

WETLANDS AND NATURAL AREAS

VISION: TO PROTECT, MAINTAIN, AND ENHANCE OUTSTANDING EXAMPLES OF THE ECOLOGY OF THE CHICAGO LAKE PLAIN. CITIZENS WILL BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPERIENCE NATURE DUE TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE WETLANDS AND NATURAL AREAS SURROUNDING LAKE CALUMET AND THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF OTHER NATURAL AREAS REMAINING WITHIN CHICAGO.



INTRODUCTION

Several thousand years ago, a vast glacial lake covered the land Chicago occupies today. As the climate altered, the waters receded, eventually forming Lake Michigan's current shoreline. The land the glacial waters left behind retained the smooth, level contours of a lake bed; the flat land is called the Chicago Lake Plain. On this level surface, rainwater seeped slowly through wet prairies, marshes, and alongside the ridges of oak groves. But beginning about a hundred fifty years ago, the moist Chicago Lake Plain began to be altered tremendously by civilization. The lakefront was filled in. Hundreds of small streams were corralled into the banks of one waterway, the Chicago River. Then the natural direction of that river was reversed to flow away from the lake. On land, marshes were filled, oaks were cut down, and prairies were paved.

Remarkably, in the aftermath of these sweeping changes, there are still remnants of the original Lake Plain landscape to be found within Chicago's borders. At Lake Calumet on the southeast side, great blue herons feed in wetlands just as they have for hundreds of years. On the far northwest side, remnants of oak savanna provide safe haven for unusual butterflies and rare plants. In fact, there are more high quality natural areas in Cook County than any other county in Illinois.¹

Today, these remnants of natural land are primarily the responsibility of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, the agency formally charged with preserving, restoring and acquiring wetlands and natural areas. The Forest Preserve District owns and manages over 3,683 acres of land within the City of Chicago, concentrated in four large sites on the northwest, southeast, and southwest parts of the city.

Scattered throughout the Chicago metropolitan region survive small remnants of the original Illinois wilderness including tallgrass prairies and oak woodlands, communities that are more endangered than the tropical rain forests. These rare remnants, with their thousands of native species, are of global conservation priority.

Chicago Wilderness, 1996



NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Significant Natural Features. Many other remnants of natural land are owned by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Chicago Park District and other public and private landowners. In 1994, the City's Department of Environment (DOE) completed an inventory of natural areas within the City of Chicago.² Most of the sites were identified through a questionnaire sent to a variety of experts of Chicago's natural history. The CitySpace Wetlands and Natural Areas Task Force carefully examined the sites in the DOE inventory and those previously identified by the Illinois Natural Area Inventory and the Chicago Park District³ (see Table 9 and Map 6).

Land Management. Management plans for Chicago's natural areas must recognize the fact that, while covering a broad geographic area and a variety of ownership interests, these sites are truly part of an interrelated natural system. For example, the Chicago River, Lake Calumet and Lake Michigan serve as navigable waterways and prime locations for commercial and industrial businesses, but they also play roles in Chicago's hydrology and as habitat in the hemispheric migratory bird route.

The management practices of the Forest Preserve District emphasize conservation and preservation of wetlands and natural areas. The Chicago Department of Environment manages North Park Village Nature Preserve as a natural area. All the other significant natural areas and wetlands listed on Table 9 require

management strategies that will preserve and enhance each area's natural features. Some sites will need to be acquired to ensure protection. Others are in public ownership and will require an interagency transfer or a change in management practices.



Table 9

WETLANDS AND NATURAL AREAS IN CHICAGO

Site	CITYWIDE SITES			LAKE CALUMET AREA SITES		
	DOE*	TF*	Site	DOE*	TF*	Site
North Shore Channel-Argyle to Howard(1)	X	X	Chicago Park District Sites			Lake Calumet
Budlong Woods (Bryn Mawr & California)	X	X	Auburn Park			Big Marsh
Chicago Mental Health Read Zone(2)	X	X	Beverly Wetland	X		Calumet River
South Branch Chicago River Corridor Open Space between Polk and Roosevelt (east side)	X	X	California Park		X	Deadstink Pond(1)
Wave-Cut Cliff and Beach Ridges-Sand Dune (Taylor St. & S. Branch Chicago River)	X	X	Columbus Park	X	X	Heron Pond
South Branch Chicago River Corridor Open Space between Roosevelt and 16th Street (east)	X	X	Douglas Park	X	X	Indian Ridge Marsh North including 120th and 116th Street Marshes+
South Branch Chicago River between Congress and Cermak	X	X	Eugene Field Park	X	X	Indian Ridge Marsh South
Sanitary and Ship Canal(1)	X	X	Garfield Park	X	X	Lake Calumet(3)
South of Douglas Park, Exposed Bedrock	X	X	Gompers Park	X	X	Railroad Prairie
Southwest of Humboldt Park, Bedrock Outcrop	X	X	Grant Park	X	X	Turning Basin Wetland
Southeast of Humboldt Park, Glacial Lake Chicago Shoreline	X	X	Horner Park/Meander Scar	X	X	Wolf Lake/William Powers (4)
Beverly Seep Area (103rd and Wood)	X	X	Humboldt Park	X	X	Conservation Area
			Hurley Playlot Park	X	X	130th Street Marsh/Hegewisch Marsh
			Indian Boundary Park	X	X	Kensington Marsh(1)
			Jackson Park	X	X	Calumet Sedge Site
			Bobolink Meadow	X	X	Powderhorn Lake and Prairie/
			Wooded Island	X	X	Powderhorn Lake Forest Preserve(5)
			Legion Park	X	X	Powderhorn Lake Extension/North-
			Lincoln Park	X	X	west Corner of Powderhorn Lake
			Montrose Harbor/Magic Hedge	X	X	Allgeld Gardens Marsh
			Lincoln Park Bird Sanctuary	X	X	Beaubien Woods Forest Preserve(5)
			Lake Chicago Shore Features/Southend	X	X	Area along Peam Central tracks
			Marquette Park	X	X	from Avenue O to 114th Street
			McKinley Park/Island	X	X	Eggers Wood Extension
			Quinn Park	X	X	Eggers Wood Forest Preserve(5)
			Rainbow Beach and Park Area	X	X	Grand Calumet River
			Ridge Park	X	X	Hyde Lake/Hyde Lake Wetlands
			Ris Park	X	X	Interchange Marsh(6)
			River Park	X	X	Little Calumet River
			Ronan Park	X	X	O'Brien Look Marsh(1)
			Sherman Park	X	X	Northwest of O'Brien Look and Dam(1)
			South Shore Cultural Center	X	X	Van Vlissingen Prairie
			Washington Park	X	X	
			West Pullman Park	X	X	
Forest Preserve District of Cook County Sites						
Sauganash Prairie	X	X				
Edgebrook Flatwoods	X	X				
Dan Ryan Woods	X	X				
Catherine Chevalier Woods	X	X				
City of Chicago Sites						
Beach south of Filtration Plant	X	X				
Olive Park-Navy Pier	X	X				
North Park Village Nature Preserve	X	X				

