



# Burnham Park

## Framework Plan



# Mission Statement

Burnham Park should provide a variety of recreational, cultural and educational experiences along Lake Michigan. These experiences should be set in an attractive natural landscape environment that serves and is connected to local neighborhoods and that strengthens the open space waterfront of Chicago.

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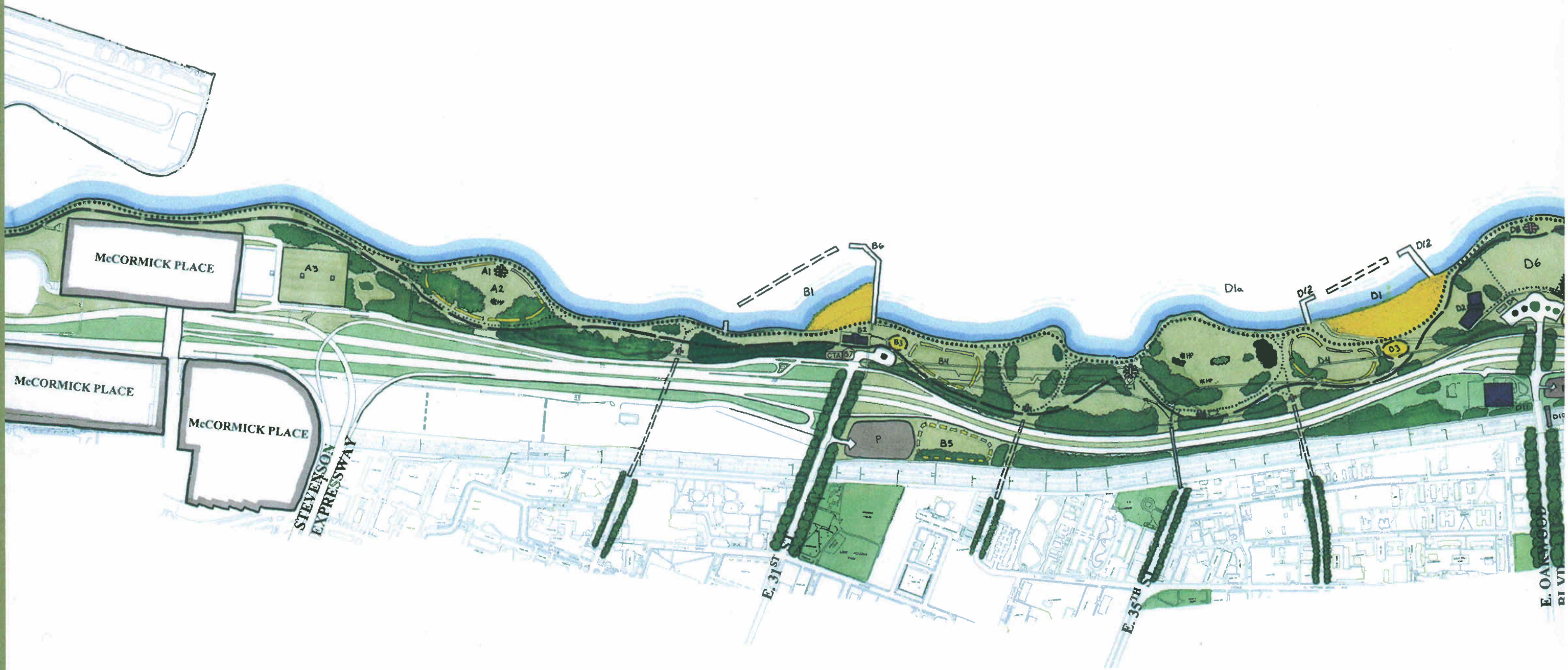
**David J. Doig**  
General Superintendent and CEO

In the spring of 1999, the Chicago Park District commissioned the Burnham Park Framework Plan in order to develop a vision for the future of the park and a series of guidelines for the implementation of that vision. Burnham Park is located along Lake Michigan and spans from the south end of Grant Park at Roosevelt Road to 56th Street including Promontory Point. The area of study for the Framework Guidelines spans from the southern edge of McCormick Place to 56th Street and Promontory Point.

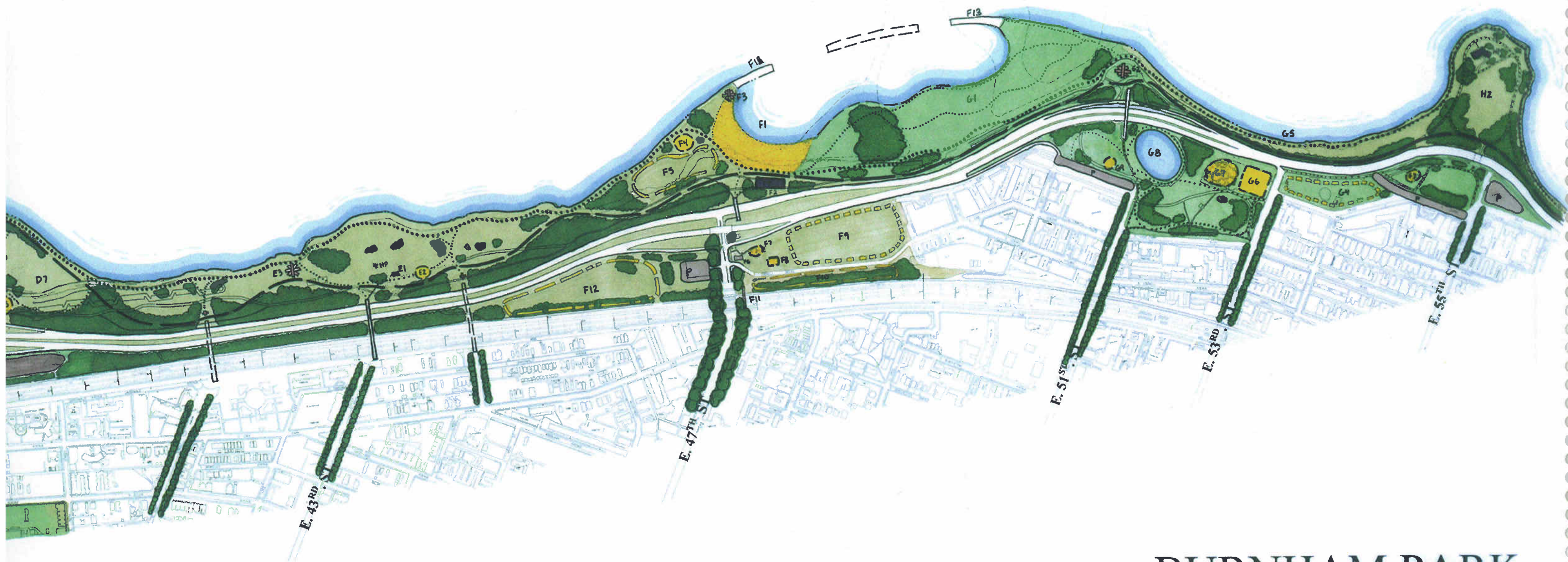
The Framework Plan is a long-range planning tool used to plan for and coordinate with future projects. It establishes a vision for future usage, access, and visual qualities of the park by examining needs and expectations for the park landscape, park amenities and park users, as well as existing conditions of park accessibility and circulation. It contains guidelines for landscape improvements, for the development of additional park amenities, and for an improved physical connection between the park and adjacent neighborhoods.

The Burnham Park Framework Plan was crafted by a team of consultants led by BauerLatoza Studio, working in conjunction with the local community, and the Chicago Park District. The planning process incorporated the ideas of community leaders from both the public and private sectors and community residents. Over a period of six months, the team conducted workshops, interviews, and public meetings with community leaders and citizens to address issues about the park in open public forums. From the workshops and public meetings evolved a mission statement and a series of framework objectives that reflect the values and sentiments of the community.














**LEGEND:**

-  PARK FACILITY
-  PARK AMENITY
-  ACTIVITY AREA
-  OVERLOOK
-  NEIGHBORHOOD MARKER

-  DENSE VEGETATION
-  OPEN VEGETATION
-  BIKEWAY / RUNNING PATH
-  PEDESTRIAN PATH



# BURNHAM PARK FRAMEWORK PLAN

CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS





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## Time Line—

## Burnham Park

**1869** The state creates the South Park Commission that oversees development of what will become Jackson and Washington parks, the Midway Plaisance, and the south boulevards.

**1893** The Columbian Exposition world's fair is held in Chicago's Jackson Park.

**1896** Burnham makes his first proposal for an "Outer Park Boulevard" to connect Grant and Jackson parks with a lakefront park.

**1909** Daniel H. Burnham and Edward H. Bennett's Plan of Chicago is published.

**1911** The South Park Commission reaches an agreement with the Illinois Central Railroad to acquire the riparian rights to the site of the Field Museum and most of the lakeshore.

**1912** Burnham dies. The Chicago Plan Commission is created to realize his vision, the 1909 Plan.

**1919** Construction of landfill begins at the north end of the park. A 5-day race riot, the worst in Chicago history to that time, starts at the unofficial beach between 25th and 29th streets.

**1920** Legal and governmental issues regarding ownership and use of the lakefront are settled. Voters approve a \$20 million bond issue for the creation of the "South Shore Development," including a boulevard and lakefront park.

**1926** Soldier Field and landfill for Northerly Island are completed; nearly all of the park south to 56th Street, except for the Promontory, is under construction.

**1927** On January 27th, the South Park Commission names the new lakefront park in memory of Daniel H. Burnham.

**1929** Burnham Park is chosen as the site for the 1933 world's fair. Also, the Model Yacht Basin is constructed. All landfill, except for the Promontory, is completed and landfill for the Promontory begins.

