



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES FRAMEWORK FOR RIVERWALK TO REOPEN

Chicago reinstates popular recreation and restaurant destination for residents and visitors this summer

CHICAGO --- Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced that the City is reopening its ever-popular Chicago Riverwalk under new guidance for the use of residents and visitors. Following the latest data and based upon guidance from public health experts, City officials believe the Riverwalk can safely reopen and operate throughout the summer months. New measures will allow for increased social distancing and easier compliance with public health guidance, through the designation of specific hours for different activities. The Riverwalk will be accessible through limited access points at Lake Street and through ADA compliant ramps between Franklin and Lake Street and State and Columbus streets. All entrances will be guarded by attendants who will be responsible for confirming reservations and counting the number of people to ensure capacity limits are not exceeded, while roaming Riverwalk Ambassadors will be monitoring the space to ensure social distancing is being maintained.

“The Riverwalk is one of Chicago’s architectural gems and the rare ‘instant-classic’ in our already illustrious lineup of public landmarks. It’s also an important economic engine for our city, drawing an array of residents and visitors to its many bars, restaurants, and recreational activities,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Its reopening marks the latest exciting step in our safe, citywide reopening process, and an important indicator of our great city’s resiliency in the face of the COVID-19 crisis as we work to build, grow, and recover from this pandemic stronger than we’ve ever been.”

Starting today, the Riverwalk will now be open to the general public starting between the hours of 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The Riverwalk will be closed briefly at 10:00 a.m. to allow for cleaning. All persons using the Riverwalk and its facilities will be required to wear a face covering in accordance with public health guidance. Additionally, in order to adhere to social distancing guidance and reduce congestion the City will be implementing designated hours for recreation and concessions. The operational hours for recreational activities will occur between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., and the hours for concessions activities will take place between 11:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. This new system will allow for enhanced cleaning activities and social distancing for those using the Riverwalk.



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“The Riverwalk is one of the largest public spaces maintained by the Department of Assets, Information and Services, and we are thrilled today to announce its reopening for the summer and welcome back our concessionaires,” said David Reynolds, Commissioner of AIS. “The Department will be hard at work this summer to maintain the cleanliness of the Riverwalk in addition to ensuring that social distancing, face coverings and additional public health guidance is followed throughout the summer.”

During the recreational hours, those using the Riverwalk will be able to run, jog, walk and bike along the path between Lake Shore Drive and Lake Street. The lakefront trail remains closed and will not be accessible from the Riverwalk until it officially reopens for public use. Bicyclists should use additional caution and cycle responsibly while respecting the other users on the path. All persons using the space should be aware of their immediate proximity to others and practice social distancing.

Concessions Program Vendors and the Community Marketplace will begin a phased reopening tomorrow between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Each will be available by reservation in order to maintain social distancing and manage crowds. In order to make a reservation everyone is encouraged to contact the establishment directly. All reservations will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis and ADA access will be available upon request when reservations are being made. Beyond requiring reservations, the concession program vendors will arrange their seating areas in a manner that promotes social distancing. During this time there will also be limited passive recreation areas for people looking to spend time outdoors. The paths will be blocked at the under bridges between LaSalle and Columbus and users should use stairways.

Riverwalk Concession Vendors accessible by access points:

- Tiny Tapp & Café- West Dearborn
- City Winery – East Dearborn
- Chicago Brewhouse- West Wabash Stairway
- Beat Kitchen and Community Marketplace West Michigan Avenue
- Chicago’s First Lady and Mercury Sightseeing Cruises East Michigan
- Urban Kayaks, Island Party, The Northman- Columbus
- O'Briens's Riverwalk Cafe East Wabash

Limited passive recreation areas:

- Lake Street and LaSalle Street- Access at Lake Street, ADA ramp between Franklin and Lake or East LaSalle Street.
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial- Use State Street ADA ramp
- Michigan Plaza- Use West Michigan Avenue- this will also allow access to the Community Marketplace vendors.
- Columbus Plaza- Use Columbus Stairs
- Sweet Home Gelato- West LaSalle Street – Walk up service

“City Winery is thrilled to welcome guests back to the Riverwalk. We’ve been looking forward to reopening for months and we’re eager to provide a safe, beautiful space where guests can gather for al fresco dining,” said Nathan Holgate, Chicago General Manager of



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City Winery. “Guests can expect plenty of space between tables, enhanced cleaning protocols and other measures to ensure the safety of our visitors, our staff and the greater community. But guests can also expect world-class wine made right here in Chicago, unbeatable skyline & river views, and a great dining experience.”

“We are very excited to be reopening on the Riverwalk,” said Kevin Vaughn, Owner of the Chicago Brewhouse on the Riverwalk. “Our awesome team looks forward to serving great Chicago made beverages and Chicago themed food in a socially distanced safe environment”

Chicago moved into phase three of its reopening framework, ‘Cautiously Reopen’, on June 3 and has been gradually reopening many of its most prominent shared spaces including Navy Pier earlier this week. Cautiously reopening still requires strict physical distancing but will begin to allow for some industries to reopen. All residents must continue to abide by important guidance in phase three, including: physically distancing and wearing a face covering; limiting non-business, social gatherings to less than 10 persons; staying at home if you feel ill or have come into contact with someone with COVID-19; and getting tested if you have symptoms.

For more information about the City’s response to COVID-19 please visit [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](https://chicago.gov/coronavirus) and for more information about the Riverwalk please visit [Chicagoriverwalk.us](https://chicagoriverwalk.us).