* DOE=City of Chicago, Department of Environment, Natural Areas and Potential Natural Areas of Chicago-An Inventory Report, 1994. TF=CitySpace Wetlands and Natural Areas Task Force, Report to the CitySpace Steering Committee, 1994. CPD=Chicago Park District, Chicago Park District Natural Areas Inventory, 1994. INAI=Illinois Department of Conservation, Division of Natural Heritage, Illinois Natural Areas Inventory, 1995. CEPA=Calumet Ecological Park Association, Chicago, Illinois, Brochure (which includes materials provided by the Lake Calumet Study Committee), 1994.

+ 116th Street Marsh is identified in *Mezodowicz*, a publication of the Illinois Ornithological Society.

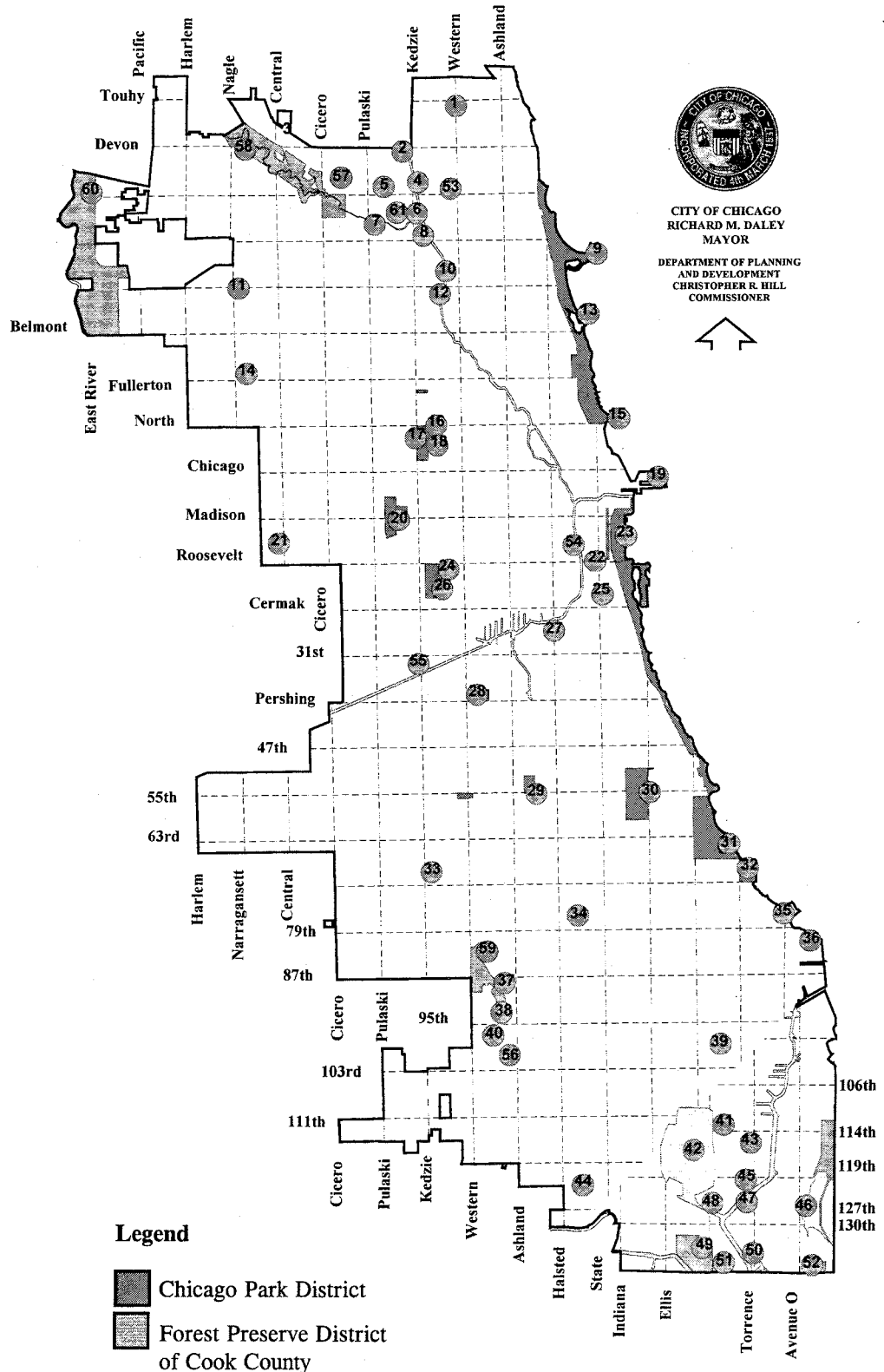
(1) Totally or partially owned by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District. (2) Owned by the State of Illinois. (3) Owned by the Illinois International Port Authority. (4) Owned by the Illinois Department of Conservation. (5) Owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. (6) Owned by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