**1933** The Century of Progress world's fair opens, its popularity leading to its extension through 1934. The 49th Street comfort station is built.

**1934** Chicago's twenty-two independent park districts are consolidated into the Chicago Park District.

**1935** New playgrounds and tennis courts are installed at "East End" (53rd Street west of Lake Shore Drive). A new beach house is built at 31st Street beach. Three passarelles are built over Lake Shore Drive south of Oakwood Boulevard. Promontory Point landfill is completed.

**1939** Alfred Caldwell's naturalistic landscape design for Promontory Point and the Chicago Park District Administration Building are completed, and the Wallach Memorial Fountain is installed on the Promontory.

**1946** In accordance with the Fair & Exposition Authority Act of 1935, the Chicago Park District approves a fifty-year lease for an airport on Northerly Island.

**1948** Merrill C. Meigs Airport opens on Northerly Island.

**1953** The Illinois legislature authorizes \$5.7 million for a convention hall in accordance with the Fair & Exposition Authority Act of 1935.

**1954** Nike anti-aircraft missile sites are planned and constructed at 26th Street and on Promontory Point, including support facilities, radar installations and barracks. Each occupies more than 7 acres of land, and they are activated the next year.

**1955** South Lake Shore Drive, a completely new highway set inland from the original, is completed and opens from 26th to 49th Streets. Segments of the old Lake Shore Drive become parking lots south of the 31st Street and Oakwood Boulevard interchanges.

**1958** The first McCormick Place convention center is constructed and opens the next year.

**1962** The Nike missiles and their support facilities are removed from the park, and their sites are re-landscaped the next year.

**1967** McCormick Place burns down. A two-year debate regarding removal of the convention hall from Burnham Park is settled with the decision to reuse the old foundations to speed construction of the new facility.

**1971** The Chicago Bears move their home games from Wrigley Field to Soldier Field, which is updated to accommodate professional football.

**1989** Restoration of Promontory Point landscape begins; its original designer, 86-year old Alfred Caldwell, supervises the project. Additionally, the state reorganizes the Fair & Exposition Authority of 1935 as the Metropolitan Pier & Exposition Authority, including a \$150 million appropriation for the restoration of Navy Pier.

**1992** 'East End' section of Burnham Park is renamed as the Harold Washington Playlot.

**1995** Northbound Lake Shore Drive is relocated west of Soldier Field, creating 57 acres of green space, including the Museum Campus, which opens in 1996.

**1996** The lease for Meigs Field airport expires. Battle over the future of the site begins.

**1997** The city and the state reach an agreement to continue airport operations at Meigs Field for five years. In 2002, Northerly Island will be transformed into parkland. Also, the 31st Street Beach House is demolished and replaced with a new facility, completed in 1998.

**1999** The Butterfly Garden is installed north of the 47th Street parking lot. Construction begins on the new revetment from 26th to 35th streets, the first phase of the Chicago Shoreline Protection Project that will reconstruct most of Burnham Park's revetments by 2005.



## Make No Little Plans, 1893–1909

On October 30, 1893, Chicago's extraordinary World's Fair, the Columbian Exposition, closed after entertaining 12 million visitors over a six-month period. The fair's numerous plaster buildings were destroyed by fire and razed, and its Jackson Park site was transformed back into green space. Although it was temporary, the "White City," inspired ideas about permanent city improvements. In 1894, the fair's Chief of Construction, architect and planner, Daniel H. Burnham began sketching ideas to create beauty and order throughout Chicago. South Park Commission President James E. Ellsworth asked Burnham if he thought it possible to create a link between Jackson Park and Grant Park. Burnham soon began work on the "Outer Park Boulevard."

Known also as the South Shore Development or South Shore Drive, the Outer Park Boulevard was envisioned by Burnham as a magnificent stretch of green space with lagoons and harbors formed by a series of man-made islands. Although Burnham briefly considered this as an exclusive residential development, he soon decided that it should be a public park, a "playground for the people."<sup>1</sup> The park and scenic drive would

buffer the existing Illinois Central railroad tracks. Its boulevard would dovetail with the existing parks, as would the lagoons. Burnham conceived of a linear park with water scenery and boating comparable to "the Thames, the Seine, and the canals of Venice."<sup>2</sup> In addition to boating, there would be bathing beaches, pavilions and bath houses and Burnham envisioned a series of attractive rustic bridges crossing the lagoons at regular intervals.

At a dinner party in Commissioner Ellsworth's home in 1896, Burnham began presenting his ideas for the lakefront to prominent Chicagoans including Marshall Field, George Pullman, and Philip D. Armour. Burnham made presentations to civic clubs and business organizations not only for his lakefront plan, but also his ideas for improving the function and appearance of the city and surrounding areas. Enamored with Burnham's vision, in 1901 the Chicago Commercial Club invited Burnham to become a member, and decided to take on the city improvement project. Burnham and architect Edward H. Bennett presented their vision in the Plan of Chicago, beautifully illustrated by Jules Guerin, published by the Commercial Club of Chicago in 1909.

## Legal Battles for Parkland, 1907–1920

The key to realizing the dream of a new south lakefront park was to acquire riparian rights to the submerged lands from 12th Street to 50th Street. The vast majority of the rights to these lands were held by the Illinois Central (I.C.) Railroad based on their charter of 1852. The first attempt to secure these rights for park development occurred via a 1907 act of the state legislature which, through careful legal language favoring the railroad, was rendered useless. In 1911, however, the South Park Commission's negotiations with the I.C. resulted in an agreement that granted the railroad 160 acres of additional right-of-way in exchange for the site of the Field Museum and the riparian rights to the lakeshore.

Before any work could proceed, many other legal matters needed to be settled. Lawsuits between park interests and other lakefront property owners, and a suit to recover the lands filed by Potawatomie native Americans who had historically occupied the area, had to be decided in various courts.<sup>3</sup> In addition, government agencies at nearly every level needed to approve the plans. The Circuit Court of Cook County, which had jurisdiction over the South Park Commission, had to confirm all agreements. The state legislature had to grant the right for the South Park Commission to build on submerged lakefront land. The Chicago Plan Commission, formed in 1912 to oversee implementation of Burnham's Plan of Chicago, wanted a role in the development's design. The City of Chicago refused to co-operate until the railroad agreed to eliminate coal-fired locomotives from its operations in favor of an electrified system. And lastly, the consent of the Secretary of War was necessary due to the Federal Government's jurisdiction over harbors and navigable waters.

The consent of all of the parties was finally secured on April 21, 1920. That February, voters in the area served by the South Park Commission approved a bond issue of \$20 million dollars. Eighty-five percent of the money was earmarked for the formation of new lands to complete Grant Park and create the 'South Shore Development'.

## Race Riots Begin on the Beach, 1919

The need for beaches and parkland on the near south side grew significantly over the many years that the proposed South Shore Development remained unimproved. By the 1910's, Chicago had only four municipal beaches. There were also beaches located in Lincoln and Jackson Parks, however, all of these beaches were a distance away from the near south side.

At the time, the city was experiencing significant growth, especially in its African-American community. There had been African-American residents in Chicago since its earliest history, however during this era, known as the "Great Migration," this community grew exponentially. Between 1900 and 1920, Chicago's African-American population expanded from 30,000 to 100,000. At the time the city's "black belt" stretched from approximately 16th Street at the north to 49th Street at the south.

Because there were no nearby municipal or park beaches, many south-siders began using a sandy stretch between 25th and 29th Streets as a bathing beach. In order to get to this beach area, people had to cross the IC tracks near 26th Street. Once one crossed over, there was an invisible dividing line between the north and south sides of the beach. The north end was considered the black beach, the south end considered the white beach.

On July 27, 1919, several African-Americans crossed the invisible line. Soon "began a series of attacks and retreats, counter-attacks, and stone throwing."<sup>4</sup> During this commotion, a black teenager, Eugene Williams, drowned. According to some, he was hit by stones. Others believed that he was too tired to continue swimming, but too afraid of the violence to swim back to shore. The police came, and when they refused to make any arrests, angry crowds began gathering and rioting soon broke out. A long week of race riots continued through much of Chicago. A total of 38 people were killed, 537 injured, and approximately 1,000 were rendered homeless and destitute by this catastrophic event. The state militia was called in and order was finally restored on August 2, 1919.



*South Park Commission's Preliminary Plan of Lake Shore Development, Chicago River to 67th Street, April 1920*



## Creating the park: Landfill & Soldier Field, 1920–1929

With the passage of the bond issue and successful resolution of the legal issues, work on the new park began in 1920. Landfill operations started at the park's north end, just south of Grant Park at the Field Museum, which was finished and opened that year. By 1925, new landforms were complete as far south as 23rd Street, including Northerly Island.

Burnham's Plan had called for a stadium on the south lakefront, which was envisioned as a major venue for public spectacles of all kinds. In 1922 the public passed a \$2.5 million bond issue for a stadium to be dedicated to the American army veterans of World War I. The architects, Holabird and Roche, designed a building that would serve as a venue for grand public spectacles and as an appropriate memorial to war dead. Due to the high costs for labor and materials the project exceeded its budget and could not be completed until a second bond issue was passed in 1926.

The completion of Soldier Field required that its access road, the first phase of South Lake Shore Drive, and its northeast parking lot be constructed. This work coin-

cided with landfill from 14th to 56th streets, but excluded the Promontory.

