



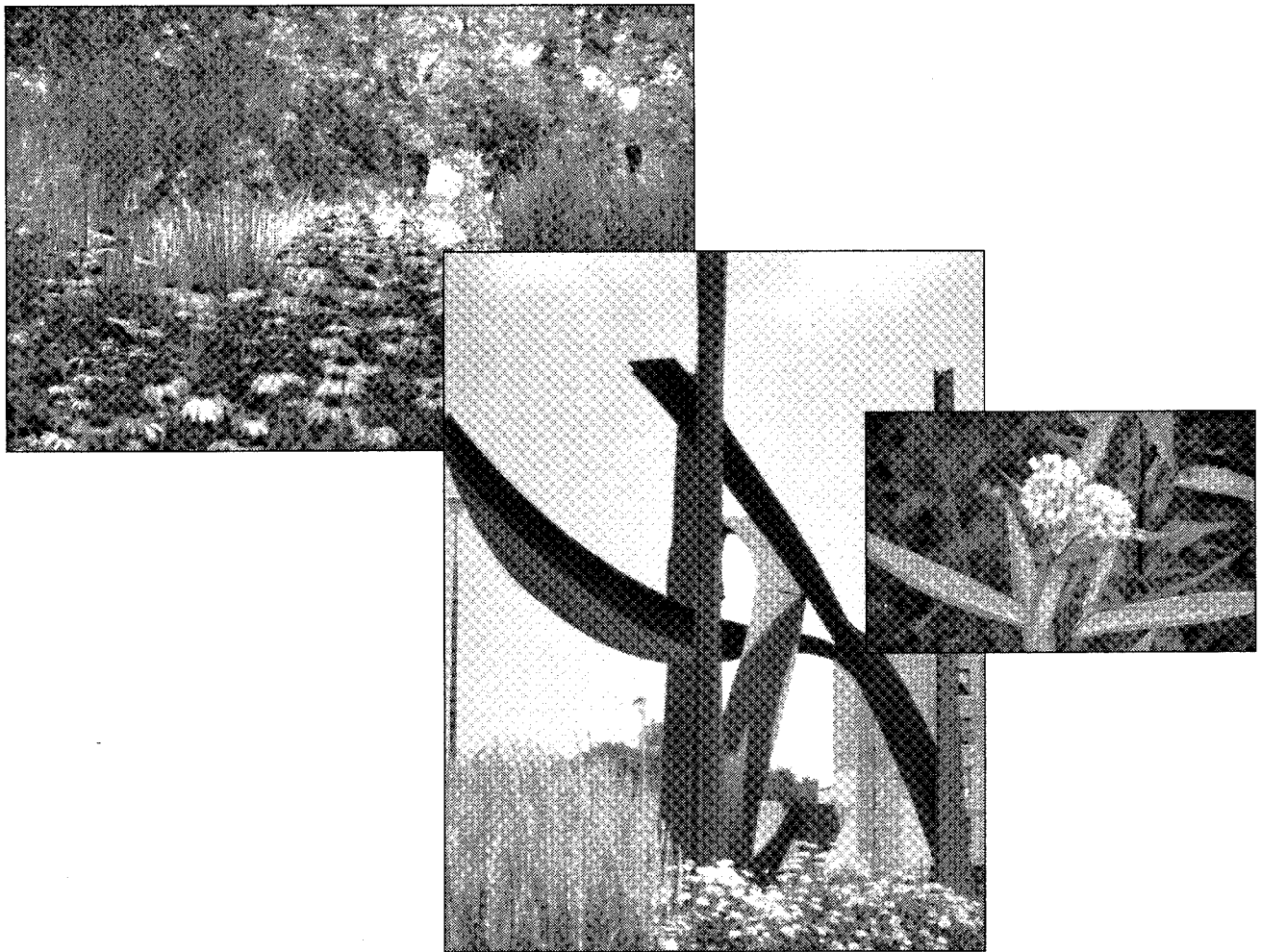
CITYSPACE

AN OPEN SPACE PLAN
FOR CHICAGO

City of Chicago ■ Chicago Park District ■ Forest Preserve District of Cook County

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■ City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

