



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office
312.744.3334
press@cityofchicago.org

Chicago Park District
Jessica Maxey-Faulkner
312.742.4786
jessica.maxey-faulkner@chicagoparkdistrict.com

CDOT
Peter Scales
312.744.0707
Peter.scales@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR EMANUEL, CITY OFFICIALS BREAK GROUND ON
FULLERTON REVETMENT, ANNOUNCE FUTURE OF THEATER ON THE LAKE**
\$31.5M Investment will improve lakefront experience for Chicago residents, visitors

Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Chicago Park District Commissioner Juan Salgado, and Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld today broke ground on the Fullerton Revetment project, which will stabilize the shoreline near the Fullerton Theater on the Lake and create 5.8 acres of new Park District land.

"Back when I was a Congressman, I secured funding for Theater on the Lake so that it could put on not just community and amateur shows, but also some of the best productions in the world," said Mayor Emanuel. "This public-private partnership builds on that investment, allowing for an expansion of the facility's amenities and programming while making infrastructure improvements that will provide better access to the theater and the lake, generate new open spaces and create a year-round destination for culture and the arts."

As part of the Chicago Shoreline Protection Project, the City, in partnership with the Chicago Park District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will stabilize the shoreline at the Fullerton Avenue Beach, which will make the Theater on the Lake facility even more convenient and attractive to residents who would like to enjoy activities at the facility and on the lakefront. The shoreline restoration will replace the existing failed revetment with a steel and concrete revetment designed to manage waves and will convert the existing failed beach cell to new parkland, adding approximately 5.8 acres of park space in an area that is regularly congested with park goers.

"This project provides critical storm damage protection to the Lake Michigan shoreline, our adjacent parkland and Lake Shore Drive," said Commissioner Scheinfeld. "The deteriorating

shoreline once posed a serious threat to our lakefront infrastructure and water supply. This project will secure the shoreline for decades to come."

The total project cost is \$31.5 million, consisting of funding from the Army Corps, the City of Chicago and the Park District. Construction is scheduled to be complete by the summer of 2016.

"Partnership is the key to success for any project," said Col. Christopher Drew, Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Chicago District. "The Army Corps of Engineers is privileged to be part of this team working to rebuild and protect our shoreline."

The Chicago Shoreline Protection Project began in 2000, and 19 of the 23 segments of the 9.5-mile project have been completed. The new design maintains safe access to the shoreline while preserving its historical and aesthetic value. The total cost of the project is now estimated at more than \$500 million, funded by the USACE, City of Chicago, Chicago Park District and the State of Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Last fall, Mayor Emanuel announced that the historic Theater on the Lake building at Fullerton Avenue and Lake Shore Drive would be converted from a summer-only programming site to a year-round program and event facility. This expansion is part of the Mayor's commitment to build and reinvigorate arts programming in neighborhoods in the City, as well as to elevate and expand neighborhood cultural assets as called for in the Chicago Cultural Plan.

The conversion to make Theater on the Lake a year-round program and event facility includes a complete renovation of the interior theater space, which will be equipped with a new performance space, lighting and sound systems. The building will be conditioned to operate year-round and will be equipped with new dressing rooms, green rooms and event space in the northern half of the pavilion. A concession space with outdoor seating and public toilets are also included. The main entry to the theater will be from the lakeside with a glass enclosed lobby facing the lake. Other improvements to the site will include a new vehicular drop off, loading access and an outdoor patio with views of Lake Michigan.

"Patrons will enjoy professional theater companies at Theater on the Lake for more than just an 8-week run," said Park District General Superintendent Michael Kelly. "The renovations will provide the capacity for bigger audiences and year-round programming."

The Park District is currently reviewing proposals for the conversion, and work is expected to start next year to ensure that completion coincides with the Fullerton Revetment project. Theater on the Lake will continue to perform in neighborhood parks as part of Mayor Emanuel's *Night Out in the Parks* until the conversion is complete.

"By redeveloping portions of the shoreline and adding nearly six acres of additional open space, we can ensure the lakefront remains a place all can enjoy for years to come," said Alderman Smith. "Further, the renovation of the Theater on the Lake to convert it to a year-round venue will allow more residents and visitors to appreciate a celebrated Lincoln Park institution, and will lend to the region's already thriving cultural landscape. I look forward to working closely with Mayor Emanuel, the Chicago Park District and the Army Corps of Engineers as work gets underway on these exciting improvements."

About Theater on the Lake: Constructed in 1920, the Theater on the Lake building was originally a recuperation ward for babies suffering from tuberculosis and other diseases. During World War

II, the structure was then used as a USO Center. After the war, the Chicago Park District used the venue for then-popular barn dances. In 1952, it was converted into the Theater on the Lake performance venue and showcased productions staged by the Park District's many community theater organizations. In 1996, the programming evolved into its current format, and the Chicago Park District began inviting professional theater companies to remount their best works.

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