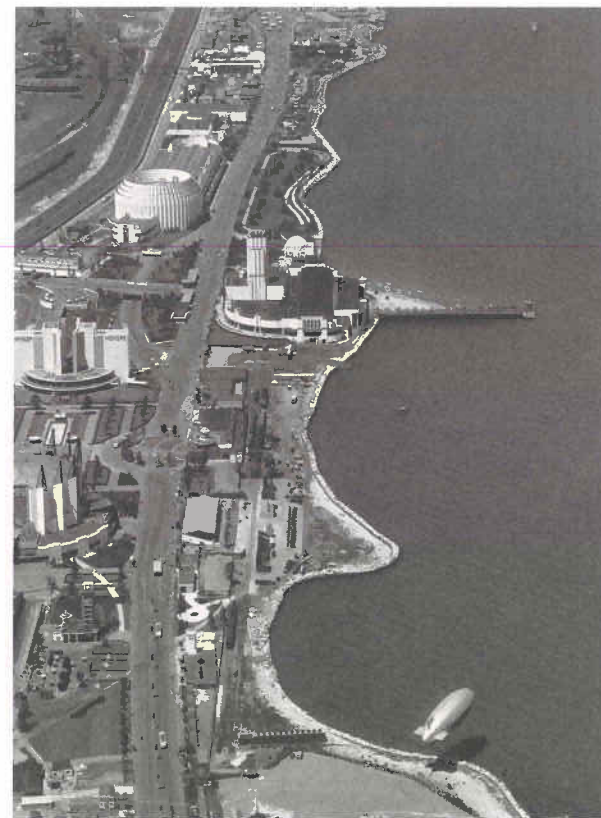
Construction started on the rest of Lake Shore Drive, the park's elegant pleasure boulevard. Having four lanes, its two north-bound lanes were named for Leif Eriksen and its south-bound lanes after Christopher Columbus. Built close to the shore, it provided vistas of the lake and views of play fields and meadows framed by trees to the west. It was in this configuration that the Drive opened from Grant Park to Jackson Park in 1930.

With its mainland taking shape and work on Northerly Island advancing, the South Park Commissioners officially named the South Shore Development in honor of Daniel Burnham on January 24, 1927. The next phase of development, including the formation of Promontory Point and the islands, was begun at the Promontory in 1929. The onset of the Depression would slow construction of the Promontory and arrest plans for the islands.

Despite concerted efforts during the 20's and 30's, Burnham's dream of a linear lakefront park with islands and lagoons was never realized except for Northerly Island and Burnham Harbor.



*The Avenue of Flags with aquarium in background, Official Pictures of a Century of Progress Exposition, photos by Kaufmann & Fabry Co., The Ruben H. Donnelly Corp., Chicago, 1933.*



*Chicago's dazzling second world's fair, The Century of Progress, Burnham Park, June 21, 1934.*

## A Century of Progress, 1933–34

Its proximity to museums, to newly constructed Soldier Field, to transportation, and its dramatic lakefront setting all made Burnham Park the ideal location for a second World's Fair when the idea began to take shape in 1927. Although Mayor William Hale Thompson did not want a fair, prominent Chicagoans had successfully solicited the support of General Charles S. Dawes, then Vice-President of the United States. Serving as president of the organizing committee, Dawes suggested that the entire fair be privately financed. A 1928 state charter created an Illinois non-profit corporation, and the World's Fair Organization began raising funds through memberships and a public campaign. Although most of the preparations were made in the midst of the Great Depression, fund-raising for the fair was extremely successful.

The fair's theme was "the dramatization of the progress of civilization during the hundred years of Chicago's existence."<sup>5</sup> Daniel H. Burnham, Jr., son of the renowned author of the 1909 Plan of Chicago, was Director of Works, and other prominent designers served on the fair's Architectural Commission. Edward H. Bennett, co-author of the seminal 1909 Plan and

consulting architect to the Chicago Plan Commission, was the commission member responsible for laying out the fairgrounds. The designers and organizers worked with the South Park Commission to oversee additional landfill for the world's fair. In 1930, as construction for the fair began, the Adler Planetarium, the first permanent planetarium in the Western Hemisphere, opened on the Northerly Island. By 1933, the planetarium sat within a gleaming asymmetrical campus of Art Deco buildings. With science and technology as its highlights, fair's exhibits included the geology section's simulated volcanoes, gold and coal mines, underground torrents and shifting sand bars. Goodyear, General Motors, RCA, Havoline Oil and other major corporations sponsored industrial exhibits.

Among the many rides and attractions were the "Sky Ride," with its double-decker rocket cars running along cables between two giant towers. The "Wings of a Century" was a pageant highlighting the century's advances in transportation from stage coaches to airplanes. The Midway offered the exotic and the bizarre with features such as the "Odditorium" and Ripley's "Believe it or Not." The fair's most popular attraction was the risqué fan dancer, Sally Rand. Numerous foreign governments participated by creating villages such as the "Streets of Paris," "Black Forest Village," and the "Streets of Shanghai." Of local significance was a reproduction of Fort Dearborn located near 24th Street on the lakeshore, not far from the site of Chicago's 1814 Fort Dearborn Massacre.

For two full seasons, fairgoers enjoyed the 82-miles of spectacles, attractions, exhibits and rides for an admission fee of 50 cents. Drawing more than 38 million visitors, the Century of Progress was a tremendous success. In addition to providing a promising symbol of the future, the fair was financially successful. There was enough money left over to provide funds for the South Park Commission, museums, organizations, and groups interested in preserving two fair attractions, the Lama Temple and Fort Dearborn.



## The 'Permanent Fair', 1934–35

When the Century of Progress closed Mayor Edward J. Kelly created a Recreation Commission to investigate the potential of a 'continuing or permanent fair' on the Burnham Park site incorporating some of world's fair exhibits. The commission, noting the contrast between what Burnham had planned and the commercialization inherent in the permanent fair concept, resolved in part:

That Burnham Park be kept free to the people of Chicago for recreation and repose, that... the parks should not be commercialized in any respect, ... that only such museums should be permitted in the parks as are of a general educational, artistic, and recreational value without any other ulterior commercial motive.<sup>6</sup>

Mayor Kelly and Leonard Hicks, head of the World's Fair Committee responsible for the disposition of the fair's exhibits, disagreed. Using White Plains, New York's Rye Beach "Playland" as a model, Hicks' Committee submitted a report in March 1935 ignoring the concerns of the Recreation Commission. Hicks' report, which received the mayor's approval, called for an amusement park including retention of some



*Promontory Point showing step-stone revetment, Burnham Park, c. 1938*

Century of Progress attractions and the beach, adding a casino and playgrounds on Northerly Island, and a new convention center on the mainland opposite the island. Focusing on the site's commercial potential and suggesting that this opportunity was as "momentous" as the Burnham Plan had been, the report asserted:

What it may mean permanently to our city fairly staggers the imagination. It will add permanently to Chicago business revenues, swell the volume of our commerce and the total of our employment. It will attract millions of visitors annually and impress them favorably with our city as a place of trade.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of opposition from the public and the press, a bill was immediately introduced in Springfield to create a Metropolitan Fair and Exposition Authority with the power to lease public park lands, charge fees and collect rents from fairs, industrial, trade, scientific, and cultural exhibits, and convention halls, "provided not more than ten per cent of the total park area of such park district shall be used for such purposes."<sup>8</sup> Any lease of park land for these purposes could extend for up to seventy years.

An incensed public responded with the creation of the first lakefront protection organization, the Committee on Lake Front and Park Defense. Despite their efforts, the bill passed the state legislature in April, 1935, but was amended to reduce the available area to five per cent of the entire park district. Additionally the term of any lease was reduced to twenty-five years, and an airport was proposed on Northerly Island, along with the permanent fair's amusements.<sup>9</sup>

## Parks Consolidation and the Exposition Authority, 1934–1941

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Chicago's recreation needs were met by an increasing number of independent park districts. By the early 1930s, 22 separate park districts operated in the City of Chicago, each with the authority to levy taxes. By 1933 the Depression rendered most of these districts financially insolvent. To reduce duplicate services and streamline operations, all of the park districts were consolidated by an act of the state legislature in 1934, creating a single Chicago Park District.

With its administration reorganized and the Century of Progress over, the new Chicago Park District began planning for future developments in Burnham Park. Between 1935 and 1937 the park district in-house designers created plans continuing some of Daniel Burnham's ideas. Federal funding through the Works Progress Administration allowed the park district to begin new landfill operations and to undertake landscape improvements.

Buildings from the fair were removed and landscape was restored between 23rd and 39th streets. By 1941, the park district had built the new 31st Street beach and beachhouse, installed playfields, meadows, walkways, basketball and tennis courts, and constructed revetments along Burnham Park's entire shore. The most significant project was the completion of the Promontory Point. Its Pavilion, inspired by a lighthouse, was designed by E. V. Buchsbaum. The landscape was conceived by the noted naturalistic designer Alfred Caldwell.

The most important legacy of this period was the establishment of the Fair & Exposition Authority because it inspired a series of events, including the Carnival of the Lakes, held in Burnham Harbor beginning in 1937. While the continuing Depression and the pending war prevented the Fair & Exposition Authority from taking other immediate actions, the concept of a permanent fair under its direction would replace Burnham's plan as the motivation for south lakefront development through most of the rest of the century.