Map 6

WETLANDS AND NATURAL AREAS IN CHICAGO

WETLANDS AND NATURAL AREA SITES

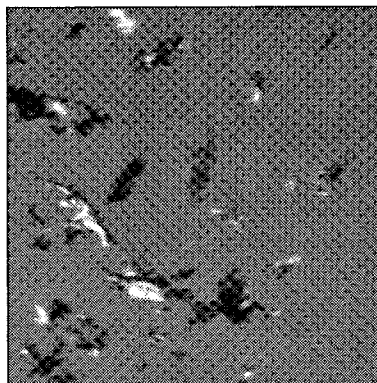
1. Indiana Boundary Park
2. Noth Shore Channel
3. Quin Park
4. Legion Park
5. North Park Village
6. Roan Park
7. Gompers Park
8. River Park
9. Montrose Harbor
10. Horner Park
11. Read Mental Health Center
12. California Park
13. Lincoln Park Bird Sanctuary
14. Riis Park
15. Lincoln Park Shoreline
16. Humboldt Park
17. Southwest Humboldt Park
18. Southeast Humboldt Park
19. Olive Park
20. Garfield Park
21. Columbus Park
22. Chicago River, Polk to RR.
23. Grant Park
24. Douglas Park
25. Chicago River, Congress to 22nd
26. South Douglas Park
27. North McGuane Park
28. McKinley Park
29. Sherman Park
30. Washington Park
31. Jackson Park
32. South Shore
33. Marquette Park
34. Auburn Park
35. Rainbow Park
36. Rainbow Beach, Water Filtration
37. Beverly wetland Seep
38. Ridge Park
39. Van Vlissingen Prairie
40. Hurley Playlot Park
41. Big Marsh
42. Lake Calumet
43. Indian Ridge Marsh, N.
44. West Pullman Park
45. Indian Ridge Marsh, S.
46. Hyde Lake and Wetlands
47. Heron Pond
48. Deadstick Pond
49. Hegewisch Marsh
50. O'Brien Marsh, Dan & Lock
51. NW O'Brien Lock & Dan
52. Powderhorn Lake
53. Budlong Woods
54. Wave Cut Cliff Beach Ridge
55. 31st & Kedzie
56. Beverly Seep
57. Sauganash Prairie
58. Edgebrook Flatwoods
59. Dan Ryan Woods
60. Catherine Chevalier Woods
61. Eugene Field Park



Thirty-one natural areas are found within the boundaries of parks owned and managed by the Chicago Park District.³ Some of these natural areas, like the Beverly Wetland, are remnants of original systems. Others are human-made but have acquired ecological importance over time. For example, Montrose Point and the bird sanctuary in Lincoln Park are built on landfill but are known throughout the Midwest as premier locations for observing migratory birds in the spring and fall.

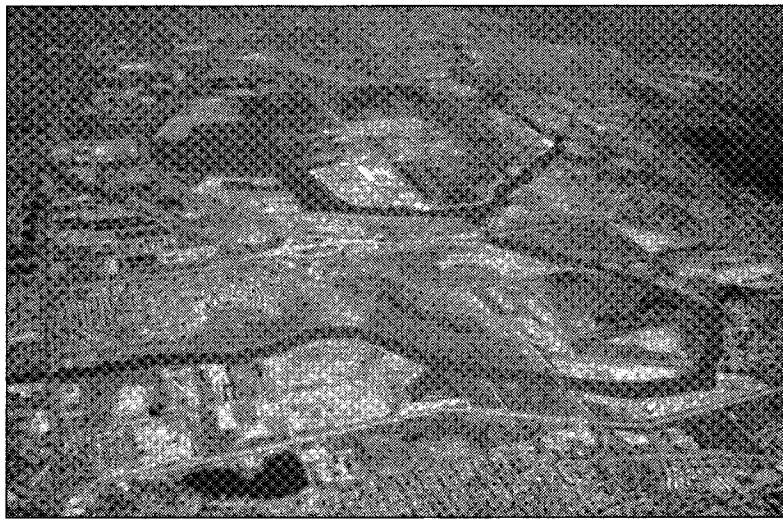
Unlike the Forest Preserve District, it is not the primary mission of the Chicago Park District to preserve natural habitats. The Chicago Park District has few staff trained in managing and programming natural areas. However, recognizing the ecological significance of areas under its jurisdiction, the Park District has begun to manage natural areas and to organize a program of teacher training and community outreach for volunteer stewardship with pilot programs at six sites: Gompers, Washington, Marquette, Jackson, Lincoln, and Hurley parks.

Two of the larger significant natural areas are already in public ownership but are not currently protected by any resource management plan. One site is owned by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District. The North Shore Channel roughly follows McCormick Boulevard from Foster Avenue north to suburban Wilmette. The waterway is a nesting site for the black-crowned night heron, a species endangered in the state of Illinois,



and it provides habitat for many migratory birds. The other site is the land surrounding the Chicago Read Mental Health Center, located on Chicago's northwest side and owned by the State of Illinois. Portions of the property have been sold for development, and the future of the natural areas is uncertain.





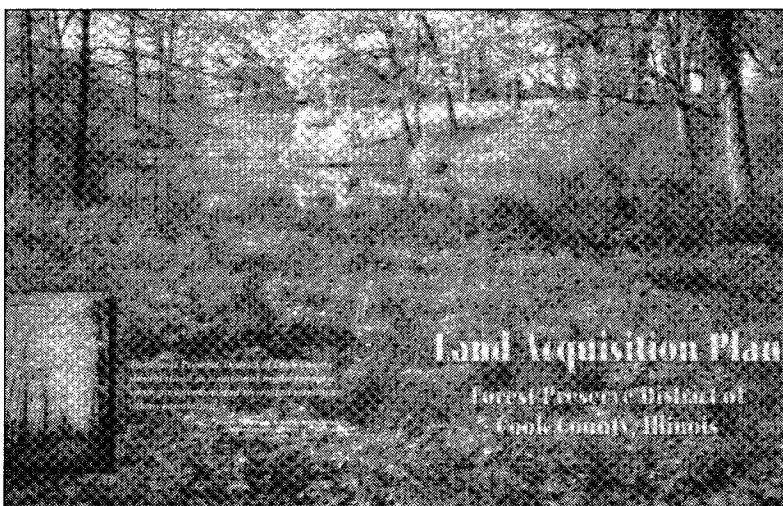
Lake Calumet Area. “Without question, the most significant wetlands and natural areas within the City of Chicago are concentrated in the Lake Calumet region,” declared the CitySpace Wetlands and Natural Areas Task Force in 1994.⁴ Located on Chicago’s southeast side, Lake Calumet is home for thousands of water birds. It is also an important resting spot for migrating species and a welcome winter respite for other waterfowl. Most people driving by Lake Calumet on Interstate 94 are unaware that in the midst of the industrial area, the lake and its wetlands teem with life, including great blue herons, egrets, ducks and geese.

The ecological significance of the Lake Calumet district has been recognized for many years by a variety of authorities (see Table 10 and Map 7). The inventory of Illinois natural areas conducted by the

Department of Natural Resources in the late 1970s identified 3,145 acres of Lake Calumet as an area of statewide significance.⁵ In its 1994 *Land Acquisition Plan*, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County pinpointed Lake Calumet as the most important natural area still in need of protection in Chicago.

The Forest Preserve District and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources own and manage some of the wetlands and natural areas around Lake Calumet. But other large parcels are owned by public agencies, such as the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District and the Illinois International Port District, and private companies that do not have the protection of wetlands and natural areas as a primary mission.

