



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CHICAGO RIVERWALK AND CHINATOWN BRANCH LIBRARY RECEIVE  
PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL HONOR**

*American Institute of Architects Recognizes Projects with Profession's Highest Honor for  
Excellence in Architecture, Interior Design and Urban Design*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the Chicago Riverwalk and Chinatown branch of the Chicago Public Library (CPL) have received the Institute Honor Awards from the American Institute of Architects (AIA). The award is the profession's highest recognition and the latest honor for the two innovative projects.

"Chicago is known across the globe for our countless contributions to the fields of architecture and design, and today Chicago is writing the next chapter in that remarkable legacy," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "The Riverwalk and Chinatown Branch Library are architecturally significant, transformative projects that will be shared by generations of Chicagoans and visitors to our great city. I want to congratulate Ross Barney Architects, Sasaki and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP for this prestigious and well-deserved recognition."

The Chicago Riverwalk serves as a 1.25-mile promenade through the heart of the City. The technically challenging project involved extending the south bank of the Chicago River out by 25 feet. The ecologically sensitive design aids in improving water quality, enabling people to interact with the river as they have never been able to before. The three newest sections, or "rooms," of the Riverwalk were completed in 2016 and include:

- **The Water Plaza:** A water feature for children and families to engage with water at the river's edge. (From LaSalle to Wells.)
- **The Jetty:** A series of piers and floating wetland gardens with interactive learning about the ecology of the river, including opportunities for fishing and identifying native plants. (From Wells to Franklin.)
- **The Riverbank:** An accessible walkway and new marine edge creates access to Lake Street and features a public lawn at the confluence. It provides an accessible route from lower to upper Wacker and Lake Street. The City is continuing to explore possibilities for how the room can be developed. (From Franklin to Lake.)

The first three rooms opened in May of 2015 and extended the Riverwalk from its terminus at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at State Street. They include:

**121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602**

- The Marina Plaza: Restaurants and outdoor seating with views of vibrant life on the water, including passing barges, water taxis and sightseeing boats. (From State to Dearborn.)
- The Cove: Also includes a restaurant, a kayak information center, and docking for human-powered crafts enable physical connections to the water through recreation. (From Dearborn to Clark.)
- The River Theater: A sculptural staircase linking Upper Wacker and the Riverwalk offers pedestrian connectivity to the water's edge and seating, while trees provide greenery and shade. (From Clark to LaSalle.)

The six-block section of the Riverwalk was designed by a team of architects including Sasaki and Ross Barney Architects and was constructed by Alfred Benesch & Co. Engineers and Walsh Construction. For more information on the Chicago Riverwalk, please visit [www.chicagoriverwalk.us](http://www.chicagoriverwalk.us).

The 16,000-square-foot, two-story Chinatown Branch opened August 29, 2015 with a partially covered "living" roof, Feng shui-influenced interior design and expansive views of the city. The branch serves as a cultural and information center for those who seek information about the Chinatown community and Chinese culture. It features "Universal Transverse Immigration Proclamation," a mural by CJ Hungerman representing Chinatown's development—past, present and future—and designed in conversation with residents of the Chinatown community.

The branch also includes CPL's signature media and lab space for teens, YOUmedia, CyberNavigator computer tutoring, and an early learning play space for children. It serves the Chinatown, Armour Square, South Loop and Bridgeport neighborhoods and was designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP.

Founded in 1857, The American Institute of Architects consistently works to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings, neighborhoods, and communities. For more information visit [www.AIA.org](http://www.AIA.org).

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