*Miniature yacht regatta at the 51st St. Toy Boat Basin, May 23, 1936.*



*Chicago Park District employees planting the landscape at Promontory Point, Burnham Park, October 21, 1938.*





*Carnival of the Lakes, Lagoon Theater, site of crowning the Great Lakes Queen and parade of illuminated water floats, August 23, 1937.*

## Post-war Events and Intrusions: 1945–1986

The end of World War II, the easing of materials restrictions in 1947, and a \$30 million bond issue passed in 1945 put plans for a permanent fair and the transformation of Burnham Park in motion. Some of these changes, particularly those related to the Fair & Exposition Authority, were planned and implemented over decades; others were matters of expediency or circumstance. The first major post-war event was the Railroad Fair of 1947–48, a showcase for new diesel powered locomotives and passenger cars. The same years saw the construction and opening of Meigs Field, the airport established under the Exposition Authority act. With an original 50-year lease, the airport was constructed on the southern two-thirds of Northerly Island. Operations at Meigs would expand with a permanent air control tower in 1952 and a terminal building in 1961. The success of this small scale operation would lead to an early 1960s plan to build a new international airport in the lake, a plan which would not be abandoned until the 1980s.

Another \$30 million bond issue, passed in early 1952, provided funds for extensive city-wide parks programs including \$6 million for the reconstruction of South Lake Shore Drive (SLSD). Due to the original drive's proximity to the shore, shoreline erosion, and the dramatic increase in traffic after the war, the park district designed an entirely new divided highway. Constructed in the open ground between the existing drive and the I.C. right-of-way, the new SLSD was built through extensive playfields and landscapes. The old road remained in use while the new was being constructed from 1952 to 1955. Despite its tremendous intrusion on the landscape, the new SLSD was celebrated in park district literature as a triumph of traffic engineering that would support the proposed federal interstate highway system.<sup>10</sup> Fragments of the old drive survive today as parking lots.

During the summer of 1955, General Motors Corporation contracted with the Exposition Authority and park district to hold a national car and truck demonstration in Burnham Park. The "Powerama," automotive fair required new facilities and doubled the



*Aerial view of south end of Burnham Park with Promontory Point, July 16, 1946.*

paved areas south and east of Soldier Field. With new parking lots and SLSD's increased vehicular capacity, 1955 saw extensive areas of the park quickly and radically transformed into an automotive transportation and parking corridor. Additional paving was required when the Southwest Interstate Highway, now the Stevenson Expressway /I-55, was completed and connected to Lake Shore Drive near McCormick Place in 1960.

During the 1950s and '60s, the idea of a permanent fair was partly realized through on-going special events. Among the regularly scheduled events were the Flower Shows held at McCormick Place in spring and fall. In addition to the Railroad Fair and Powerama, events included the Pan-American Games of 1959, which held its track and field events in Soldier Field.

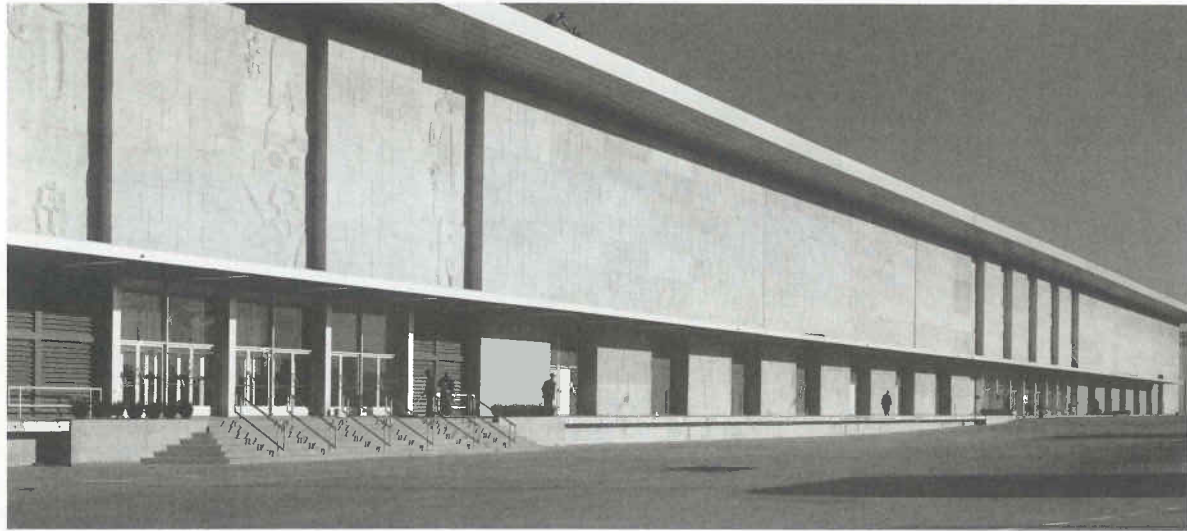


*Chicago Railroad Fair, looking southwest from about 24th St., 1948.*



*Aerial view of Burnham Park taken from approximately 27th Street showing the new and old S. Lake Shore Drives, August 19, 1958.*





View of first McCormick Place designed by Shaw, Metz and Assoc., Burnham Park, 1961.

Burnham Park was also used by the Department of Defense during the height of the Cold War for anti-aircraft missile installations. Nike surface to air missiles were on constant alert to defend Chicago from bases located at 26th Street and on Promontory Point. Built in 1954-55, both sites occupied about 6 acres and required buildings, radar, underground missile storage, fuel tanks and launch pads. Ironically, the modern military's 26th Street missile base occupied the former site of the Fort Dearborn replica, built for the Century of Progress, which had burned down in 1940. Changes in military policy and technology led to the removal of the Nike bases in 1962.

In 1953 the state legislature authorized \$5.7 million from parimutual funds allowing the Exposition Authority to construct and operate the convention hall proposed in the 1935 act. Civic groups filed lawsuits to stop the project. The suits were dismissed by 1958 and the first McCormick Place was completed in 1960. When it was destroyed by fire in 1967, there were many people who hoped that it would not be rebuilt in Burnham Park. Despite efforts by civic groups to have the new convention hall relocated outside the park, the Exposition Authority's immediate need, and time savings represented by reusing the old foundation, determined that the new convention hall would remain in the park. Built between 1969 and 1971, this structure, known as McCormick Place East, covers a 19-acre site. The facility's success led to the construction of the McCormick Place North Building in 1986, and the West Building in 1996.

## Recent developments, 1989-1999

In 1989 the city and state legislature reorganized the Metropolitan Fair & Exposition Authority as the Pier & Exposition Authority, giving the redefined organization \$150 million to reconstruct Navy Pier as a recreation and cultural center. While the Exposition Authority would still direct activities at McCormick Place, its reorganization would effectively transfer the permanent fair concept from Burnham Park to Navy Pier, where Mayor Kelly's vision for a lakefront amusement facility was finally realized.

While the intrusions on Burnham Park's design after 1935 were extensive, recent developments have shown a trend toward the vision of the park as a green public recreation space. 1989 saw the beginning of new work in Burnham Park with the restoration of Alfred Caldwell's landscape on Promontory Point. Caldwell, 86 years old at the time, returned to supervise and complete the design he had first envisioned in 1937. Additionally, the Chicago Park District rehabilitated the Promontory Pavilion in 1991.

In 1993, the park district undertook an extensive renovation of Soldier Field in anticipation of the World Cup Soccer tournament the following year. To meet the needs of park users, new facilities included a Fish Cleaning and Concession Building on Burnham Harbor at 19th Street in 1989-90. In 1992 a 13-acre playground area west of SLSD and north of 53rd St. was renovated and renamed in memory of the late Mayor Harold Washington. An initiative to replace outdated facilities on the lakefront led to the construction of new beach houses at 12th Street beach on Northerly Island and at 31st Street beach in 1997.

In 1999, an underused part of the park west of Lake Shore Drive at the 47th Street parking lot is being transformed into a Butterfly Garden. Another significant event this year is the start of the shoreline protection project, to reconstruct revetments in Burnham Park from 26th Street to 56th Street. This project, which will not be completed until 2008, may also include the formation of up to 120 new acres of land, representing the first new south lakefront landfill in over 60 years.

A recently completed project with a major impact on Burnham Park's landscape has been the relocation of Lake Shore Drive and creation of the new Museum Campus, an integrated and attractive setting for the lakefront museums. This 57-acre project occupies parts of Grant and Burnham parks. In Burnham Park it included the removal and reconfiguration of the north-bound lanes of the drive, transformation of hardscape into green space, and return of the park east of the stadium to recreational uses.

The 50-year lease granted by the park district for Meigs Field expired on September 30, 1996. Beginning the year before, when the city, park district, and over 60 civic organizations held meetings to discuss the future of the airport site, they agreed that the airport revert to parkland. The proposal favored by Mayor Richard M. Daley focuses on nature, with provisions for lagoons, natural landscapes, campgrounds, and an outdoor museum. Mayor Daley's plan was approved by the City Council. However, there was a heated debate between the city and the state, which wanted the airport to remain open. After months of controversy, in February 1997 Mayor Daley and Governor Jim Edgar announced an agreement granting a five year extension for the airport. The deal specifies that, as of 12:01 a.m. on February 10, 2002, the site will be returned to the park district for redevelopment as parkland.

The design for the new landscape on Northerly Island is one of many opportunities to enhance Burnham Park. One current opportunity is the Illinois Department of Transportation's phase I project for the reconstruction of SLSD. Other proposals follow in this report. This plan provides a framework for future developments that will allow Burnham Park to continue evolving into the vital public recreation space worthy of its original visionary Daniel H. Burnham.

by Julia Sniderman Bachrach &  
Timothy N. Wittman  
for the Chicago Park District  
December, 1999

1 Burnham, Daniel H. and Edward H. Bennett, *Plan of Chicago*, Chicago: Commercial Club of Chicago, 1909; facsimile republication, New York: Da Capo Press, 1970, Plate L.

2 Ibid., p. 51.

3 *Chicago Park District, Historical Register of the Twenty-Two Superseded Park Districts*, Daniel F. Breen, editor, 1941, vol. I, p.311.

4 *Chicago Commission on Race Relations, The Negro in Chicago*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922, p. 4.