■ Chicago Park District
John Rogers, President

■ Forest Preserve District of Cook County
John H. Stroger, Jr., President

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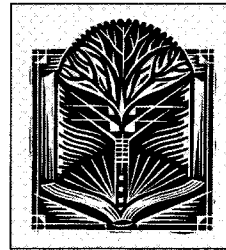
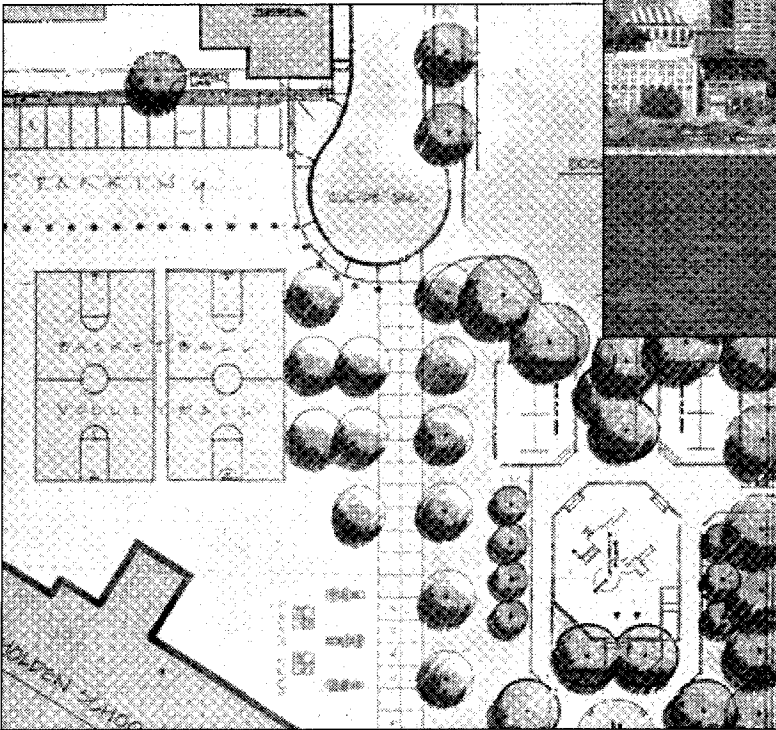
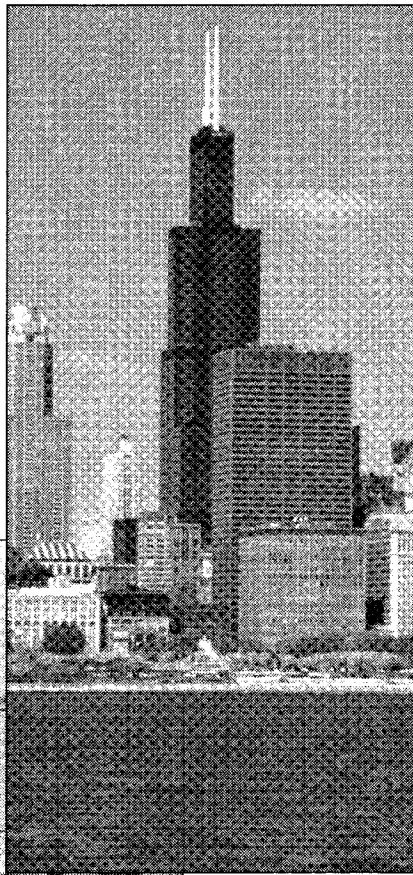
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE CITYSPACE PROJECT WAS INITIATED IN 1993 WITH A GRANT FROM THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR CREATING AND PRESERVING OPEN SPACE IN CHICAGO. THE ORIGINAL CITYSPACE PARTNERS INCLUDED THE CITY OF CHICAGO, THE CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT AND THE FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF COOK COUNTY. IN 1996, THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS JOINED THE PARTNERSHIP AS A LEAD IMPLEMENTING AGENCY.

THE *CitySpace Plan* PRESENTS THE KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CITYSPACE STEERING COMMITTEE AND ITS TEN TASK FORCES. PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED CHICAGO'S OPEN SPACE AGENCIES AND ADVOCATE GROUPS, NUMEROUS PUBLIC AGENCIES, AND CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN CHICAGO. THE PLAN ALSO DESCRIBES NEW OPEN SPACE PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS THAT HAVE BEEN INITIATED AS A RESULT OF THEIR EFFORTS.



WHAT CHICAGO NEEDS

Chicago's large regional parks, historic boulevards and outlying forest preserves have served Chicago well for many decades. But splendid as they are, these assets are insufficient to meet the needs of Chicago residents today.

The three sponsoring local governments have been concerned for some years about the fact that there is simply not enough parkland and open space to serve all Chicago residents. In fact, the majority (63 percent) of Chicago residents live in neighborhoods where the parks are either too crowded or too far away. More parkland is needed to provide all Chicagoans with safe and convenient access to outdoor recreation.

People's use and need for open space has evolved in the hundred years since Chicago's historic park system was established. Today, people need safe trails for bicycling and walking; places to garden; easy and pleasant access to the wilderness of forest preserves; more downtown plazas and green space; neighborhoods that look like someone cares for them, with planters, trees and flowers; and industrial corridors that are well-landscaped and conducive to retaining their existing businesses and capturing new ones.

In today's mobile society, sufficient open space is an economic necessity for metropolitan areas. While many factors influence the decision of a company or an indi-

vidual to move into or out of a city, a major consideration is quality of life. Parks, trails, and aesthetics are critical variables in the quality of life equation.

Currently, Chicago lags behind other metropolitan areas in this regard, ranking 18th out of 20 cities of comparable size, according to one study that assessed the ratio of open space acres to population. To be competitive with other cities in attracting business, Chicago cannot afford to ignore any of the components that influence location decisions.

Another deficiency in the existing system is that certain natural resources, whose preservation is of value to the entire Chicago metropolitan region, have not been adequately appreciated and protected. These include the south lakefront; lands along the inland waterways, which provide habitat for migrating bird and other wildlife; and other lands of high ecological integrity that support habitat for plants and animals rare in Chicago.

SETTING GOALS FOR INCREASING OPEN SPACE

Two needs for open space are consistent city-wide. Each community needs enough acres of public open space available to serve the residents who live there, and residents of every community deserve to have parks or other open spaces that are within reasonable travel distances.

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With this understanding, the *CitySpace Plan* recommends short-term and long-range goals to ensure that all Chicago neighborhoods have convenient access to public open space. By 2010, the *CitySpace Plan* recommends that the city strive to have eliminated all unserved areas and to bring all communities up to the Chicago Park District's minimum standard of two acres of open space per 1,000 residents. The long-term goal is to raise the city's overall supply of open space from four acres to five acres per 1,000 residents.

Reaching these goals is no small task: acquiring and improving enough land to serve all Chicagoans will require creative and aggressive work on the part of the CitySpace partnership.