The lack of protection for the area’s remaining wetlands has been a concern of many citizens in the Lake Calumet area. To address this, local groups have proposed the establishment of the “Calumet Ecological Park,” which would include the preservation of seven green corridors in the Calumet area linking the wetlands to the Illinois and Michigan Canal Natural Heritage Corridor to the west, and the Lake Michigan shoreline in northwest Indiana and the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore to the east.⁶



The State of Illinois will substantially increase its role in natural area preservation with the creation of the *Conservation 2000* program to be administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Department of Agriculture and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Among the funded components of the program are a Land Protection Program and a Lake Management Program. The Land Protection Program will provide cost-share funds to private landowners for natural landscape maintenance and restoration. The Lake Management Program will provide funds for technical and monitoring assistance and grants for comprehensive lake protection and restoration plans.

Natural Areas for People. Besides identifying wetlands and natural areas, the CitySpace task force focused on the critical relationship between natural lands and the people who live around them. The task force concluded that criteria and programs for selecting and protecting wetlands and natural areas must address not only the biological aspects but also the human dimensions of the sites and surrounding communities. “Programs and policies for wetlands and natural areas should seek to provide Chicago residents with better opportunities in and near their neighborhoods for: 1) seeing and learning about natural processes such as growth, regeneration, and succession; 2) experiencing natural values such as solitude, serenity, and refuge from urban noise and crowding; and 3) becoming actively involved in creating, restoring, protecting, and caring for ecological communities near their homes.”¹¹

For sites with significant biological features, such as the Lake Calumet wetlands, the Chicago river edges and forest preserve prairies, the active involvement and stewardship by local residents is an essential part of preserving and restoring biological quality. Sites of lesser biological significance, such as a railroad embankment that has “grown wild” or a small lot with large trees that provide nests for birds, may merit protection and enhancement solely because of their significance to the surrounding community. Although sites of lesser biological significance exist within the city, no formal inventory of them has been developed.



KEY OBJECTIVES AND OPEN SPACE POLICIES

1. Protect significant wetlands and natural areas that remain within the city.

- Dedicate significant publicly owned wetlands and natural areas as Illinois Nature Preserves.
- Lease or transfer other publicly owned wetlands and natural areas to a public agency with a mission of managing natural areas.
- Work with the owners of large institutions and cemeteries and other landowners to develop plans that preserve wetlands and natural areas on their property.
- Acquire land or negotiate easements for protection of wetlands and natural areas on private land.

2. Establish a Lake Calumet preservation and development district.

- Protect and enhance the wetlands and natural areas within the Lake Calumet district.
- Pursue a comprehensive preservation and industrial development strategy for the Lake Calumet district, which promotes the unique wetlands and natural areas as essential components of the overall economic development program for the district.

3. Manage the natural areas and wetlands of Chicago as an inter-related system.

- Develop a habitat management strategy, such as a habitat conservation plan, for each wetland and natural area of significance.

- Develop ecological and management strategies for Chicago Park District properties and for other public and private open spaces, keeping intact the historic design of the landscape.

- Establish management practices and recreational and educational programs that are appropriate for each wetland and natural area.

- Develop and maintain a Chicago Wetlands and Natural Areas Inventory.

4. Educate and involve citizens in wetlands and natural areas and in their protection and restoration.

- Develop a program to provide educational materials, brochures and signs for natural areas and wetlands of local and statewide significance.

- Promote volunteer stewardship and document programs for all of Chicago's wetlands and natural areas, building upon existing programs wherever possible.

- Educate public and private landowners regarding the opportunities and benefits of using plants native to the Chicago region in their landscapes.

- Develop field programs for school-aged children that provide a loosely structured experience in a natural area with an adult that is comfortable, interested and knowledgeable about Chicago's landscape ecology.

- Establish a grants program for volunteer stewardship and docent programs.



PROGRAMS

Lake Calumet District

The Lake Calumet district holds unique opportunities for the preservation and restoration of wetlands and natural areas and an expansion and improvement of Chicago's industrial base. Since Chicago's earliest days, the Lake Calumet district has been used for industrial, transportation, waste disposal and water treatment purposes. At the same time, although vastly diminished in numbers, birds and other wildlife have continued to use the wetlands and natural areas of the district.

Many people interested in the future of the Lake Calumet district envision the area's diverse land uses coexisting and vastly improved. A comprehensive development and preservation strategy is needed to accomplish this goal, including the following actions:

- Organize and fund a team of local, state and federal agencies and officials, landowners, businesses, civic organizations and community groups to oversee the planning and implementation of a Lake Calumet Preservation and Industrial Development District.
- Establish a Lake Calumet Preservation and Industrial Development District and apply all local, state and federal wetlands and natural area protection regulations, along with low-cost land acquisition programs, to preserve important natural areas within the district.
- Clarify the ownership of all the wetlands and natural areas within the Lake Calumet Preservation and Industrial Development District. Ensure that all landowners have an opportunity to participate in the planning process.
- Encourage the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to lease and/or purchase all publicly-owned wetlands and natural areas in the Lake Calumet Preservation and industrial Development District to manage and restore them as examples of the Chicago Lake Plain ecosystem.
- Encourage the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission to work with private and public landowners in the Lake Calumet Preservation and Industrial Development District to dedicate wetlands and natural areas as Illinois Nature Preserves and Illinois Natural Heritage Landmarks.





Chicago Wetlands and Natural Areas Inventory

Both the DOE inventory report and the CitySpace Wetlands and Natural Areas Task Force identified the need to update and monitor the list of Chicago wetlands and natural areas. A first step would be the creation of an integrated Chicago wetlands and natural area database, building upon the substantial inventories developed by the DOE, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Chicago Park District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and becoming a part of the regional natural resources inventory maintained in the geographic information system (GIS) of the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC).