5 Lohr, Lenox R. *Fair Management, The Story of a Century of Progress*, Chicago: Cuneo Press, 1952, p.15.

6 Halsey, Elizabeth. *Development of Public Recreation in Metropolitan Chicago*, Chicago: Chicago Recreation Commission, 1940, p. 57.

7 *Chicago Daily News*, March 6, 1935.

8 *Citizens' Association, Bulletin No. 93*, April 24, 1935.

9 Halsey, p. 62.

10 *Chicago Park District, Annual Report for 1955*, pp. 5 & 25.

All historic photos are courtesy of the Chicago Park District Archives



# Site Analysis— Existing Conditions



*31st Street Beach house*

Burnham Park is bounded by Lake Michigan on the east and, in most locations, either Lake Shore Drive or the Illinois Central Rail Road (I.C.) on the west. The park runs south from Roosevelt Road to 56th Street. This framework plan addresses the area of the park from 56th Street to the south to McCormick Place to the north, an area of approximately 400 acres. The location of the park provides both of its most appealing physical conditions—the lake edge and the magnificent views north to the Chicago skyline. Its location is also the reason for two of the major challenges facing Burnham Park—access over Lake Shore Drive and the Illinois Central tracks and the narrow width of the park between Lake Shore Drive and Lake Michigan.

Burnham Park is under used when compared to its counterpart on the north side. Limited access, a perceived absence of security, a deteriorated shoreline revetment, and lack of facilities are in part contributing to this under utilization. This is especially true of the middle section of the park north of 47th Street to the 31st Street beach.

## Existing Facilities

Existing public facilities include the beach house at 31st Street beach, restroom facilities at 43rd Street, and the Promontory Point Pavilion. Restroom facilities are limited to these locations.

The existing beach house at 31st Street provides toilets, showers and changing areas, and limited concessions. The beach is currently being expanded to three times its present size in conjunction with the replacement of the revetment to the north and south. The new beach project also includes an extension of the existing 31st Street Pier and the construction of a new pier to the north of the beach. It is the only beach in the area of study. The closest beaches are at 12th Street and 57th Street.

- There are recreational amenities in the following locations:

Playlots: 31st Street Beach, 43rd Street, 47th Street, 53rd Street, and 55th Street.

Basketball courts: 35th Street, 43rd Street, 47th Street

Athletic fields: 47th Street, and 53rd Street.

Tennis Courts: 53rd Street.

- There is a basin for sailing model yachts at 51st Street.

- A butterfly nature garden is being developed at 47th Street on the west side of Lake Shore Drive.

- Restroom facilities at 43rd Street have been the site of various security incidents, and require upgrading.

- The lower level of Promontory Point Fieldhouse is not accessible.

- Existing athletic facilities are extremely limited and are clustered at the south end of the park from 47th Street to 56th Street.



*Basketball courts at 35th Street*



*Playground at 47th Street*



A photograph of the exterior of the National Museum of the American Indian. The building is constructed from light-colored stone blocks and features a dark, gabled roof. On the right side, there is a prominent circular tower with a conical roof. The facade includes several large, dark-framed windows and a central entrance. The building is surrounded by a green lawn with some young trees and small stone pillars in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue.

**LAKE MICHIGAN**

ADLER PLANETARIUM  
 HEDD AQUARIUM  
 12TH STREET BEACH  
 NORTHERLY ISLAND  
 BURNHAM PARK YACHT HARBOR  
 BURNHAM PARK  
 SOLDIER'S FIELD  
 EXIST. PARKING  
 LAKE SHORE DRIVE  
 MCCORMICK  
 MCCORMICK  
 STEVENSON AVE  
 31ST STREET BEACH  
 BURNHAM PARK  
 EXISTING PARKING  
 ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF  
 BASKETBALL COURT  
 BURNHAM PARK  
 E. OAKWOOD BLVD  
 BASKETBALL COURT  
 PLAYGROUND  
 BUTTERFLY GARDEN  
 PLAYGROUND  
 MODEL YACHT BASIN  
 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS  
 PROMONTORY POINT  
 PLAYGROUND  
 TENNIS COURT  
 E. 31ST STREET  
 E. 35TH STREET  
 E. 43RD STREET  
 E. 47TH STREET  
 E. 51ST STREET  
 E. 53RD STREET  
 E. 55TH STREET

**BURNHAM PARK**  
 CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT  
 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

0 500 1000 2000 3000



# Site Analysis— Access & Circulation

To reach Burnham Park from the adjoining neighborhoods, one must cross the Illinois Central rail line and Lake Shore Drive, either via a pedestrian bridge, or at the vehicular access points at 31st Street and Oakwood Boulevard. Within the area of study (McCormick Place to Promontory Point), pedestrian circulation lacks hierarchy. In many locations high speed users, such as cyclists and roller bladers, share paths with low-speed users, such as walkers.



*Pedestrian Bridge at 43rd Street*



*Vehicular Access at Oakwood Boulevard*

## Vehicular Access

- Vehicular access is located only at 31st Street and at Oakwood Boulevard. Parking is available at 47th Street on the west side of Lake Shore Drive and at 31st Street and at Oakwood Boulevard on the east side of Lake Shore Drive
- There is no public transportation (CTA) into the park and no regularly scheduled Metra stops along the length of the Park. There is a flag stop at 47th Street.
- There are CTA bus stops on the west side of the Illinois Central tracks near the park. They are located at 35th Street and Cottage Grove, 40th and Lake Park, 43rd and Oakenwald, 47th and Lake Park, and at the Museum of Science and Industry, south of Burnham Park.



*Parking Lot at 31st Street*

## Pedestrian Access

- Pedestrian bridges over Lake Shore Drive and the Illinois Central Tracks are located at 35th Street, 43rd Street, 47th Street, and 51st Street.
- There is an accessible pedestrian underpass at 55th Street.
- The bridges at 35th and 43rd Streets are not clearly identified within the neighborhoods as connections to the park. None of the bridges are barrier free and accessible or bicycle friendly.
- Pedestrian crossings at the vehicular access points are poorly planned and unmarked. There are pedestrian-vehicle conflicts at 31st Street and at Oakwood Boulevard, as pedestrians cross Lake Shore Drive access ramps to reach the park.

## Parking

- Existing parking lots at 31st Street and at Oakwood Boulevard are long linear lots that are inefficiently laid out, that are unsafe, and that divide narrow parkland. Vehicular access into the lots conflicts with the existing bicycle route.
- Vehicular access to the parking lots from north-bound Lake Shore Drive off-ramps requires a 180 degree turn.
- The pedestrian walk from the 47th Street parking lot is blocked by a median strip and has no clear pedestrian crossing lanes or crossing lights.

## Circulation through Park

- There are no separate paths for pedestrians and bicyclists at many points through the park.
- The existing pathway system is confusing and lacks hierarchy; multiple parallel paths exist in some locations, while other locations are limited to a single path for all users.
- Revetment damage limits access to Lake Michigan.
- The existing bikeway is focused north-south with minimal connections to adjacent communities.



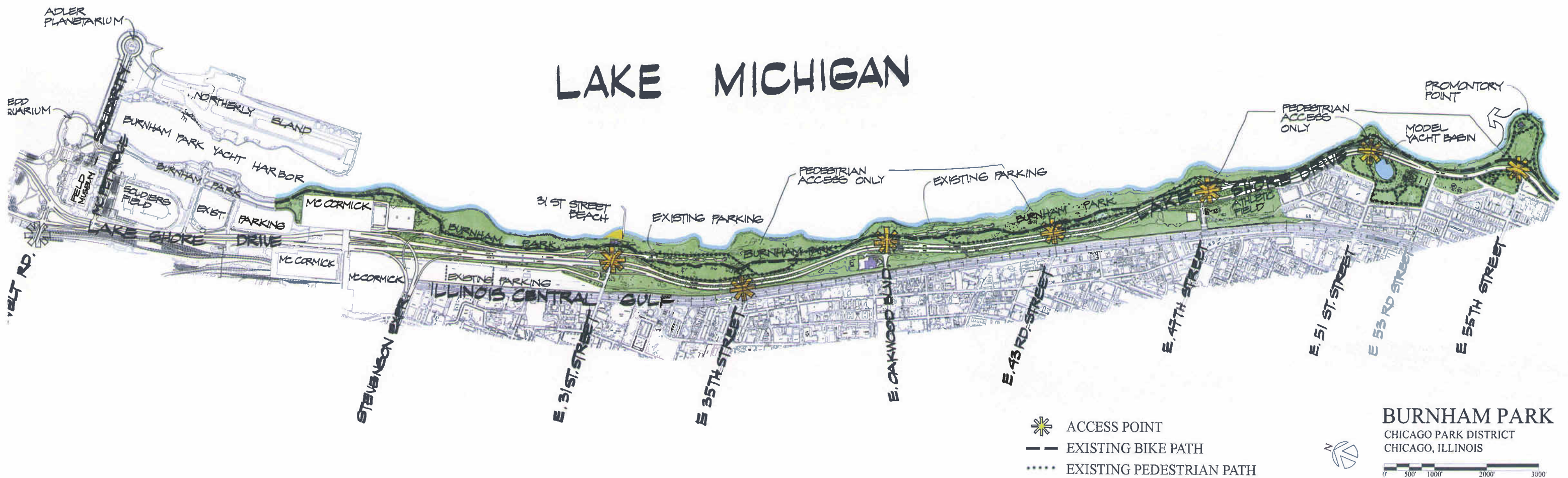
*Multiple pedestrian and bicycle paths lack hierarchy*



ion



Pedestrian and Bicycle path at 53rd Street





# Site Analysis— Park Character

With the exception of the landscape at Promontory Point, the Model Yacht basin, and the newly planted butterfly garden at 47th Street, the landscape in Burnham Park lacks a distinctive character. Inferior maintenance and extensive storm damage contribute to problems with park appearance. The deterioration of the lake edge is being addressed by the Chicago Park District, the City of Chicago and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers through the Shoreline Protection Project which will complete construction on the revetment (entire shoreline edge) by 2005.



