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I&M Canal and Centennial Trail Connection Now Open

With the official ribbon cutting on October 7, the trail connection linking the 3.26 mile Centennial Trail and the 11 mile I&M Canal Trail is now open for public use.

This new connection, made possible by a generous grant from CITGO, wraps along and under the 135th Street bridge on the east side of the canal, and links 14.5 miles of continuous, scenic pathway, allowing travel from Lemont to Joliet. While the project itself is in Romeoville, the grant money donated by CITGO was cooperatively used by the Village of Romeoville, the City of Lockport, and the Forest Preserve District of Will County to develop the connection. The project includes new walkways and curbs, street graphics, a parking area, benches, a bike repair station, directional signage, new landscaping, and a mural under the bridge. Funds have been set aside to maintain the connection, and a future expansion also calls for a branch of the path to connect to the Romeoville Metra station.

“This is a fantastic example of a public-private partnership that has helped us to enhance our community’s trail system,” said Romeoville Mayor John Noak. “I can’t thank our project partners enough for their cooperation.”

“This is another one of those great incremental updates to the region’s bike path system that brings connectivity to our cities and heritage sites,” said Mayor Steven Streit of Lockport. “I’m thankful to Romeoville, CITGO, the Forest Preserve District of Will County, and the City of Lockport for working together to fix this previously fractured part of the trail and allow safe and easy passage along the I&M Canal and Des Plaines River.”

“The Forest Preserve has long been dedicated to connecting our communities through trails and bringing people and nature together,” said Forest Preserve Board President Annette Parker. “For decades, linking our residents to open spaces and other civic areas has been one of our primary goals. Our past partnerships with the Village of Romeoville and the City of Lockport have been highly successful and we look forward to partnering with them on future projects.”

“We have a strong safety culture within CITGO and we wanted to help extend that same focus to our community,” said Jim Cristman, Vice President and General Manager of the CITGO Lemont Refinery. “We are excited to contribute to the new I&M Canal Trail along with our community partners and provide a safer connection between the Lockport and Romeoville communities.”

