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**MAYOR EMANUEL PURSUES LANDMARK STATUS FOR BOYSTOWN LEGACY WALK**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced that the City would seek Landmark Status for the Legacy Walk in Boystown. With its Northalsted "Rainbow Pylon" Streetscape with conjoined outdoor museum, the half-mile Legacy Walk remains the only outdoor LGBTQ museum in the world.

"The Legacy Walk is not only a historically significant legacy of the LGBT community of Chicago, but a signal that the entire city is a safe and welcoming place for everyone," said Mayor Emanuel. "As we celebrate Pride Month, let's recognize the countless contributions made by LGBTQ Chicagoans and reaffirm our unwavering belief in equality for all."

The Legacy Walk will be submitted to the Chicago Landmarks Commission for consideration for Landmark Status. Landmark Status will protect the steel pylons and outdoor museum that define the Boystown streetscape. It is being considered for its unique cultural, historical and social heritage, its celebration of individuals who significantly contributed to the development of Chicago, and its distinctive physical presence as a visual feature of the Boystown neighborhood, among other criteria.

"Twenty years ago the installation of the North Halsted Pylons gave rightful recognition to our neighborhood as a center of LGBT life, culture and entertainment," said Alderman Tom Tunney. "For the last six years, the Legacy Project has added real meaning to the pylons, educating our community and visitors on the lives and work of LGBT leaders in history. I am pleased to join with the Mayor today in landmarking these installations so that future generations can learn these stories and enjoy our neighborhood."

The formal process to designate the Legacy Walk as a Chicago Landmark will be led by the Planning, Historic Preservation & Sustainability Bureau of the Department of Planning and Development. Historic preservation staff will spend the next several months researching the area's architectural and historical significance and provide a recommendation to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks. After a public review process, the Landmarks Commission will make its final recommendation and forward the decision to City Council for approval.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Legacy Project, we are humbled and thrilled for this history-making decision to confer Landmark Status upon the Legacy Walk and the world-famous Northalsted Rainbow Pylon Streetscape," said Victor Salvo, Co-Founder and Executive Director of The Legacy Project. "A beacon to the world, the Legacy Walk is a vitally important safe and affirming place in an era when historically 'gay' places are rapidly disappearing. I thank Mayor Emanuel and the City of Chicago who from Day One have shown spectacular support and truly remarkable encouragement of this vision and for working to preserve the memorial for generations to come."

"Boystown is a beacon and global leader in promoting equality, diversity and community for LGBTQ people," said Chad Honeycutt, executive director, Northalsted Business Alliance. "This new designation befits our proud history and those who advocated and sacrificed to create a space where LGBTQ people feel safe and welcome. Boystown stands tall in a city known for its global impact."

The Legacy Walk was first conceived in 1987 to provide a safe place where LGBTQ youth could learn about the historic achievements of people like themselves. In 1991 the city created the Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame to celebrate LGBTQ Chicagoans, the first municipally funded institution of its kind. In 1998 the Chicago dedicated the iconic "Rainbow Pylons" in Boystown as the first, and still the only, permanent, architecturally defined streetscape redevelopment in celebration of the unique cultural and historical contributions of the LGBTQ community. On Coming Out Day in October 2012, Mayor Emanuel dedicated the Legacy Walk, adding kiosks and plaques commemorating the diverse history and prominent leaders of the LGBTQ community. The bronze plaques honor key LGBTQ figures throughout history, many of whom are overlooked by history books, including Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, British mathematician Alan Turing and NASA astronaut Sally Ride. This year, the Legacy Walk will dedicate its 39<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> bronze memorials to fill the remaining two slots available in the museum.

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