*Park landscape at 26th Street*



*Deteriorated shoreline revetment*

## Park Location

- The park is approximately 4 1/2 miles long. The lakefront side of the park (to the east of Lake Shore Drive) varies in width from +/- 100 feet at its narrowest, to +/- 800 feet at its widest.
- The park is bounded by Lake Michigan on the east. Large areas of the park are bounded by Lake Shore Drive or by the Illinois Central tracks on the west.
- Lake Shore Drive runs through the park, creating a visual and noise intrusion for park users but offering excellent views to motorists.
- The park has magnificent views to the Chicago Skyline and to Lake Michigan
- The narrow width of the park from 51st Street to 54th Street is prone to flooding and storm water damage that severely limits use of park. This problem is being addressed by the Chicago Shoreline Protection Project which will add up to 100 feet of additional land in this location through lakefill and which will rebuild the failed revetment.

## Landscape

- The landscape is a mixture of older and newly planted trees. The older trees exist in clusters adjacent to the locations of the former Lake Shore Drive. (See Park History).
- The Alfred Caldwell designed landscape at Promontory Point has been restored.
- There is limited shrub massing and a lack of variety of landscape. There is no definition of open lawns and meadows.
- There is limited visual and aural screening of Lake Shore Drive and the Stevenson Expressway (I-55) interchange.
- There is no consistent usage of site furnishings such as benches, water fountains, and lighting except at areas near 31st Street and Promontory Point.
- There are limited areas of lake front habitat for birds and other wildlife in Burnham Park.

## Revetment

- The revetment protects the shoreline from erosion due to storms. Typically, the original construction consisted of two parallel rows of closely-spaced timber piles which were filled with stone. Massive cut limestone capstones (2-5 tons) were placed on top of the stone fill to create a series of steps.
- The majority of the revetment was built between 1910 and 1930
- Revetment deterioration is due primarily to deterioration of the timber piles in the zone of fluctuating water levels (Record Low Water in 1964 and Record High Water in 1986), which resulted in loss of the stone fill and subsequent settlement of the capstones.

There have been periodic attempts to stabilize individual segments of the shoreline. The current project is the first large-scale reconstruction.

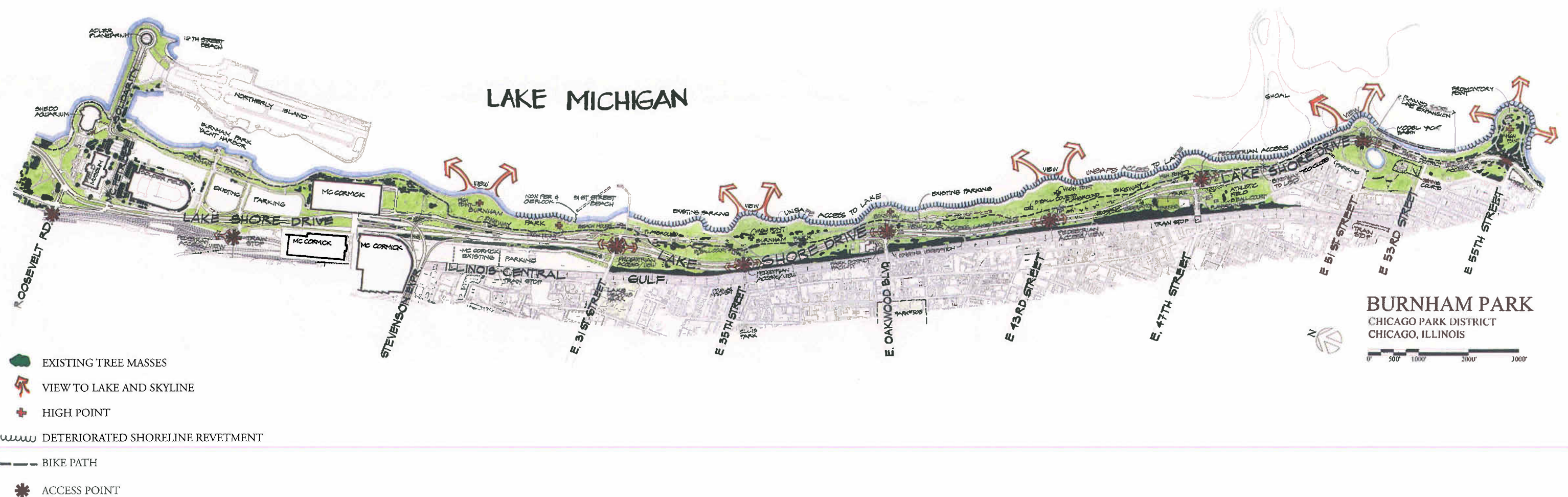


*Proximity of bicycle path to Lake Shore Drive (47th Street)*





View to Chicago Skyline from 35th Street

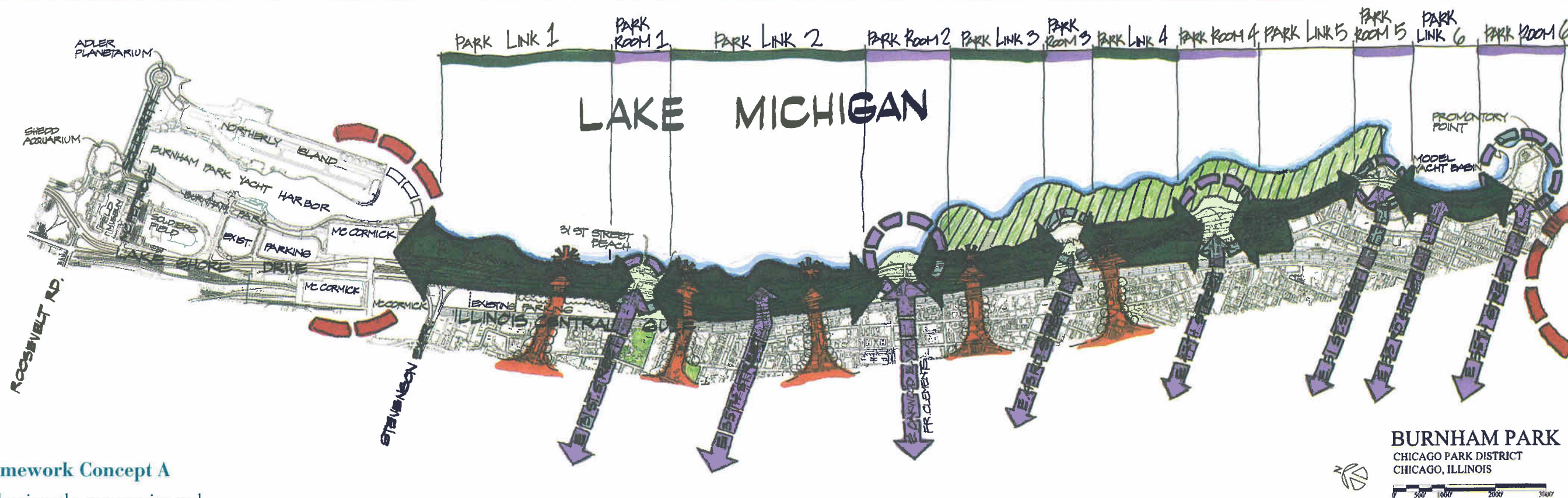




# Planning Process

## 1999 PROJECT CALENDAR

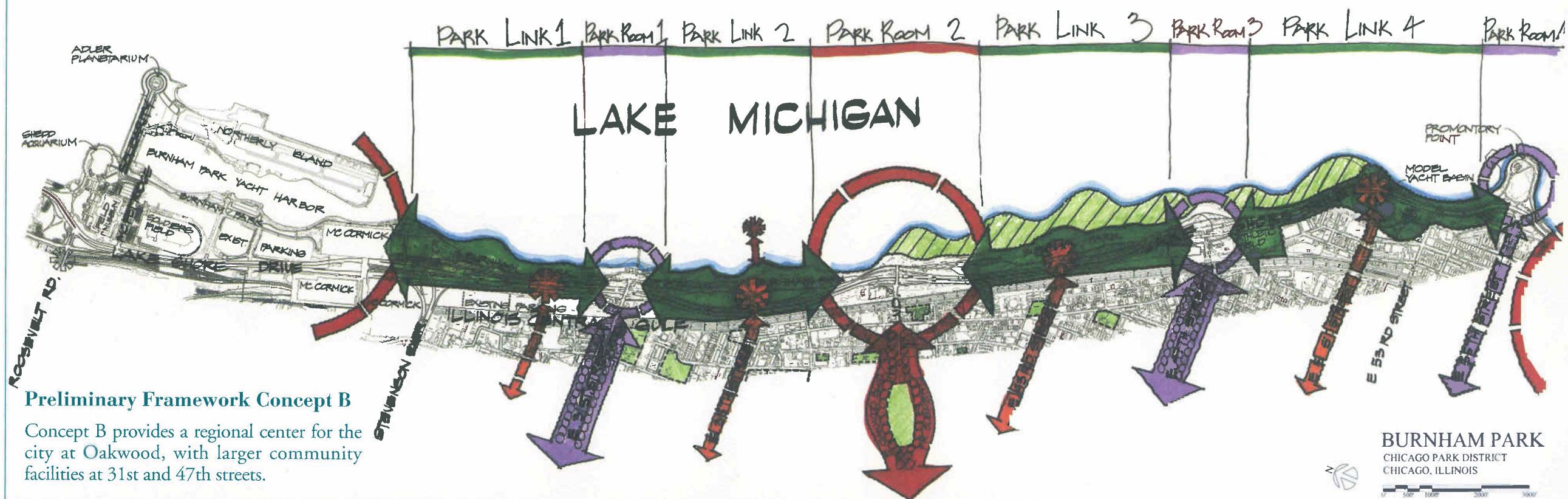
March 11:	Project Start-up
April 20:	Public Meeting #1
May 11:	Steering Committee Meeting #1
May 11:	Public Meeting #2
May 11-13:	Public Design Charrette
May 13:	Public Meeting #3:
July 7:	Steering Committee Meeting #2
July 8:	Public Meeting #4:
Sept. 15	Steering Committee Meeting #3
Sept. 22:	Public Meeting #5



