



BIRD FRIENDLY CHICAGO

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Contact: Dan Lory

Phone: 312-622-6752

Email: birdfriendlychicago@gmail.com

Bird Friendly Design Ordinance Introduced in Chicago City Council

Chicago, IL (January 23, 2019) – Alderman Brian Hopkins (2nd Ward) introduced in Chicago City Council today the Bird Friendly Design Ordinance (O2019-320). The ordinance establishes bird safe building material and design standards for new building construction in an effort to reduce bird mortality from circumstances that are considered to be “bird hazards.”

In introducing the ordinance, Hopkins noted that “over the past several decades Chicago has taken action to make our beautiful city a less hazardous place for the millions of birds that pass through here, especially during the migration season. This ordinance makes the powerful statement that as we build an ever more vibrant and dynamic city, we will do so in a way that minimizes our city’s negative impact on native and migratory birds.”

The ordinance builds on similar ordinances in other North American cities like San Francisco and Toronto, and it enjoys the support not only of conservation groups, but also architects and other design professionals. Jeanne Gang, Founding Principal of architecture practice Studio Gang, points out: “If we keep environmental impact in mind from the start of the design process, we can create buildings that are functional and aesthetically pleasing, and also bird friendly. This ordinance is a great step forward by a city with a history of groundbreaking architectural advancement.”

The Bird Friendly Design Ordinance championed by Alderman Hopkins is the dedicated mission of Bird Friendly Chicago, an alliance to promote a safer urban environment for birds. “Nationwide, as many as a billion birds are killed every year in collisions with buildings,” says Annette Prince, chair of Bird Friendly Chicago and director of Chicago Bird Collision Monitors. “The average Chicagoan is distressed to see the toll our buildings take on birdlife, but they are heartened to realize that we have it in our power to significantly reduce these tragic deaths. This ordinance is a win-win for the people of Chicago and for the birds that enrich our lives and that are crucial for a healthy environment.”

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David Willard, Collection Manager Emeritus, Bird Division, at the Field Museum, added: "This ordinance is a sensible response to decades of hands-on research in bird collisions conducted by the Field Museum and others, and it fits hand-in-glove with the work that both the Chicago Park District and the Cook County Forest Preserves are doing to preserve and restore our natural areas."

The ordinance, which does not apply to existing structures or to detached homes, townhouses, two-flats or residential buildings of six units or less, was assigned for further review to the Committee on Health and Environmental Protection, and could be brought to the entire City Council for vote as early as April of this year.

About Bird Friendly Chicago.

Bird Friendly Chicago is an alliance of four organizations: Chicago Audubon Society, Chicago Bird Collision Monitors, Chicago Ornithological Society, and Illinois Ornithological Society. Its mission is to promote a safer urban environment for birds through improved lighting, landscaping and glass features of buildings. To learn more, visit www.BirdFriendlyChicago.org.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please call Dan Lory at 312-622-6752, or email at birdfriendlychicago@gmail.com