LAKEFRONT

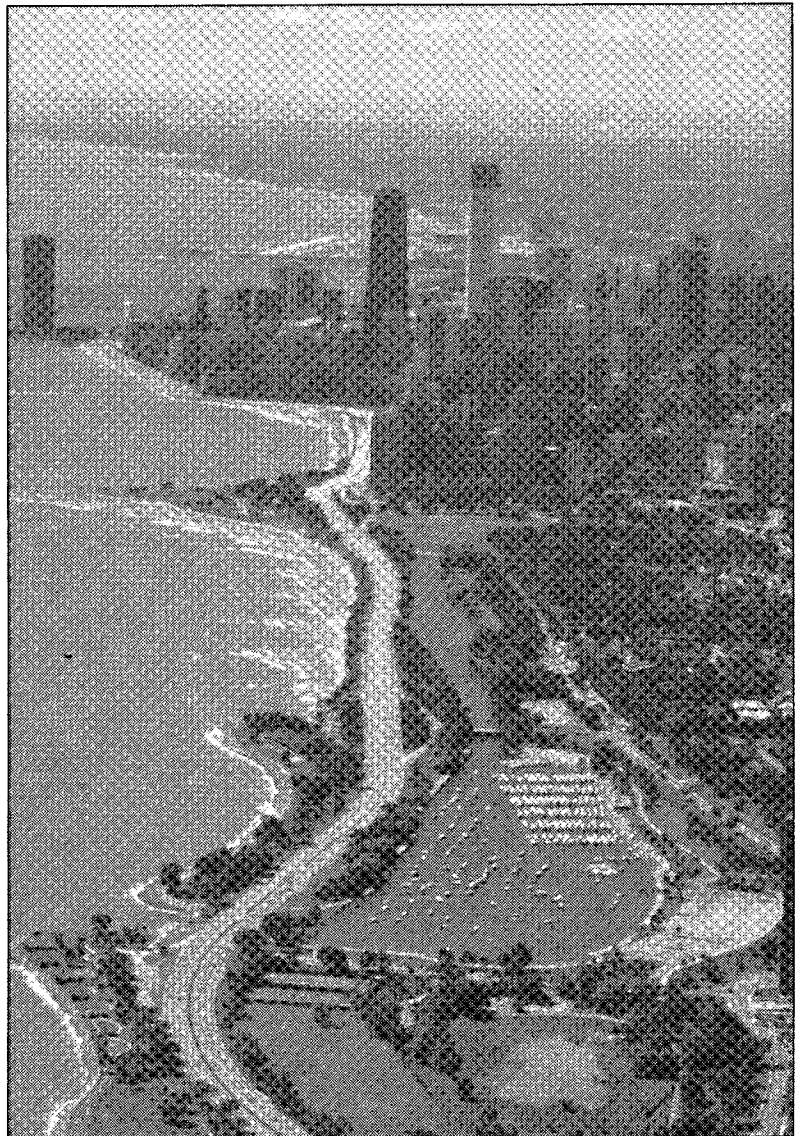
VISION: TO HAVE A SAFE, ACCESSIBLE, AND PUBLICLY-OWNED LAKEFRONT PARK SYSTEM THAT STRETCHES UNINTERRUPTED FROM CITY LIMIT TO CITY LIMIT.

INTRODUCTION

The lakefront park system is perhaps the best-known of Chicago's open space amenities. Currently, 24 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline are protected and managed as public open space by the Chicago Park District. The lakefront park system encompasses more than 3,000 acres of parkland, 29 beaches, 8 harbors, and numerous smaller open spaces, ponds and lagoons.

There is but one object of scenery near Chicago of special grandeur or sublimity, and that, the lake, can be made by artificial means no more grand or sublime.

Frederic Law Olmsted, 1871





The Lake front by right
belongs to the people.

It affords their one great
unobstructed view, stretching
away to the horizon, where
water and clouds seem to
meet...These views of
expanse are helpful alike to
mind and body. They beget
calm thoughts and feelings,
and afford escape from the
petty things of life....Not a
foot of its shores should be
appropriated by individuals to
the exclusion of the people.
On the contrary, everything
possible should be done to
enhance its attractiveness
and to develop its natural
beauties, thus fitting it for
the part it has to play in the
life of the whole city.

*Daniel Burnham, Plan of
Chicago, 1909*

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The earliest plat of the Illinois and Michigan Canal Commissioners in the 1830s set aside land along the lake to “remain forever open, clear and free.” Since the City’s inception, Chicagoans have dreamed and planned for one continuous park from city limit to city limit. The Lakefront Ordinance of 1919 wrested control of the shore from the railroads and began the process of linking Chicago’s north side parks with those to the south. In 1972, the City passed the *Lakefront Plan* and the *Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance*, companion documents that guide public decisions affecting the lakefront today.

Yet even with this high level of commitment and legal protection, there are threats to and challenges for the lakefront. In some areas, the shoreline is deteriorating to dangerous conditions and in need of urgent repair. The natural diversity of the parks needs to be increased to better support wildlife, particularly birds. And proposals for new buildings on parkland occasionally arise. The 1972 *Lakefront Plan* needs updating

to address new environmental concerns and priorities for the 21st Century. In addition, the Lakefront Protection Ordinance should be evaluated for its past effectiveness and modified, where necessary, to become more effective in the future.

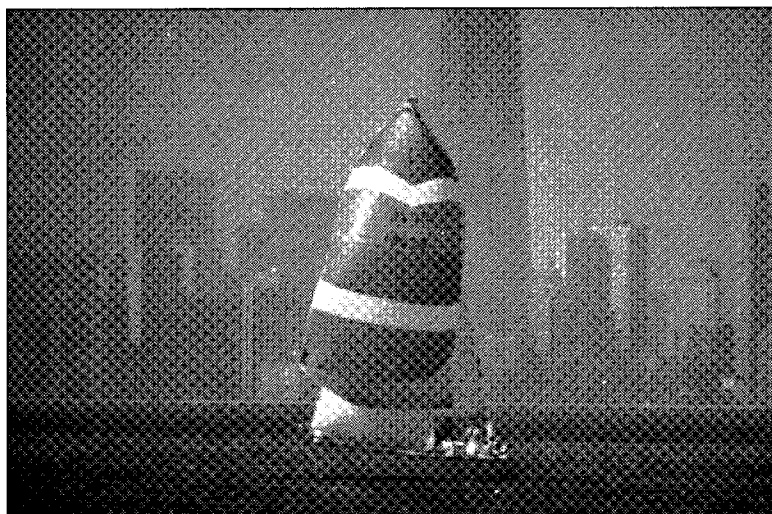
Although excellent planning has occurred for Lincoln, Grant and Jackson parks, long-range plans have never been undertaken for many of the areas south of McCormick Place. The recreational, historical and ecological resources of Burnham, Rainbow and Calumet parks, and the South Shore Cultural Center would benefit greatly from such efforts.

