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Clybourn Avenue Protected Bike Lanes Near Finish Line

Inaugural Project Aims to Enhance Safety, Shape Guidelines for Future Use

CHICAGO –The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), in partnership with the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), announced today that the final touches will be completed over the coming days on the new protected bike lanes along Clybourn Avenue in Chicago’s Old Town neighborhood. The project involved building the first protected bike lanes ever on a state route, further demonstrating IDOT’s commitment to increasing travel choices and improving mobility by providing more options for bicyclists and pedestrians.

“This is a project that’s time has come,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “As commuters and travelers are constantly seeking out new ways to get from Point A to Point B, it is our job to find safe and creative solutions to meet their needs. I look forward to working with the public and our transportation partners on finding other new ways to promote bike use in Chicago and throughout Illinois.”

The project added a raised concrete median on Clybourn Avenue between North Avenue and Division Street, as well as on Division Street between Clybourn Avenue and Orleans Street, creating a buffer between bikes and regular vehicular traffic. Additional project components include specialized bike signals at key intersections and landscaping along some of the medians.

Although IDOT has jurisdiction of the road, CDOT maintains it.

“This addition to the city’s bike lane network builds on our unprecedented investments to expand transportation options in Chicago and make it one of the most bike-friendly cities in the country,” said Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “Investing in bike lanes is an important part of our efforts to grow Chicago’s economy and attract businesses and families to the city. Thanks to IDOT’s leadership on this project, we continue to make progress toward expanding the city’s bike lane network for all Chicagoans to enjoy.”

The Clybourn Avenue project is part of an ongoing feasibility study by IDOT into expanding bicycle and pedestrian facilities on state routes. Clybourn Avenue was chosen as a pilot location

for additional research based on the high volume of bicyclists and pedestrians. Of the 93 injury-crashes that occurred along this stretch between 2008 and 2012, about 40 percent (30) involved pedestrians and bicyclists, even though they represent about 12 percent all of roadway users during peak traffic hours, according to IDOT statistics.

Both IDOT and CDOT will gather before-and-after data on impacts to safety, traffic flow, street sweeping, snow removal and other operational responsibilities to help develop guidelines and policy for similar projects on other routes.

“Congratulations to IDOT for pioneering state-of-the-art bike lanes on Clybourn,” said Ron Burke, Executive Director of the Active Transportation Alliance. “To get more people riding bikes, we need many miles of protected bike lanes like these. When your bike ride is separated from car traffic by permanent barriers, biking suddenly becomes easier and more comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.”

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