



Office of Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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MORGAN STREET BRIDGE TO OFFICIALLY OPEN!

Ribbon Cutting and Parade to Celebrate the Occasion

- WHAT:** The City of Rockford, in partnership with the Illinois Department of Transportation and Rockford community will celebrate the opening of the Morgan Street Bridge with a ribbon cutting and parade.
- WHEN:** Tuesday, December 17, 2013 at 11:00 a.m. in the Center of the Morgan Street Bridge.
- WHERE:** Center of Morgan Street Bridge: *Parking will be available at the Campus Square Mall to the east of the bridge or on Buchanan Street (enter on Loomis) on the west side of the bridge.*
- INTERVIEWS:** Mayor Morrissey, IDOT Secretary Ann Schneider, Omer Osman and Paul Loete of IDOT; Alderman Venita Hervey, Retired Alderman Victory Bell, community leaders, city staff and elected officials.
- PHOTO OP:** Ribbon cutting in center of bridge at 11:00 followed by short fireworks. Parade to begin immediately after ribbon cutting. Vehicles in the parade will be queued from the east at the Campus Square Mall and at the west on Buchanan. Parade will return to City Hall for a short reception and comments from VIP's.
- PARTNERS:** Illinois Department of Transportation and the Rockford community

ABOUT THE 5th MORGAN STREET BRIDGE PROJECT:

The \$29 million Morgan Street Bridge project was awarded in July of 2012. The total cost of the project is actually \$40 million, as it includes various road reconstruction projects in areas surrounding both sides of the bridge. These improvements include reconstructing College Avenue from Kishwaukee Street to the east side of the bridge and Morgan Street from the new bridge to South Main on the west side.

Also, compared to the old structure which was supported by four piers, two of which were in the river, the new structure will allow the 300 foot main span to cross the normal width of the Rock River with no piers in the water at all.

Other bridge amenities include ornamental lighting and railing. Many decisions as to the bridge's look, functions, and impact on surrounding areas were made with the help of community involvement. Two focus groups—the Bridge Focus Group and the Community Revitalization Focus Group—were formed to involve local shareholders. Their mission was to identify transportation needs, identify and evaluate bridge and roadway concepts to address the needs, identify strategies to revitalize the study area, and develop recommendations for implementation.

The new bridge will improve access/circulation to the commercial shopping center (College Square) and provide a “green” buffer along the north side of College Avenue. Once the bridge is done, it is estimated that the average daily traffic will increase from 10,000 people (which it currently sees now) to nearly 60,000 people.

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