### Preliminary Framework Concept A

Concept A is a predominantly community and neighborhood based park with a community center at Oakwood, and increased access from the neighborhoods





Over a period of six months, the team conducted a series of five public meetings and a two-day public design charrette. A steering committee comprised of members of public agencies and not-for-profit groups with a significant interest in the Lakefront, guided and gave feedback about the development of the plan. Through a combination of surveys, "visioning sessions" and public discussion groups, a series of cohesive ideas about park use and park character evolved.

## Public Meetings #1 and #2

At the initial public meetings, the team compiled information about current park usage— including positive and negative perspectives of the park. During public meetings a number of "visioning exercises" were held to develop ideas about future park uses, and to gauge responses to types of potential landscape treatment for the park. Several general concerns and desires emerged during the first meetings.

- Additional amenities such as beaches, beach houses or other recreation areas should be added to the park north of 51st Street. Restrooms and concessions as well as separate walking and bicycling paths should be added throughout the park.
- The park should have quiet, natural areas for sitting and relaxing or strolling. The park should not become overcrowded with activities and people.

- Access to the park should be improved, the park should be well maintained, and security features such as lighting and first-aid or emergency facilities should be added.

- During the two-day design charrette, the team used the information compiled during the previous meetings to create two preliminary framework concepts. These concepts address the role of the park in relation to the adjacent neighborhoods, the South Side community, and the City of Chicago as a whole.



## Public Meetings #3–5

Over the course of the following meetings the plan was revised to incorporate public comments. The final framework plan envisions a park with a community and neighborhood focus, and with the potential to accommodate larger events at the Oakwood area. During these public meetings, the following concepts emerged as desires for shaping and enhancing the park.

- The "Heart of the Park" should be centered at Oakwood Boulevard, with "low-key" neighborhood oriented activities in the remainder of the park. It should contain a flexible and expandable outdoor space which can accommodate open-air events, and which also retains the natural character of the park.
- Park landscaping should maintain and enhance the natural character of the lakefront, should be able to sustain wildlife habitats, and should include opportunities for education about the natural environment.

- Park amenities should focus on those activities that can only be accommodated on the lakefront.

- Parkland should be increased through lakefill where possible. Existing land should be used for park purposes; parking should be relocated to the west of Lake Shore Drive.

Survey results, and a list of public participants are located in the Appendix.



# Guiding Principle





# Mission Statement

**Burnham Park should provide a variety of recreational, cultural and educational experiences along Lake Michigan. These experiences should be set in an attractive natural landscape environment that serves and is connected to local neighborhoods and that strengthens the open space waterfront of Chicago.**

Underlying the mission statement is a series of principles that provide a foundation for the framework plan.

## **Burnham Park is a place where nature and culture can flourish in all their forms.**

Burnham Park should provide a multitude of natural and cultural experiences by focusing on facilities that provide educational or interpretive experiences, places for performances or educational events, and naturalized areas with interpretive trails and habitat areas. It should utilize its special location on the lakefront for water-related recreational activities and outdoor spaces while preserving and enhancing views to both Lake Michigan and the Chicago Skyline.

## **Burnham Park is a secure and comfortable place.**

Burnham Park should be reinforced as a safe and accessible destination with improvements to entrances, parking areas, public transportation, pathways, lighting and signage. Pedestrian access to the park should be improved with new barrier-free and accessible entrance points over Lake Shore Drive at quarter mile intervals. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be expanded within the park with separate trails for each.

## **Burnham Park is a place where all feel welcome.**

Burnham Park should be a place where nature and culture flourish, where every visitor is welcome and comfortable, and where the local community goes to relax and enjoy the lakefront. This principle improves the landscape quality and diversity of the waterfront while protecting and enhancing views of the lake and the Chicago skyline. It should vary the park experience by creating a series of open sunny areas and enclosed shady spaces organized around a series of “Garden Room” links.



# Framework Plan Objectives

The Burnham Park Framework Plan provides a structure that enables the Chicago Park District and the local community to create a new future for Burnham Park. Drawing from the workshop sessions and interviews with the community, the plan provides a series of mutually reinforcing objectives that support the framework recommendations. The recommendations are outlined in detail in the Framework Guidelines, but the principle objectives can be summarized as follows:

- Maintain a balance between areas of activity and areas of repose within the park through the creation of “Park Links” and “Park Rooms”.
- Designate existing parkland for park use by relocating the majority of surface parking to the west of Lake Shore Drive.
- Increase park land with lake infill at 39th Street and at the Morgan Shoal (47th-50th Streets) to provide increased lakefront recreational opportunities for Near and Mid-South Side users, including additional beaches, park facilities and related programs.

- Preserve and enhance the naturalistic landscape character of the park to provide areas to experience nature and habitats to attract birds, fish and other wildlife.
- Reduce the noise of Lake Shore Drive in the park through the use of landforms and landscape buffers at designated areas.
- Improve access and circulation into and through the park by creating additional bicycle/pedestrian access bridges, separate pedestrian and bicycle paths, opportunities for CTA bus stops, and vehicular drop-off points.
- Strengthen the connection between the park and the adjacent neighborhoods through a series of landscaped “Gateways” and “Greenways” with extensive street plantings and shade trees.
- Preserve view corridors to Lake Michigan and the skyline from the park and Lake Shore Drive at designated areas.

- Create opportunities for beaches and community beach buildings which will support a variety of lakefront programs and activities for community and neighborhood use.
- Create a Burnham Park Advisory Council made up of community members to work in conjunction with the Chicago Park District to guide the implementation and development of future work in accordance with the Framework Guidelines.
- All future lake projects will comply with the Lakefront Protection Ordinance, and will incorporate inter-governmental agency coordination to ensure that projects are developed in conjunction with the Framework Plan Guidelines.



# Park Organization

One of the biggest challenges facing Burnham Park is its narrow linear form. In order to allow for the incorporation of additional educational, recreational, and cultural facilities within the park while maintaining a balance between areas of activity and areas of quiet and repose, the Framework Guidelines organize the park into two types of zones, called *"Park Links"* and *"Park Rooms"*.

*"Park Rooms"* contain areas for organized activities and facilities, such as beaches, basketball or tennis courts, beach houses, and outdoor gathering spaces.

*"Park Links"* connect park rooms with bicycle and pedestrian walks and contain areas for small picnics and play areas for children, as well as an enhanced naturalistic landscape.

## Park Rooms:

To the east of Lake Shore Drive, Park Rooms provide areas for lakefront oriented recreation including areas for fishing and swimming, picnic areas, areas for family or community gatherings, and play areas for children. Park Rooms provide drop-off areas adjacent to park facilities, parking for people with disabilities, and opportunities for CTA bus access. Access to the Park Rooms is landscaped to create *"Community Gateways"*.

To the west of Lake Shore Drive, Park Rooms provide landscaped parking lots for park users, and "outdoor activity areas" such as basketball courts, tennis courts, or soccer fields.

## Park Links:

Park Links contain a variety of types of landscape including groves of trees, meadows, and open lawns that provide character, shade, habitat for wildlife, and a noise buffer from Lake Shore Drive. They contain "Overlooks" that create focus points that include seating, lighting, and informational and directional signage about park opportunities. Park Links provide the opportunity to enhance the connection to the adjacent communities through new accessible bicycle/pedestrian bridges, or *"Neighborhood Greenways"*

## Unifying Features:

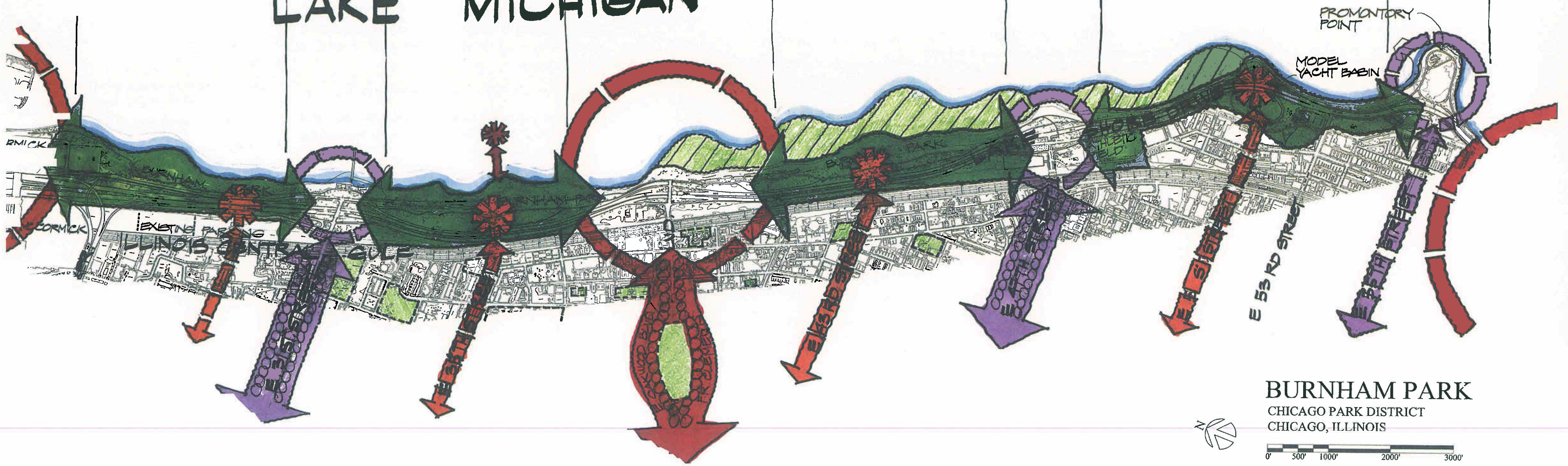
Develop a comprehensive system of site furnishings, walk and path paving, signage, lighting, and water fountains to create a unified and cohesive character for the whole park. Install a paved bicycle route with an adjacent soft surface running path; install a pedestrian walk along the new shoreline revetment. These paths connect the links and rooms throughout the length of the park.



