and new marine edge creates access to Lake Street and features a public lawn at the confluence. It provides an accessible route from lower to upper Wacker and Lake Street. The City is continuing to explore possibilities for how the room can be developed. (From Franklin to Lake.)

The first three rooms opened in May of 2015 and extended the Riverwalk from its terminus at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at State Street. They include:

- **The Marina Plaza:** Restaurants and outdoor seating with views of vibrant life on the water, including passing barges, water taxis and sightseeing boats. (From State to Dearborn.)
- **The Cove:** Also includes a restaurant, a kayak information center, and docking for human-powered crafts enable physical connections to the water through recreation. (From Dearborn to Clark.)
- **The River Theater:** A sculptural staircase linking Upper Wacker and the Riverwalk offers pedestrian connectivity to the water's edge and seating, while trees provide greenery and shade. (From Clark to LaSalle.)

The six-block section of the Riverwalk was designed by a team of architects including Sasaki and Ross Barney Architects and was constructed by Alfred Benesch & Co. Engineers and Walsh Construction. The project is funded through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Infrastructure Finance Innovation Act (TIFIA) program which provided a loan of \$98 million. Additionally, the project received \$10 million in state funding.

For more information on the Chicago Riverwalk, please visit www.chicagoriverwalk.us.

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