PROTECTING AND MANAGING THE LAND: KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The city's land resources are vast and varied. The *CitySpace Plan* determined the greatest opportunities for creating new open spaces are found in three places, which can be taken advantage of with the following actions:

1) Land Surrounding Schools. The majority of public schools are surrounded by concrete or asphalt. The *CitySpace Plan* recommends that these be converted, at least in part, into grassy landscaped areas for school children's play and also to provide parkland for the surrounding neighborhood.

2) Inland Waterways. Inland waterways, such as those along the Chicago River and the extensive wetlands at Lake Calumet, offer significant potential for trails, greenways and preserves for wildlife habitat. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District owns 385 acres of land along 12 miles of Chicago's inland waterway system and an additional 265 acres of the Lake Calumet ecosystem. These properties could be leased from the MWRD by Chicago's open space agencies for little or no cost.

3) Vacant Lots. The vacant lots scattered throughout the city's neighborhoods represent a valuable land resource for open space, as well as for commercial and residential development. Though the process of transferring City-owned lots and tax-delinquent lots to community groups has been made easier over the past five years, hurdles still remain. To facilitate acquisition, the *CitySpace Plan* recommends that the City's Tax Reactivation Program be expanded to recognize open space as a desirable use for tax-delinquent vacant lots. The Plan also recommends a process for transferring City-owned vacant land to open space organizations.

Even when the processes are in place to make it simpler to transfer ownership of vacant lots for the purposes of creating open space, these endeavors are thwarted by the problem of who should own, manage and carry the insurance for these sites.

The *CitySpace Plan* proposed the creation of "NeighborSpace," a non-profit organization that will solve this dilemma. Vacant lots destined to become parks, vegetable and flower gardens, sculpture gardens, natural areas, protected river edges or scenic landscapes can be owned and insured by NeighborSpace. All NeighborSpace sites will be maintained and managed by local block clubs, businesses or other neighborhood groups.

FRAMEWORK PLAN: **SPECIFIC GOALS FOR A DIVERSITY OF OPEN SPACES**

The three recommendations above are part of a comprehensive plan for creating a variety of new open spaces in Chicago. Following are highlights from key policy recommendations for each component of the CitySpace Framework Plan.

Neighborhood Spaces:

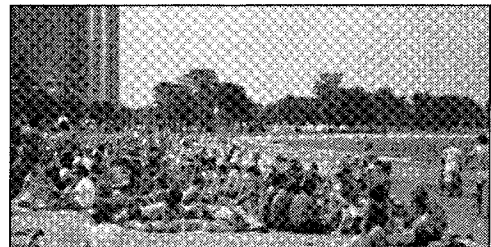
- Convert public school grounds into parks to serve both the school and surrounding neighborhood.
- Establish a long-term funding base for NeighborSpace to support community-managed open spaces.
- Ensure that neighborhood spaces are safe by including the Community Alternative Policy Strategy (CAPS) in all neighborhood open space planning and maintenance programs.

Greenways:

- Create greenways along the North and South branches of the Chicago River, North Shore Channel, Sanitary and Ship Canal and within the Lake Calumet district.
- Require new development along the inland waterways to locate at least 30 feet back from the waterway.
- Create new bikeways and nature trails along abandoned railroad corridors, especially to link existing open space.

Lakefront:

- Create an open air museum park on Northerly Island upon the closure of Meigs Field.
- Expand other lakefront parks by converting parking lots, roadways, railways and other underused paved areas to green space.
- Create new parkland as part of the redevelopment of the USX property on the southeast side.
- Expand parkland and beaches as part of the Shoreline Reconstruction Project.



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Wetlands and Natural Areas:

- Protect significant wetlands and natural areas by acquiring or leasing publicly-owned land and negotiating conservation easements on private property.
- Ensure protection of the wetlands and natural areas in the Lake Calumet district through a comprehensive preservation and industrial development strategy.
- Promote landscaping on vacant land and parkways along industrial streets, and promote outdoor recreational space development for use by employees and local residents.
- Improve the landscape surrounding municipal buildings and encourage their use by employees and surrounding residents.

Downtown:

- Create a Riverwalk through a continuous network of parks, walkways and recreational areas throughout the Downtown district.
- Expand Grant Park at the north end by developing parkland and outdoor cultural and entertainment space on inactive railyards east of Michigan Avenue, between Randolph Drive and Monroe Street.
- Expand Grant Park at the south end by incorporating the area east of Michigan Avenue, between 11th Street and Roosevelt Road, into the park.
- Create new open spaces on downtown vacant lots.

Transportation Corridors, Industrial Corridors and Municipal Buildings:

- Create more green spaces along Chicago's transportation corridors by requiring landscaping as part of new public works projects and by encouraging public-private partnerships for landscaping the public way.

IMPLEMENTING THE CITYSPACE PLAN

The effectiveness of the *CitySpace Plan* ultimately will be determined by what happens on the ground. The tasks of defining need and creating physical plans for open spaces are only first steps in the process. If true change is to be realized, the participating local governments must coordinate and organize their efforts to develop, manage and finance the projects and programs.

The CitySpace action plan guides decision making and establishes the intergovernmental and public-private compacts necessary to: maintain the organization and planning framework necessary to achieve short-term and long-range open space goals; acquire and improve the land for new open space, using a variety of public and private resources; recruit private citizens in developing and maintaining open spaces; and ensure that private development complements public open space goals.