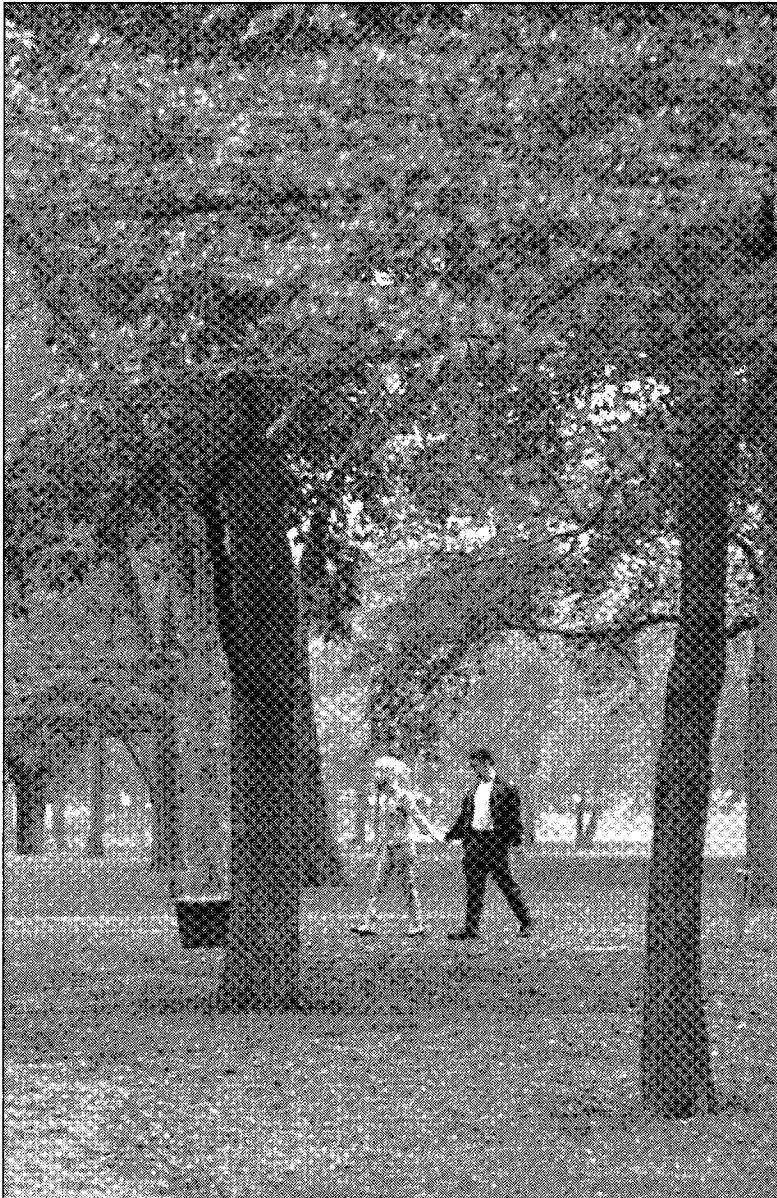
The most basic necessity for the lakefront park system is to retain the open space that is already there. To accomplish this, the CitySpace Lakefront Task Force emphasized the urgency of completing the Shoreline Protection Project, which will stabilize the edges of the lakefront. This project must be funded and implemented immediately. Also, existing parkland should be upgraded and consistent standards set for its use, design, maintenance and security.

Well-designed public access should be established along the entire length of the shoreline to allow more people to use greater portions of the lakefront.

In developing lakefront policies, the CitySpace Task Force built upon the contents of the 1972 *Lakefront Plan* of Chicago, which provided an overarching set of strategies for protecting and enhancing the lakefront. The key objectives and policies developed here were intended to enhance, not repeat, these points. The 1972 *Lakefront Plan* included the following basic policies, which the *CitySpace Plan* endorses:

1. Complete the publicly owned and locally controlled park system along the entire Chicago lakefront.
2. Maintain and enhance the landscaped, spacious and continuous character of the lake shore parks.
3. Continue to improve the water quality and ecological balance of Lake Michigan.
4. Preserve the cultural, historical, and recreational heritage of the lake shore parks.
5. Maintain and improve the formal character and open water vista of Grant Park and prohibit any new above-ground structures.
6. Increase the diversity of recreational opportunities while emphasizing lake-oriented leisure time activities.
7. Protect and develop natural lake shore park and water areas for wildlife habitat.
8. Increase public safety.
9. Design all lake edge and lake construction to prevent shoreline erosion.
10. Ensure a harmonious relationship between the lake shore parks and the community edge.
11. Do not allow any new private development east of Lake Shore Drive.
12. Improve access to the lake shore parks and reduce vehicle traffic on secondary park roads.
13. Strengthen the parkway characteristics of Lake Shore Drive and prohibit any roadway of expressway standards.
14. Ensure that all port, water supply and public facilities are designed to enhance lakefront character.
15. Coordinate all public and private development within the water, park and community zones.





KEY OBJECTIVES AND OPEN SPACE POLICIES

CitySpace's Lakefront Task Force, using the 1972 policies as a point of departure, developed a complementary set of key objectives and supporting policies that reinforce and expand upon the mission embodied therein.

1. Prevent the loss of existing lakefront open space.

- Prevent erosion of the shoreline.
- Reduce flood and storm damage.
- Maintain, protect and enhance the

predominantly landscaped, spacious and continuous character of Chicago's public shoreline.

- Maintain an inventory of the amount and location of open space/green area and paved/built areas.
- ### ***2. Improve the quality and safety of existing lakefront open space for its patrons.***
- Develop framework plans for the south lakefront parks.
 - Use the policies in the *Lincoln Park Framework Plan- A Plan for Management and Restoration* to guide decisions regarding land-use, open park space, water, paths, park and support facilities and site furnishings in Lincoln Park.
 - Use the design ideas and guidelines in the *Lincoln Park Framework Plan* to guide the Chicago Park District's capital improvement budget for Lincoln Park.
 - Encourage land uses that are dependent upon being on the lakefront and are consistent with the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance.
 - Preserve the public, non-commercial character of the lakefront.

3. *Extend and expand the amount of lakefront open space.*

- Have a public body acquire riparian (waterside) rights.
- Acquire additional lakefront property from private owners.
- Expand lakefront parkland and beaches wherever feasible.
- Expand and enhance beaches.
- Improve the landscaping of parking lots, play slabs and other impervious surfaces, and remove such surfaces that are unnecessary.

