



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 31, 2016

**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

Jessica Maxey-Faulkner, Chicago Park District

312.742.4786

[Jessica.Faulkner@ChicagoParkDistrict.com](mailto:Jessica.Faulkner@ChicagoParkDistrict.com)

**MAYOR EMANUEL, CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT BEGIN LAKEFRONT TRAIL SEPARATION**

*Key investment under Mayor Emanuel's Building on Burnham Plan*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Chicago Park District Superintendent Michael Kelly, members of the Active Transit Alliance (ATA) and Chicago Area Runners Association (CARA) today gathered to kick off the first phase of the Chicago Lakefront Trail separation project, which will begin at 31<sup>st</sup> street. Mayor Emanuel announced plans to separate the trail from Fullerton to Ohio streets and 31<sup>st</sup> to 51<sup>st</sup> streets in March when he unveiled *Building on Burnham*, a comprehensive vision to invest in Chicago's parks and open spaces.

"This is an important step in making the Lakefront Trail safer, more accessible and more enjoyable for the thousands of Chicagoans and visitors that travel the path each day," Mayor Emanuel said. "Trail separation does more than address issues of overcrowding; it builds a better future for one of the city's greatest assets by ensuring more commuters are able to experience what the lakefront has to offer."

The project is designed to alleviate areas of congestion by separating the Lakefront Trail into two distinct paths, a commuter trail and a pedestrian trail. The commuter trail will accommodate patrons using the park to bike to work or throughout the park without having to weave in and out of people walking. The pedestrian Lakefront Trail will be used for people on foot.

Chicago's lakefront trail is one of the busiest in the United States. Used by bikers, joggers and people enjoying the scenery, it is estimated that more than 100,000 people per day use the trail during summer weekends according to a recent study by CARA and ATA. The commuter trail, made of asphalt, will measure 12 feet in width and will be located closest to Lake Shore Drive. The pedestrian trail will measure 20 feet in width with 14 feet of asphalt and 6 feet of soft surface mix on either side.

“Making Chicago’s Lakefront, river and natural areas accessible and enjoyable for all our patrons is important to the Chicago Park District” said Chicago Park District General Superintendent and CEO Michael P. Kelly. “Separating the trail will address the issue of overcrowding and make walking, biking and running even more enjoyable for everyone.”

The lakefront trail is also undergoing paving. In total, approximately seven (7) miles from Ardmore Avenue to Oak Street Beach will be resurfaced, removing cracks and adding new striping and trail markings.

Improving the lakefront trail is a key component in Building on Burnham, the Mayor's comprehensive plan to invest in the Lakefront, the Chicago River, natural areas and recreational opportunities in neighborhoods across the city. This plan follows the Mayor's successful expansion of Chicago's park system in his first mayoral term, which has already added 750 acres of new parkland, 256 new playgrounds and more than \$800 million in capital investment from neighborhoods and private sources.

The Chicago Park District currently manages more than 65 protected natural areas, encompassing more than 1,400 acres. Building on Burnham will underscore the expansion of natural areas, setting a goal of 2,020 acres of protected natural areas in the City of Chicago by 2020.

# # #

**The Chicago Park District** is the 2014 Gold Medal Award winner, recognized for excellence in park and recreation management across the nation. For more information about the Chicago Park District's more than 8,300 acres of parkland, more than 585 parks, 26 miles of lakefront, 12 museums, two world-class conservatories, 16 historic lagoons, nearly 50 nature areas, thousands of special events, sports and entertaining programs, please visit [www.chicagoparkdistrict.com](http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com) or contact the Chicago Park District at 312/742.PLAY or 312/747.2001 (TTY). Want to share your talent? Volunteer in the parks by calling, 312/742.PLAY.