Much of what must be done is contained in previously-stated objectives. In addition, the *CitySpace Plan* recommends the following specific actions:

1. Establish an intergovernmental development structure to implement the *CitySpace Plan*.
2. Set priorities and establish a development schedule for open space projects through an integrated capital improvement program and annual budget allocations for open space land acquisition and development.
3. Create new zoning requirements for residential development to ensure that open space requirements for private development complements the neighborhood's public open spaces.
4. Establish appropriate zoning classifications to support open space development and preservation goals.
5. Secure public open space and conservation easements along the inland waterways and within the Lake Calumet District through zoning and guidelines for waterway development.
6. Incorporate open space projects in development plans for Tax Increment Financing districts, Special Service Areas, Strategic Neighborhood Action Program areas and other programs funded by Community Development Block Grants.
7. Identify and implement open space projects and programs within Empowerment Zones.
8. Increase Chicago's share of state funding for developing open space and support continued funding of federal programs for open space development and preservation.
9. Form partnerships with local and national foundations to implement programs and projects recommended in the *CitySpace Plan*.
10. Support collaborative programs that involve citizen stewardship.

What was once a small park
and barren land has been
developed into an attractive,
enjoyable facility for people
of all ages. One of the best
parts of this project is the
message it sends to the
children: we value you and
consider you an important
part of Chicago's future.
We are trying to make your
lives better.

*Mayor Richard M. Daley,
Altgeld Gardens Carver Park
dedication, 1993*



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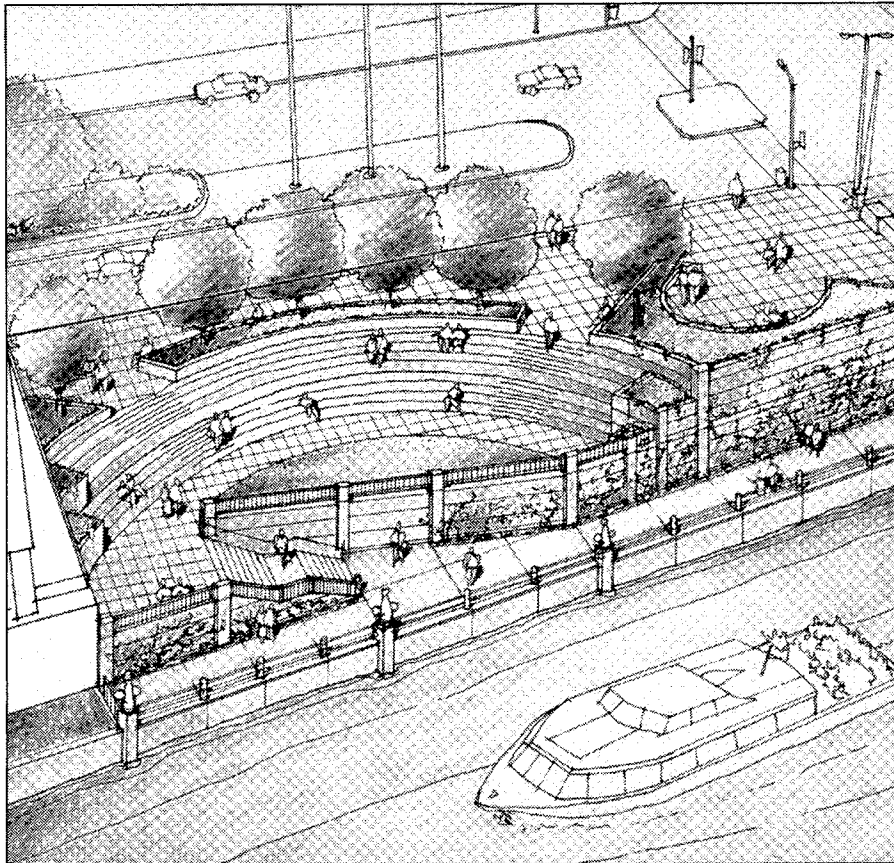
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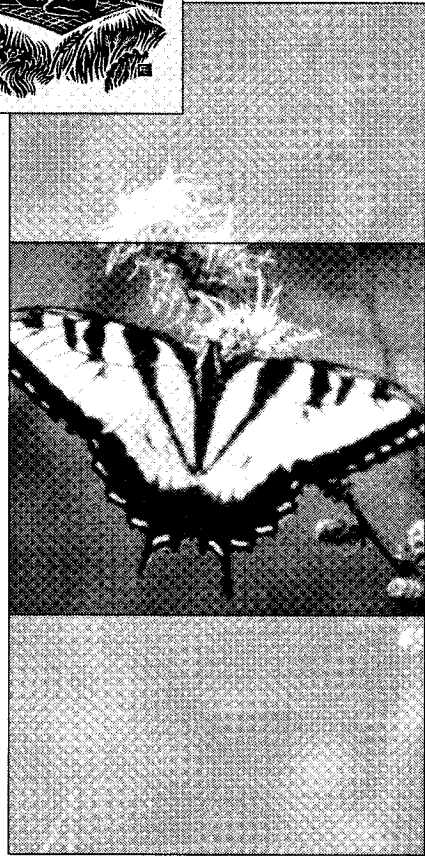
CONCLUSION

Now is the time to demonstrate that today's leaders have the vision and tenacity to leave Chicago a legacy of public open spaces as significant as the priceless parks, boulevards and forest preserves created by the city's early visionaries. Today's leaders have already participated in the formation of the *CitySpace Plan*, but the challenge now lies in its implementation. The *CitySpace Plan* serves as a call to action to the champions needed to lead the effort and achieve the Plan's goals.



