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City replaces pedestrian bridge along Canal; walkway on north side will temporarily close

INDIANAPOLIS – The City of Indianapolis, Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD) today announced that a stretch of the Downtown Canal Walk near the Ohio Street basin will temporarily close to allow workers to install a new drawbridge on the north side of the basin. From April 6 through April 14, the small portion of the canal walk will not be accessible to the public between West Street and Ohio Street.

Individuals traveling along the northwestern walkway may cross over to the southeastern side of the canal, which will remain open, by using the bridges at West and Ohio streets. There also are elevators near the canal at New York Street and inside the Indiana Historical Society to assist persons who cannot use the stairs to access the street-level bridge.

The replacement of the bridge is part of the city’s preparations for the spring and summer seasons as recreational activities begin to pick up along the canal. New activities will include authentic Italian gondola boat rides, along with pedal boats and remote-controlled boats.

“We are very excited about the growing activity along the downtown canal,” DMD Director Maury Plambeck said. “Replacing the drawbridge at the Ohio Street basin is a necessary step in offering these new recreational options to the community, and we apologize for any inconvenience created by the bridge’s installation.”

The drawbridge, Plambeck explained, lifts up to allow the gondolas and pedal boats to be moved inside to an overnight storage facility adjacent to the Ohio Street basin.

On Monday, signs will be posted along the canal to notify pedestrians of the walkway restriction.

Pedal boat rentals will begin weekend operations on April 17 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and a seven-day schedule will begin in May. Gondola rides can be purchased throughout the week from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. beginning in May. Private gondola rides may be scheduled as early as April 17 before full-time operations begin. All boat rentals and gondola rides will start at the Ohio Street basin.