



# 41st Street Pedestrian and Bike Bridge

Chicago, Illinois

Chicago Department of Transportation

Counterclockwise from top: aerial renderings and up-close bridge visualization (© City of Chicago).

New bridge connects mixed-income housing and neighborhoods to the city and waterfront.

## CONTEXT

- Construction to be complete in 2019.
- Midwestern.
- Urban.
- \$29 million.



## URBAN/CITY TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

- Project adds new bicycle and pedestrian bridge over railroad tracks and major road.
- Bridge increases access between a historically disenfranchised community and lakeshore trail system.

## WHAT WAS THE PROJECT DRIVER?

Residents on the North Side of Chicago have long enjoyed frequent and nearby access points to the Michigan Lakefront, but not so for the residents of the South Side. Some bridges have been renovated, but others, such as the one at 41<sup>st</sup> St, are completely new connections.

## HOW DID THIS CONNECT THE COMMUNITY?

The 41<sup>st</sup> Street Pedestrian and Bike Bridge is a new investment that connects the Bronzeville neighborhood to the nearby Lake Michigan waterfront on the South Side of Chicago. It is one of five new or renovated connections in this part of town, aiming to develop the same waterfront access and **bike and pedestrian** experience in other parts of the City. The city hopes to eventually provide the previously isolated Near South Side with the same frequency of lakefront connections as the North Side—or roughly one every quarter mile.

When complete later in 2018, this Bridge will be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities, with ramps to accommodate bicycles, wheelchairs, and emergency vehicles. Not only does it go over Lake Shore Drive (an expressway), it also will span over

the Illinois Central rail tracks. In addition to connecting the neighborhood, it will also connect Lake Park Crescent, a new mixed-income housing project development built as part of the Chicago Housing Authority's Plan for Transformation, with Burnham Park and the Oakwood/41st Street Beach. The project benefitted from participation of the Chicago Park District and the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA). Selected through a design competition, the project is also meant to create a specific place experience and mirror the meandering curves found in Chicago's older, Frederick Law Olmsted-designed parks

The planning for this project has been in the works for over 10 years and is grounded in its **context-sensitivity**. The 2016 draft Bronzeville Community Action Plan identifies this connection as a community priority and as part of a network of community planning initiatives in different topic areas – such as improving lakeshore access; supporting transit and transit-oriented development; enhancing housing access and affordability; revitalizing local retail; and expanding green neighborhood assets and activities. Furthermore, it builds on the great momentum of public and private investments throughout the community such as being part of the *Building on Burnham* plan to supporting citywide investments; additional bridge investments at other points nearby; a new grocery store; arts and recreation center; library upgrades; and waterfront shoreline reconstruction.



### WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS?



When open, the project will provide better access to Chicago's lakefront for Bronzeville residents and will make walking and bicycling safer and more attractive for the 44-percent of residents who currently commute via walking, bicycling, or transit and the nearly 40-percent of Bronzeville households without a car. Access to this trail is an important economic enhancement for this community. More than 60,000 people a day currently use Chicago's Lakefront Trail as a direct and safe bicycle and pedestrian route connecting to downtown employment and education centers. Fifty percent of trail users report that they use the trail for transportation purposes in addition to recreation purposes.

The project itself will create 140 jobs during construction. It was also a 2014 Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant recipient for its innovative partnership with housing authorities and new access for bike commuting for a disadvantaged **environmental justice** community, receiving \$18.76 million in funding from the U.S Department of Transportation.

**For more information:**  
<https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/cdot/provdrs/ped/news/2017/june/mayor-emanuel-breaks-ground-on-41st-street-pedestrian-and-bike-b.html>  
[https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/TIGER14\\_ProjectFactSheets.pdf](https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/TIGER14_ProjectFactSheets.pdf)  
<https://chicago.curbed.com/2017/6/6/15745676/chicago-construction-bronzeville-41st-street-bike-pedestrian-bridge>  
<https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dcd/cnn/plans/bronzeville.html>