



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BLOOMINGDALE TRAIL CONSTRUCTION TO BEGIN NEXT WEEK

No Parking on Bloomingdale Avenue as Workers Remove Paint from Viaducts and Retaining Walls

Neighbors near the Bloomingdale Trail, the centerpiece of the Northwest Side trail-and-parks project known as "The 606," will see increased construction activity starting on Monday, September 30th as the first phase of construction begins, the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) announced today.

The construction includes the rehabilitation of the viaducts and retaining walls, as well as removing the railroad tracks and converting the railway to a multi-use path. CDOT will oversee the construction of the linear park, which will be open to visitors by the end of 2014.

"Construction crews are moving quickly to build the trail, but are also working to ensure that disruptions are kept to minimum," said CDOT Commissioner Gabe Klein. "Neighbors can expect some parking and travel restrictions during the construction period."

In addition to work on the elevated trail, the first phase of construction will focus on ground-level work at Damen Avenue, Western Avenue, California Avenue and Whipple Street. Crews will start by cleaning and removing paint from the viaducts and embankment walls in order to assess the structural integrity of the concrete.

Crews must remove all paint and clean the embankment walls to assess the structural integrity of the concrete, which necessitates the removal of the murals painted along the structure. The embankment walls along Bloomingdale Avenue will be tented to provide additional safety during the removal of lead-based paint.

While Bloomingdale Avenue will remain open to traffic unless otherwise posted, parking will not be allowed along the street for the duration of construction. Neighbors can find the coming week's construction schedule at project website (www.the606.org) under "News for Neighbors."

Beginning today, the cul-de-sac at Ridgeway Avenue and Bloomingdale Avenue will be closed to serve as a staging area for construction crews. This area will remain closed during construction, and will become the western trailhead to the Bloomingdale Trail when the park opens.

“No Parking” signs will be posted along Bloomingdale and Ridgeway to notify residents that parking will not be permitted. Starting Monday, illegally parked cars may be ticketed and towed. Residents can call 311 to track the location of towed vehicles.

Dog Friendly Areas (DFAs) at Walsh and Churchill Parks will be restricted for the majority of construction. Additionally, the eastern end of Julia de Burgos Park will be closed for most of the construction period, with the Whipple entrance to the park closed. The Albany entrance will remain open, and the playground will remain open.

Planned for the top of an abandoned, 2.7-mile Canadian Pacific Railway viaduct between Ashland and Ridgeway Avenues, the linear park will be managed by the Chicago Park District. CDOT will maintain the viaduct’s walls and bridges and the Park District will maintain the trail and 13 acres of open space planned for the top.

The century-old viaduct, which runs adjacent to Bloomingdale Avenue, ceased to be used for regularly scheduled rail operations in 2001. Its redevelopment as a linear park and trail will build on the City’s legacy for innovative open spaces by linking four ethnically and economically diverse Chicago communities (Wicker Park, Bucktown, Humboldt Park and Logan Square) and five neighborhood parks.

The Bloomingdale Trail is the centerpiece of the entire trail and parks project, known as “The 606,” is transforming nearly three miles of unused rail line into the elevated multi-use trail, five ground-level neighborhood parks, various art installations and other amenities. The park and trail system is named for the 606 zip code prefix all Chicagoans share.

More than half of the project’s development cost is being financed through federal highway and transportation grant funding. The remainder is being raised through a partnership between the City, the Park District, and the Trust for Public Land, the nation’s leading organization focused on creating parks and preserving land, which is serving as project manager.

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