Proposed river park north of Van Buren Bridge

BACKGROUND



BACKGROUND

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

CHICAGO'S OPEN SPACE LEGACY

THE SYSTEM OF OPEN SPACE TODAY

WHAT CHICAGO NEEDS TODAY

THE VALUE OF OPEN SPACE

DEFINING OPEN SPACE NEEDS

HOW CHICAGO COMPARES TO OTHER CITIES

REGIONAL OPEN SPACE NEEDS

COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE NEEDS

ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY

OPEN SPACE NEED FACTORS

GOALS FOR MEETING OPEN SPACE NEEDS

PLACES TO GROW

WHERE CHICAGO WILL FIND THE LAND

RESOURCES TO MEET ITS OPEN SPACE NEEDS

VACANT LAND

INLAND WATERWAYS

LAND ADJACENT TO PUBLIC BUILDINGS

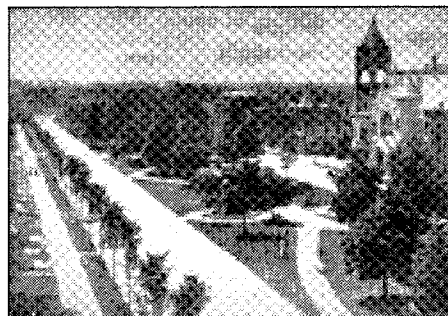
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OPEN SPACE TYPOLOGY AND SITE EVALUATION

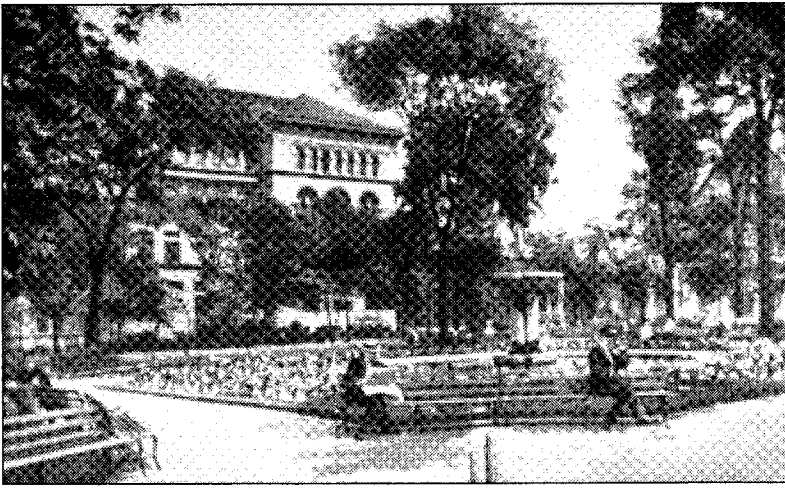
THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

CHICAGO'S OPEN SPACE LEGACY

As early as 1835, in the midst of great land speculation, residents of the fledgling City of Chicago held meetings to discuss saving some federally owned land as open parcels to be “accessible at all times for the people.”¹ When maps were drawn to subdivide and sell Fort Dearborn (located near the intersection of Michigan and Wacker), two parcels were labeled “public ground.”² One was dedicated as Dearborn Park in 1839. The other parcel was marked with the notation “public ground—forever to remain free of buildings.”³ This lakeshore property was transferred to the City in 1844 and formally dedicated as Lake Park in 1847. Later it would be renamed and would become the first piece of today’s Grant Park.



Drexel Boulevard, 1869



Washington Square, 1842

The First Parks. The few other parks created during the 1840s and 1850s were small-scale plots donated or sold cheaply to the City by real estate speculators who knew that a small square in the center of a residential development would boost the value of the entire neighborhood. In 1849, a forward-thinking developer suggested a more ambitious plan. John S. Wright stated, "I foresee a time, not very distant, when Chicago will need for its fast increasing population a park or parks in each division. Of these parks I have a vision. They are improved and connected with a wide avenue, extending to and along the lake shore on the north and south, and surrounding the city with a magnificent chain of parks and parkways that have not their equal in the world."⁴ Wright's idea would later serve as the genesis of one of the earliest boulevard systems in the nation.

At the same time, people were increasingly concerned about the health threat perpetrated by a public cemetery that was located right on the lakefront. Physician John H. Rauch determined that the burials in the sandy low-lying site threatened Chicagoans with cholera, small pox and other diseases, since drinking water was drawn from the lake. Rauch's crusade to convert the burial ground into a public park met with success in 1860. Later, after President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, the park was named Lincoln Park in his honor.

The Park Commissions. By the late 1860s, citizens throughout Chicago were demanding the creation of additional parks. As a result, three Acts of the Illinois Legislature were approved in 1869 establishing the South, West and Lincoln Park commissions. Each commission had its own jurisdiction and was responsible for improving one section of what was intended as a unified park and boulevard system to encircle the city.

The South Park Commission hired Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux to design South Park, known today as Jackson and Washington parks and the Midway Plaisance. Olmsted, designer of New York's Central Park, believed that parks should not only provide a release from urban tensions, but also serve as democratic places of friendly interaction between people of all classes.

The original West Park system was designed by Olmsted's friend and colleague, William Le Baron Jenney, an architect, planner and engineer. The original ensemble of the West Park system are now known as Humboldt, Garfield, and Douglas parks.

The Lincoln Park Commission expanded its original 60-acre park, often through landfill additions, and created Lake Shore Drive as a boulevard linkage with the south parks. Although Diversey Parkway was intended as the boulevard connection with the west parks, it was developed as a typical city street from the Chicago River to the lake. As a result, the boulevard system formed a horseshoe rather than the ring that had been envisioned.

