



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND CDOT CUT RIBBON ON MOTOR ROW STREETScape

Recently installed streetscape addresses safety concerns and encourages economic development

CHICAGO — Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot joined Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) Commissioner Gia Biagi and 3rd Ward Alderman Pat Dowell to cut the ribbon on the recently completed streetscape project along Michigan Avenue between Cermak and 24th Place. The Motor Row streetscape implements a “road diet” that reduces the previous four travel lanes to three, reducing crossing distances for pedestrians. Other improvements include widened sidewalks, new crosswalks, new landscaping, and LED smart lighting. The enhancements encourage drivers to slow down and make it easier for pedestrians to cross safely.

“By investing in infrastructure projects, we are doing more than just improving the appearance of our streets — we are also investing in the safety of our residents, encouraging economic development, and generating community pride,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Streetscape investments represent one of the many ways we are combatting an increase in dangerous driving. A few miles per hour can make the difference between life and death, which is why we’re putting physical measures in place to help drivers slow down and calling on all Chicagoans to do their part to monitor their speed.”

The improved streetscape at Motor Row features safety improvements that help address the recent increase in traffic fatalities citywide:

- **Reduced Pedestrian Crossing Distance** — Decreasing the number of travel lanes limits pedestrians’ time exposed in the roadway and increases their visibility to drivers when crossing the street.
- **Improved Crosswalks** — 20-foot continental crosswalk at 23rd Street helps drivers see pedestrians sooner and slow down earlier.
- **Decreased Travel Lanes** — Reducing the number of travel lanes from 4 to 3 forces drivers to slow down when approaching the crosswalk



- **LED Smart Lighting** — New lights and hanging baskets increase visibility for drivers and pedestrians alike.
- **Widened Sidewalks** — Increasing sidewalk width provides more room for pedestrians to maneuver.

“The Motor Row streetscape project not only reflects this neighborhood’s rich history, but it also includes several components that improve traffic safety and create a better environment for people walking,” said Commissioner Biagi. “Chicago’s streets are much more than the asphalt cars drive on — they are the crosswalks, sidewalks, lighting, and the infrastructure that creates safer, more livable, and more economically vibrant public spaces. We are working on streetscape projects like this across Chicago as part of Mayor Lightfoot’s Chicago Works capital investment plan. This is just the start of unprecedented investment in communities all over Chicago.”

The streetscape at Motor Row also features aesthetic improvements that will have a long-term impact on the surrounding community:

- Full-width pavement resurfacing
- Parkway improvements and beautification
- New benches, litter receptacles, and bike racks
- New landscaping and trees
- Community gateway elements and light pole identifiers

“Planning for the Motor Row project was a multi-year process,” said Alderman Dowell. “Working in partnership with CDOT and the residents’ task force, we were able to create a streetscape that will bring lasting improvements to this section of Michigan Avenue for businesses and residents alike.”

Located just west of McCormick Place, Motor Row is now known as an entertainment district; however, the area was originally named Motor Row due to the high concentration of car sales and repair businesses once located along the street. To reflect that history, the design of the custom, lighted identifiers was influenced by the Art Deco and automotive styling of that era.

The nearly \$11 million streetscape project, funded through two TIFs, was designed in close cooperation with a local task force and community stakeholders. Christopher B. Burke Engineering was the lead design consultant for the project, and Sumit Construction was the lead construction contractor. Duroweld fabricated the gateway community identifiers that welcome all to Motor Row.



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In addition to investments in infrastructure, Mayor Lightfoot and CDOT will roll out an awareness campaign encouraging drivers to slow down. The campaign, which will appear on digital billboards and social media platforms, highlights the importance of coming together to protect our neighbors and reminds drivers to “Slow Down Chicago.”

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