

**Opening Remarks by Commissioner Marcia Jiménez
Department of the Environment
City of Chicago**

Friday, March 11 , 2005

Good Morning –

As the City of Chicago continues on the vanguard of green building design, I am pleased to welcome you to the first of its kind summit on bird collisions with buildings.

I am especially pleased to see you here today to give you the charge to continue developing world class architecture that is also environmentally appropriate - not only energy efficient and LEED rated but also healthy for our 8 million migrating birds that come through the city in spring and fall.

We know that birds do not see glass. They are deceived by reflections of natural forms like trees, sky and water in windows. This is a major cause of bird mortality and kills up to 1 billion birds in the U.S. every year.

In 2000 Mayor Daley signed the Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds, formalizing the City's commitment to ensure that the millions of migrating birds that pass through Chicago each season have the best possible 'visitor' experience."

At the same time, the city was breaking ground on our LEED Platinum Chicago Center for Green Technology.

Continuing our tradition of leadership in the green building and green city movements, we launched the Lights Out program to reduce the artificial light that is known to be a significant hazard for birds. With the success of Lights Out – which is now a model for cities throughout North America, we can now see that there are additional urban obstacles for birds that must be addressed.

Through your participation here today, you are a part of a vanguard movement to consider ways to retrofit existing buildings and designing new buildings that will be filled with light, provide healthy ventilation and have windows that are visible to birds, not obstacles to them.

Architects and builders can help reduce or prevent bird from collisions in both new construction and existing structures. Creative use of design elements such as glass with an embedded pattern can be part of the solution for new construction as well. An office or high rise tenant can make their building more bird friendly by simply moving their plants away from the window.

I'm thrilled to see so many members of the building and design community here today to consider solutions to the problem of birds colliding with buildings.

I hope that the exchange of ideas taking place at this conference between the design community, local, state and national partners will make Chicago and other cities as green and healthy for our feathered friends as they are for us.

Your ideas can help save many of the 1 billion birds that die every year just here in the U.S. When great thinkers like you are assembled, anything is possible. The sky is the limit. Let's make our skies limitless for the countless birds flying through Chicago this upcoming migration period and all that follow.

Thank you.