Growth Leads to Greater Demand for Parks. By the 1890s, Chicago was undergoing tremendous industrial and population growth. Between the formation of the three park systems in 1869 and 1900, Chicago's population increased five-fold, to a total of 1.7 million people. The amount of new parkland during the same period, however, totaled only slightly more than 100 acres. Nearly 750,000 people resided in the central part of the city, more than a mile away from any parks.

As it increased in population, Chicago's geographic boundaries also widened. In 1889, residents of townships within 120 square miles around the city voted in favor of annexation by Chicago. These territories were far from existing parks and did not fall within the jurisdictions of any of the three park commissions. A law created to allow the formation of new park boards eventually led to the establishment of 19 additional park districts.

The annexed areas, and regions slightly beyond them, contained exceptional natural features already threatened by development. These included the meadow lands along the Des Plaines River, Skokie Marsh, Lake Calumet and the Calumet rivers, and the bluffs and forested ravines along the north shore of Lake Michigan.

Birth of Comprehensive Open Space Planning. During the 1890's, Jane Addams and other social reformers created the city's first playgrounds in the tenement districts. City leaders soon realized that these scattered efforts could not satisfy the growing demand for clean and healthy places for children to play.



Women's open air gymnasium at Mark White Square, 1905

On November 6, 1899, the City Council formally established the Special Park Commission to survey all the existing parks, playgrounds and open lands in the region and to develop a "consistent plan" that would satisfy "present and future" needs for parks and other recreation areas in Chicago.⁵

The Special Park Commission decided to build fifteen playgrounds in the city's most densely populated neighborhoods and continued to collect data for its study. However, due to the budget constraints, the Commission could only establish a few municipal playgrounds on its own, and instead put its efforts behind helping the Board of Education and the South, West, and Lincoln Park commissions to create new parks and playgrounds.

Using the information it had collected on population density and residents' proximity to parks, the Commission identified appropriate sites for acquisition. In some cases these were barren lands near schools. More often, however, existing schools were in congested "wards destitute of playground space, built flush with the sidewalk, hugging and overhanging alleys and hovels."⁶ The Board of Education was urged to adopt a rule requiring that whenever a new elementary



Wading pool at Mark White Square, 1905

For health and good order there should be one acre of park area for each hundred people.

Dwight H. Perkins, Report of the Special Park Commission, 1904



school was constructed, an open-air playground would be set up adjacent to it.

South Parks Set the Standards. Of the three existing park boards, the South Park Commission was the most progressive in creating new parks. The South Park Commission's General Superintendent, J. Frank Foster, believed that neighborhood parks should have separate indoor and outdoor gymnasias for men and women, running tracks, wading pools, playground equipment, sand courts, fieldhouses with assembly and club rooms, and beautifully landscaped grounds.

In 1904, the Olmsted brothers and Daniel

H. Burnham and Co. entered into contracts with the South Park Commission for the collaborative landscape and architectural design of a system of fourteen neighborhood parks. The Special Park Commission's data helped identify the sites for the new parks. By 1905, ten of the fourteen parks were completed and opened to the public. The new parks were an immediate success. In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt called the parks "one of the most notable civic achievements of Any American city."⁷



Special Parks Commission members reviewing plans for the Forest Preserves, ca. 1905

Birth of the Forest Preserve District.

The 1899 mandate for the Special Park Commission to examine undeveloped lands at the outer regions of the city was instrumental in forming the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. After conducting an intensive study, architect Dwight H. Perkins and landscape architect Jens Jensen recommended the protection of thousands of acres in the Des Plaines River Valley, along the banks of the Little Calumet River, and within the Skokie Marsh region along the north shore of Lake Michigan.

Perkin's and Jensen's recommendation to reserve a crescent-shaped belt of natural lands at the perimeter of the city impressed Henry G. Foreman, the president of the Cook County Board, who formed the Outer Belt Park Commission in 1903. In 1905, the Commission decided the rising costs of land made the immediate adoption of a bill establishing forest preserves imperative. An act was quickly drafted and presented to the State legislature, only to be followed by several years of political debate on the issue.

Daniel Burnham's help was enlisted to garner support for a comprehensive vision of the forest preserve and boulevard



Dwight Perkins at Skokie Marsh, ca 1900

system. In his seminal 1909 Plan of Chicago, Burnham considered a forest preserve system "as practical and quite as much needed as were the boulevards of a generation ago, which have now become interior thoroughfares of priceless value."⁸ In 1915, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County was formally established, and within 10 years, the District had accumulated 24,000 acres of land.



Aerial view of Burnham Park looking north, ca. 1950

The need for breathing spaces and recreation grounds is being forced upon the attention of practical men, who are learning to appreciate the fact that a city, in order to be a good labor-market, must provide for the health and pleasure the great body of workers.

Daniel Burnham, Plan of Chicago, 1909



The Lakefront Plan. Daniel Burnham's 1909 plan called for landfill from Wilmette to Jackson Park. The plan asserted: "This park, enclosing lagoons for boating, would be a continuous playground for the people, and may be built utilizing the wastage from the city and excavated material at practically no cost."

Burnham envisioned Grant Park as the civic "heart" of downtown, with a new Field Museum of Natural History as the centerpiece. Aaron Montgomery Ward, owner of a mail order house on Michigan Avenue, launched a legal campaign to protect the park's open character in the late 1890s. After a series of lawsuits, the State Supreme Court ruled in Ward's favor in 1911. The museum was eventually constructed at the southeast edge of Grant Park.