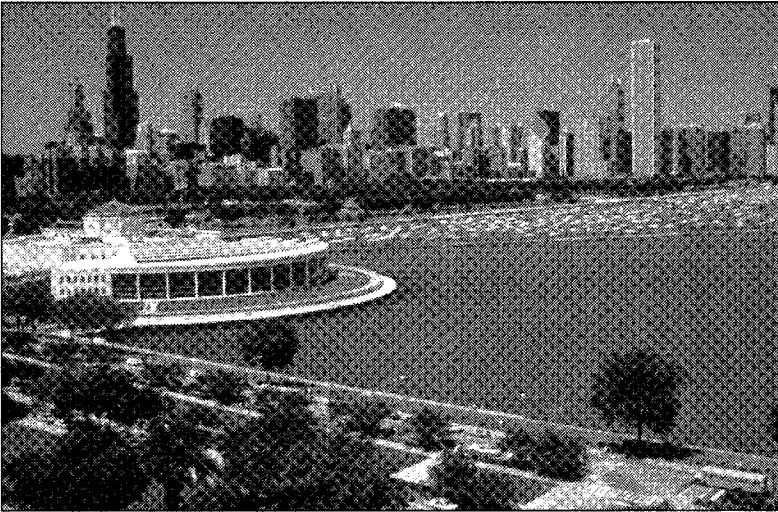


4. *Restore Lake Shore Drive as an urban scenic boulevard by strengthening its park-like landscape characteristics.*

- Establish comprehensive design standards that will assure continuing enhancement of Lake Shore Drive as a scenic boulevard.
- Coordinate changes to Lake Shore Drive through the use of a long-range planning process for the lakefront.
- Limit the type and volume of traffic.
- Remove unnecessary exit and entrance ramps.



Lake Shore Drive planning workshop, July 1994



5. *Improve access to lakefront open space.*

- Provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the lake at one-quarter mile intervals and more frequently near major attractions.
- Improve access via public transit to the lakefront.
- Resolve conflicts between modes of traffic through improved roadway, bike/pedestrian path and park design.
- Meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Encourage the accommodation of public access across privately owned lakefront properties.
- Maximize the use of existing parking areas and where possible consolidate and relocate parking to peripheral sites near western park boundaries.
- Construct new parking on peripheral sites outside park boundaries.

6. *Perform environmental remediation and restoration.*

- Promote preservation and conservation of natural resources.

- Develop and implement a plan to sustain the urban forest along Chicago's lakefront.
- Improve drainage from Lake Shore Drive to diminish negative environmental impacts.
- Identify and remediate non-point source pollution affecting the lakefront and Lake Michigan and implement pollution prevention measures.

7. *Create and develop ecological transition zones.*

- Retain and enhance the biological diversity of lakefront parks by supporting habitats for fish, birds, and other fauna and flora.
- Establish a landscape management program for high use areas, wildlife areas, and other landscape zones.
- Create educational programs and places for public school children to study wildlife and aquatic life, water sampling techniques and other environmental sciences.

8. *Establish a framework for coordinating all lakefront planning and development.*

- Integrate the entire lakefront into a comprehensive planning, design, engineering and maintenance framework.
- Establish and coordinate design standards and construction schedules for all major development projects.

- Conduct periodic reviews of long-range plans to assess status and relevancy.

9. *Involve the public at an early stage and throughout the process when making decisions affecting the lakefront.*

- Establish an open and participatory planning and decision-making process.
- Increase opportunities for public education.
- Promote public stewardship.

PLANS AND PROJECTS

The CitySpace Lakefront Task Force identified over 100 projects that would improve Chicago's lakefront. The priority projects listed below were gathered from existing documents and plans, including the 1972 Lakefront Plan, the Shoreline Protection Project, the Lincoln Park Framework Plan, and the Grant Park Design Guidelines, or were recommended by members of CitySpace's Lakefront Task Force (see Map 8).

North City Line to Oak Street

- Acquire riparian rights on all privately-owned properties between Hollywood Avenue and the northern city limit.
- Expand public parkland to protect the shoreline from erosion and flooding and to create more open space.
- Expand parkland as a part of the Shoreline Protection Project plan to

fill the northern beach groins at Fullerton.

- Adhere to the policies of the Lincoln Park Framework Plan to guide future Lincoln Park development.

Oak Street to 26th Street

- Develop DuSable Park at the mouth of the Chicago River.
- Create a Turning Basin Marina at Monroe Harbor.
- Extend the lakefront pedestrian/bicycle path system into downtown by creating connections under Lake Shore Drive and along the north bank of the river, with links to Stetson Avenue and Michigan Avenue.
- Develop parkland on the inactive rail yard at the north-west corner of Grant Park, in the area bounded by Monroe Street on the south, Columbus Drive on the east, Randolph Drive on the north and the Illinois Central tracks on the west, with pedestrian connections at Washington and Madison Streets.
- When Meigs Field is decommissioned in 2002, redevelop Northerly Island into parkland.
- Develop parkland on the structure over the Metra rail yards between Central Station and Lake Shore Drive, as described in the Central Station Guidelines.
- Develop new pedestrian connections to the lakefront along the St. Charles Air Line right-of-way and at 18th Street.

26th Street to 59th Street

- Develop a framework plan for Burnham Park, addressing the historic intent, current conditions and future uses.
- Expand the width of public park land to protect the shoreline from erosion and flooding and to create more open space.
- Expand the 31st Street beach or create a new beach at or near this site.
- Integrate the lakefront park system into the adjacent community by redeveloping vacant land at 39th Street, creating green space and linking the lakefront parks to the boulevard system at Drexel Boulevard.
- Remove parking lots and the old service road south of Oakwood Drive to increase the amount of usable and attractive open space.
- Acquire and landscape the property between Lake Shore Drive and the Illinois Central tracks.

