

RECOGNIZING THE 95th ANNIVERSARY OF THE JACKSON BASCULE BRIDGE

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago is a remarkable metropolis of many natural and manmade wonders that has grown according to the heralded plans of our great engineers and architects and also by the enterprise of those who are today unknown and yet unnamed in our history. Our city is recognized worldwide for its buildings, boulevards and bridges; and,

WHEREAS, January 29, 2011, will mark the 95th anniversary of the trunnion bascule bridge spanning the Chicago River at West Jackson Boulevard. Opened in 1916, this \$425,000 project was the first downtown bridge to fully incorporate the aesthetic ideals of “The Plan of Chicago of 1909” and provided a span without supports causing obstructions in the river. Prior to the plan, utility was the primary consideration in bridge design. Following the plan, bridges were designed to be beautiful and utilitarian; and,

WHEREAS, Two key elements for bridge aesthetics during the early 20th Century were the operator houses and the location of deck support. Operator houses were designed to be pleasing to the eye and decorated with ornament while the structural support of the bridge was below the deck; and,

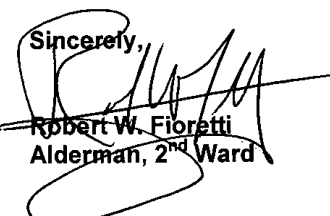
WHEREAS, The bridge was built under the supervision of the Sanitary District, City Engineers and the Chicago Plan Commission. Its structural design was executed by the Joseph E. Strauss Bascule Bridge Co., the superstructure was erected by the Strobel Steel Construction Co. and the substructure was built by the Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Co. The steel came from the Mount Vernon Steel Co., Mount Vernon, Ohio. Its operator houses were designed by Edward H. Bennett, who earlier co-authored “The Plan of Chicago of 1909” with Daniel H. Burnham. Aesthetic features added as much as 10 percent to the overall project cost; and,

WHEREAS, In the early years of its service, this bridge was raised more than 2,500 times annually. It is estimated that over its lifetime it has been raised more than 60,000 times. At present, the bridge is raised about 50 times a year, primarily for the movement of pleasure boats in the spring and fall. With its proximity to Union Station, the bridge serves more than 23,000 pedestrians whereas only 9,000 vehicles cross its span each day. Due to its multifaceted importance, the city invested more than \$3 million in a 1993 renovation of the bridge. Its history has been documented in many books, television programs, architectural and engineering journals and on Web Sites such as www.chicagoloopbridges.com; and,

WHEREAS, The Honorable Robert W. Fioretti, Alderman of the Second Ward, has apprised this august body of the 95th Anniversary of the Jackson Boulevard Bascule Bridge; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED That we, the Mayor and the members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered together this 13th day of January 2011, do hereby recognize this achievement of engineering, aesthetics and endurance and do expect many more years of service from this bridge; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to the City of Chicago Department of Transportation Division of Engineering.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Fioretti
Alderman, 2nd Ward