The presence of the Illinois Central Railroad's right-of-way and the U.S. Government's harbor rights hindered further lakefront development for several years. An ordinance to protect and expand the lakefront was approved in 1919, and in the 1920s, agreements were reached between the various agencies, and some filling began. However, the World's Fair in 1933 was the impetus that led to the completion of the most substantial portion of Burnham's lakefront plan, although only one of the five proposed islands was actually created. In homage to the great planner, the entire landfill area between Jackson and Grant parks was named Burnham Park.

Consolidation of Commissions and Functions. The Great Depression caused the bankruptcy of most of the individual park districts, and consolidation was inevitable. In 1934, the Illinois state legislature consolidated 22 independent agencies to create the Chicago Park District as a separate government body. Over the next eight years, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided \$84 million of federal funding for park work. State and city matching funds increased the total improvement budget to approximately \$105 million, and the Chicago Park District's work force was increased to nearly 10,000 employees. This was the last great period of park expansion in Chicago, with improvements to small parks, the reconstruction of Lake Shore Drive, and major landfill extensions to Burnham and Lincoln parks.

Over the years, the City of Chicago acquired 243 parks and playlots of its own. The majority were less than 10 acres in size, and many of the playlots were only a fraction of an acre. In 1959, the City and Park District entered into the Functional Consolidation Act through which the City parks and playlots were turned over to the Chicago Park District, the separate park police force was eliminated, and the boulevards were transferred to the City of Chicago.

Table 1a shows the park acreage acquired by the Chicago Park District and its predecessors from 1840 to 1992, along with the population it served.

Table 1a

CHICAGO PARK ACRES, 1840-1990

Year	Population	Park Acres	Acres/1000 Residents
1840	4,470	2	0.4
1860	112,172	37	0.3
1890	1,099,850	2,006	1.8
1910	2,185,283	3,242	1.5
1930	3,376,438	5,713	1.7
1950	3,620,962	7,480	2.1
1970	3,366,957	6,974	2.1
1990	2,783,726	7,423	2.6

Source: Chicago Park District, Research and Planning Division, 1996

THE SYSTEM OF OPEN SPACE TODAY

The legacy of the past is present today in our existing parks, forest preserves and boulevards. The following provides an overview of the major open space agencies, their roles, and landholdings.

Chicago Park District

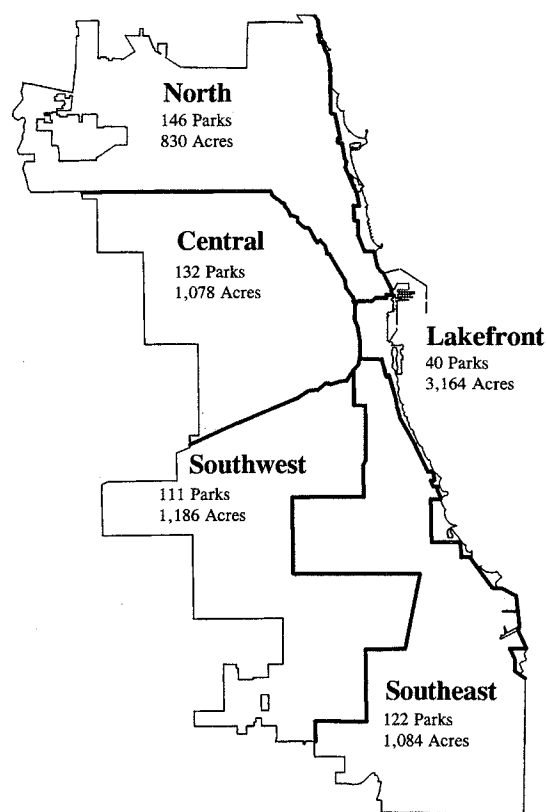
The mission of the Park District is to acquire, develop, and maintain park properties, and to make parks available to residents in all areas of the city. The Chicago Park District is the largest owner of public open space in Chicago, with 551 properties covering 7,341 acres. These parks range in size from mini-parks smaller than one acre to the 1,212-acre Lincoln Park. Most parks contain playground equipment and other recreational facilities. Many of these parks also contain non-open space uses: major city museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago, Field Museum, Adler Planetarium and the Shedd Aquarium; harbor facilities; McCormick Place; and paved areas, including Meigs Field and Lake Shore Drive. Adjusting for these non-park facilities, there remains a total of 6,697 acres of parkland owned and maintained by the Chicago Park District.

Chicago's 40 lakefront parks encompass approximately 2,520 acres of parkland, approximately 38 percent of the Chicago

Park District's total park acreage (see Figure 1 and Table 1b). The majority of parkland, or 4,177 acres, is distributed within 511 parks located in the Chicago Park District's five neighborhood regions.

Figure 1

PARK ACRES BY REGION



Source: Chicago Park District,
Research and Planning Division, 1998

Table 1b

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT OPEN SPACE

Type	Characteristics	Examples	Number	Percent*
Magnet Park	50+ acres, attracting large numbers of visitors from the entire metropolitan area	Burnham, Grant, Jackson and Lincoln parks	5	38%
Citywide Park	50+ acres, attracting visitors from the entire city	Douglas, Garfield, Humboldt, Marquette, and Washington parks	10	25%
Regional Park	15-50 acres, with indoor and outdoor recreational facilities serving a section of the city	Horner, Portage, Rogers and Welles parks	46	16%
Community Park	5-15 acres, with indoor and outdoor recreation facilities serving several neighborhoods	Amundsen, Crescent, Fuller, Hiawatha and Jefferson parks	130	14%
Neighborhood Park	.5-5 acres, with outdoor and sometimes indoor recreation facilities serving a neighborhood	Cole, Dooley, Gross, Jonquil, Pietrowski and Seneca parks	159	4%
Mini-Park	Less than 1 acre, playground	Baraga, Buckthorn, Harding, Nelson and Willow parks	145	.5%
Passive/Natural Area	Landscaped park without indoor or outdoor facilities for active recreation	Auburn, Sayre, Clark parks, River Esplanade and Washington Square	41	2%
Unimproved	Sites for future park development	Chinatown Park and DuSable parks	15	.5%
Total Chicago Park District Parks/Open Spaces			551	100%