59th Street to 79th Street

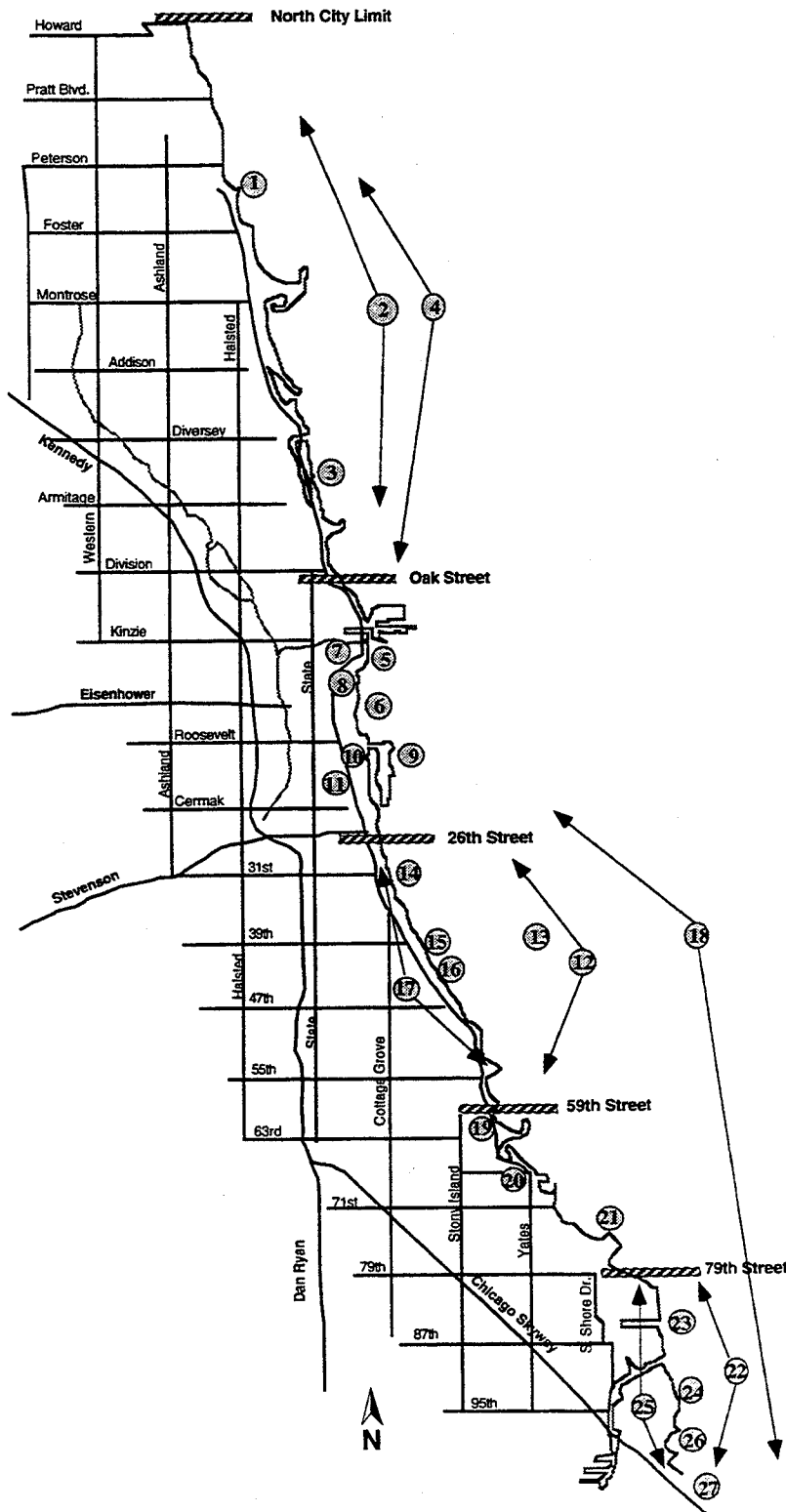
- Develop framework plans for South Shore Cultural Center and Rainbow and Calumet parks, addressing historic intent, current conditions and future uses.
- Create parkland above the new underground parking structure at the Museum of Science and Industry.
- Incorporate lakefront open space objectives into the State's Strategic Regional Arterial planning for Lake Shore Drive and Cornell and Stony Island avenues.

- Acquire riparian rights between 71st and 75th streets to create public park land along Chicago's Lake Michigan shoreline.

79th Street to Indiana Border

- Acquire riparian rights along privately owned property.
- Reserve new parkland on USX property and Iroquois Landing to create continuous public parkland between Rainbow Park and Calumet Park.
- Cap the Confined Disposal Facility (adjacent to Calumet Park) and, following an environmental assessment, redevelop as parkland.
- Create a continuous public bike path along the lakefront from 79th Street to the Indiana border.
- Convert Calumet Yacht Club to public parkland.
- Convert former Falstaff Brewery site to public parkland.

LAKEFRONT OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS



LAKEFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

1. Acquire riparian rights, Hollywood to city limits
2. Expand parkland with shoreline protection
3. Expand parkland at Fullerton
4. Implement Lincoln Park Framework Plan
5. Create DuSable Park
6. Reconfigure Monroe Harbor Marina
7. Extend bike/pedestrian path to Downtown
8. Convert parking lots, railyards to parkland
9. Create Northerly Island parkland
10. Develop parkland over Metra railyards
11. Create greenway along St. Charles Air Line
12. Develop Burnham Park Framework Plan
13. Expand parkland with shoreline protection
14. Expand, improve 31st Street Beach
15. Expand parkland, links to 39th & Drexel Blvd.
16. Remove parking, create parkland at Oakwood
17. Landscape area between LSD, IC tracks
18. Develop and implement framework plans for south lakefront parks
19. Create new parking, parkland at Museum of Science and Industry
20. Coordinate SRA Plan with open space plan
21. Acquire riparian rights, 71st to 75th
22. Acquire riparian rights, 79th to state border
23. Create parkland at USX sites
24. Convert Confined Disposal Facility to parkland
25. Extend bike path from 79th to Indiana border
26. Convert Calumet Yacht Club to public parkland
27. Convert former Falstaff Brewery site to public parkland.

Northerly Island Park: An Open Air Museum

Northerly Island Park will complete the dream first envisioned by Daniel Burnham in his 1909 *Plan of Chicago*. The city's newest park will serve as a national model for accessibility, incorporating innovative features that enable all visitors to enjoy the site's spectacular setting and attractions. A wide variety of educational and outdoor activities will reflect the best of the area's natural and manmade features.

The park, a floating island connected by a land bridge to the nearby Museum Campus, provides a unique opportunity to blend the themes of the Adler, Shedd and Field museums — earth, water and sky — into an educational and recreational environment. A set of uniquely accessible playgrounds will reflect these themes. These and other features of the park will be devoted to outdoor activities set amid natural surroundings, including:

- An expanded 12th Street Beach, including rollable walkways that lead to the water making it easy for those who are disabled.
- A 40-foot Sky Mound with lake and skyline views, and an observation area related to the Adler Planetarium.
- A lakefront promenade along the eastern edge of the island.
- Natural areas, including a lagoon, prairie, wetland and wildlife bird sanctuary.

- Ferry service to shuttle park patrons across Burnham Harbor from the Soldier Field parking lot.
- An indoor nature center in the existing airport terminal that includes a restaurant, exhibition space, conservatory and educational and activity rooms for use all-year round.
- Botanic garden with sensory and enabling gardens.
- A 10-acre, landscaped area for picnics, general recreation, and in the winter, an outdoor ice rink.

For all the people of Chicago,
let us create a new park on
our lakefront like no other
place in the world -- a park
that through its unique and
inspired design is equally
accessible to people with
disabilities and people
without, that combines the
same elements of water,
land and space as the
adjacent museum campus,
and that through its recre-
ational educational and
passive natural settings,
lifts our spirits, stimulates
our minds, and offers gentle
respite for our souls.

*Vision Statement for
Northerly Island*



Key Plan

NORTHERLY ISLAND PARK