Region	Acres **	Percent of Parkland Acres
Lakefront	2,520	38%
North	830	12%
Central	1,078	16%
Southwest	1,186	18%
South	1,083	16%
Total Parkland Acres	6,697	100%

Source: Chicago Park District, Research and Planning Division, 1998.

* Percent of total (7,341) Chicago Park District acreage.

** Adjusted for non-park facilities.



Forest Preserve District of Cook County

By working together in partnership with the City of Chicago and the Chicago Park District, we can meet the challenge of preserving and protecting more open space for the residents of Chicago, and all who enjoy nature's bounties.

*President John H. Stroger, Jr.,
Board of Forest Preserve Commissioners, 1995*



The Forest Preserve District of Cook County was created as a county-wide government by the Illinois legislature in 1915; its board is comprised of the same members as the Cook County Board. The mission of the Forest Preserve District is to acquire, restore, and manage natural lands as nearly as may be possible in their natural state and condition, for the purpose of preserving and protecting the prairies, forests, wetlands, rivers, and streams for the education, pleasure, and recreation of the public.

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County is the second-largest owner of public open space in Chicago, with 3,683 acres distributed in three separate areas of the City. Table 1c shows the variety of the FPDCC's facilities and landholdings in Chicago. The North Branch Division consists of 877 acres of forest preserves on the north side of the city, along the North Branch of the Chicago River and north of Foster Avenue. The Indian Boundary Division consists of 1,786 acres of forest preserve on the northwest side of the city, east of the Des Plaines River and north of Belmont Avenue. The Calumet Division consists of 1,020 acres of forest preserves on the far southeast side of the city, near the Wolf Lake Conservation Area and the Little Calumet River, and on the

southwest side of the city along Western Avenue and the city limits.

The vast bulk of the FPDCC's 67,000-acre holdings lie outside the city. When the FPDCC was formed, over two million people already lived in Chicago, making land acquisition difficult within its borders. The FPDCC concentrated its land buying in outlying areas, where large tracts of land could be acquired less expensively, and the agency was highly successful in this effort. These forest preserves contain natural areas of high ecological integrity, and some offer recreational opportunities not available in the city. Giving Chicagoans better access to these amenities is a priority for the FPDCC. The agency plans to connect city dwellers to its outlying forest preserves using greenways and other efforts, including working with public transportation authorities.



Table 1c

**FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF COOK COUNTY
RECREATION FACILITIES IN CHICAGO**

Division	Areas / Facilities	Acres
North Branch	Edgebrook Woods and picnic grove, Indian Road Woods, Caldwell Woods and picnic grove, Forest Glen Woods and picnic grove, LaBagh Woods and picnic grove, Billy Caldwell Golf Course, Edgebrook Golf Course and community clubhouse, Jensen Toboggan Slide and North Branch Bicycle Trail (paved)	877
Indian Boundary	Catherine Chevalier Woods and picnic grove, Robinson Woods and picnic grove, Schiller Woods and picnic grove, Che-che-pin-qua Woods and picnic grove, La Framboise Reserve, Indian Boundary Golf Course and Des Plaines Multi-Use Trail	1,786
Calumet	Powderhorn Lake and picnic grove, Burnham Woods, Eggers Grove and picnic grove, Wolf Lake overlook and picnic grove, Beaubien Woods and picnic grove, Flatfoot Lake and picnic grove, and Dan Ryan Woods and picnic grove and Dan Ryan Toboggan Slide	1,020
Total Forest Preserve District of Cook County Acreage in City of Chicago		3,683



City of Chicago

The City of Chicago and its various departments own and maintain a significant amount of public open space. The City owns 31 plazas and squares, which constitute more than 20 acres of open space distributed throughout 16 community areas. In addition, the Chicago Department of Water maintains the 10-acre Olive Park near Grand Avenue and Lake Michigan, and the Department of the Environment maintains the North Park Village Nature Center, which includes 46 acres of natural areas, wetlands, woodlands, and trails.

The City of Chicago has had jurisdiction over the boulevard system since its transfer from the Park District in 1959. Today, responsibility for the boulevards is shared among three departments. The Department of Planning and Development is responsible for overall planning of the boulevard system; the Department of Transportation carries out system improvements; and the Department of Streets and Sanitation is responsible for the maintenance, management and operations of the system.

Table 1d provides a summary of how the 11,499 acres of open space in Chicago is distributed among the Chicago Park District, Forest Preserve District, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the City of Chicago. In addition, Map 1 shows how the publicly owned open space is distributed throughout the city.

Table 1d

CHICAGO OPEN SPACE BY OWNER

Owner	Acres
Chicago Park District	6,697
Forest Preserve District of Cook County	3,683
Illinois Department of Natural Resources (William Powers Conservation Area, Wolf Lake)	613
City of Chicago:	
Parks, Malls and Plazas	30
North Park Village Nature Center	46
Boulevards (estimate)	405
Other local acres	25
Total Acres	11,499

Map 1

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN CHICAGO