n

PARK LINK 1   PARK ROOM 1   PARK LINK 2   PARK ROOM 2   PARK LINK 3   PARK ROOM 3   PARK LINK 4   PARK ROOM 4

LAKE MICHIGAN



BURNHAM PARK  
CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

0' 500' 1000' 2000' 3000'



# Park Use

*Burnham Park should provide a multitude of natural and cultural experiences by focusing on facilities that provide educational or interpretive experiences, places for performances or educational events, and naturalized areas with interpretive trails and habitat areas. It should utilize its special location on the lakefront for water-related recreational activities and outdoor spaces, while preserving and enhancing views to both Lake Michigan and the Chicago Skyline.*

## Recommendations for Park Usage, Facilities, and Amenities

Following are general recommendations for character and use throughout the park.

Specific facilities and amenities for each link and room are described in the following Links & Rooms sections:

**PARK LINK #1: McCORMICK - 31st ST:**  
Commemorative Art Garden

**PARK ROOM #1: 31st ST. GATEWAY:**  
Expansion of existing beach

**PARK LINK #2: 31st ST.- OAKWOOD BLVD.**  
Community Garden

**PARK ROOM #2: OAKWOOD GATEWAY**  
Increased park land with a new beach and community/ beach building and flexible multi-purpose outdoor lawns

**PARK LINK #3: OAKWOOD - 47TH ST.**  
Chicago Demonstration Garden

**PARK ROOM #3: 47TH ST. GATEWAY:**  
Increased park land to create a cove with a new beach and community/beach building and a naturalistic dune or wetland area.

**PARK LINK #4: 47th ST - 51st ST:**  
Nature Garden

**PARK ROOM #4: PROMONTORY POINT:**  
Promontory Point fieldhouse, and historic Alfred Caldwell landscape.

## Park Opportunities

The Framework Plan recommendations to increase park land at both Oakwood Boulevard. and 47th Street, to develop new beaches and community/beach buildings, and to create a new cove and wildlife area, provide for a variety of recreational and educational opportunities.

Specific programmatic recommendations include:

**Establish the beach houses at 31st, Oakwood, and 47th Streets as locations for waterfront recreational instruction programs.**

- Provide swimming, sailing, lifeguarding, or kayaking lessons and equipment rentals.

- Provide facilities and information for fishermen.

**Establish Oakwood Community/Beach Building as a location for cultural activities.**

- Provide a multi-use outdoor space with the potential to accommodate local community dance, music, and theater performances.

**Establish 47th Street Community/Beach Building as a location for environmental and ecology programs.**

- Provide information about interpretive walks and wildlife habitat areas, such as the butterfly garden and the nature trail at 47th Street, and other habitat areas throughout the park.

- Create a system of interpretive signage throughout the park, to identify tree and shrub types, and to provide information about types of habitats.

- Establish snorkeling or other programs, which study aquatic plant and fish life of Lake Michigan.

**Establish Promontory Point as an Interpretive Center for Park History.**

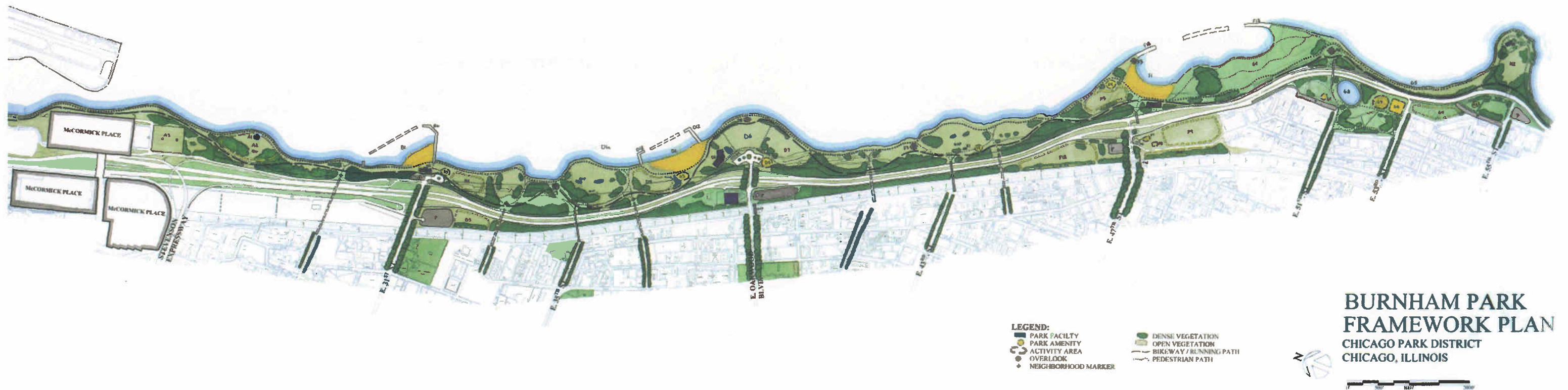
- Provide information about the historic Caldwell landscape, and the history and evolution of the park.

- Develop a model yacht building program.





*Chicago Park District Summer Program*



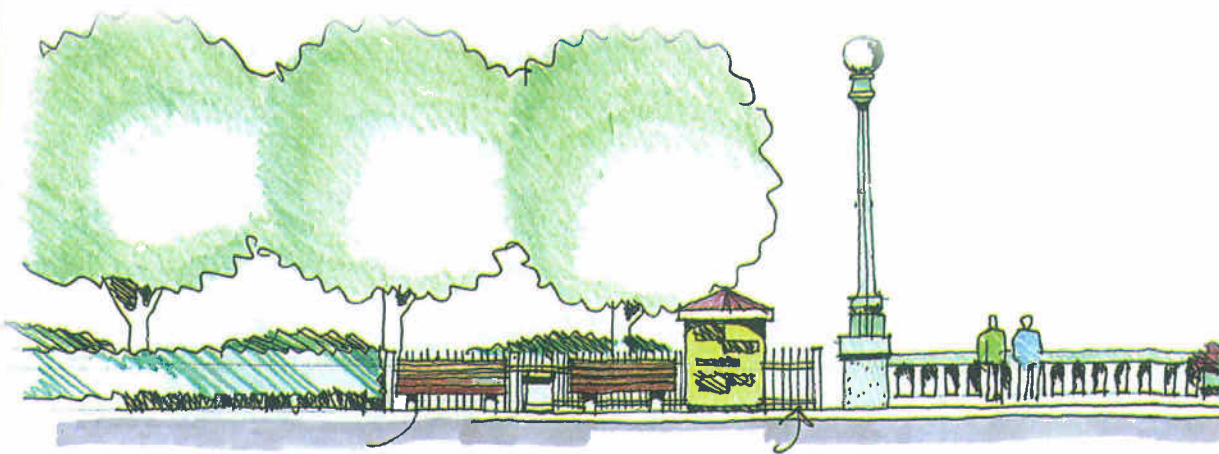


# McCormick—31st

## Park Link #1 Legend: McCormick Place to 31st Street

COMMEMORATIVE ART GARDEN  
A1. MEMORIAL GROVE / PUBLIC ART WALK  
A2. COMMEMORATIVE ART OVERLOOK  
A3. McCORMICK GARDEN TERRACE

Revetment Reconstruction: In progress



Gateway Plaza to Burnham Park

## Recommendations

- Create a naturalistic landscape with a Migratory Bird Habitat Area.
- Create Commemorative Art Overlook near the water with signage, seating and lighting. Incorporate sculpture at the overlook.
- Incorporate interpretive signage about bird migration and art walk.
- Use landforms and landscape plantings on the west edge of the park to screen noise from the I-55 ramp.
- Create an outdoor public art display that features work of local and regional artists.
- Create a Terrace Garden on McCormick Place parking garage.
- Provide additional directional signage for pedestrians and bicyclists to clarify public connection through McCormick Place
- Provide a new, accessible, bicycle/pedestrian bridge at 29th Street.

## Park Room #1 Legend: 31st Street Gateway

B1. EXPANDED BEACH (IN PROGRESS)  
B2. BEACH HOUSE (EXISTING)  
B3. PLAYGROUND (EXISTING)  
B4. PICNIC AREA  
B5. OUTDOOR SPORTS AREA  
B6. FISHING PIER (IN PROGRESS)  
B7. CTA BUS STOP

Revetment Reconstruction: In progress

## Recommendations

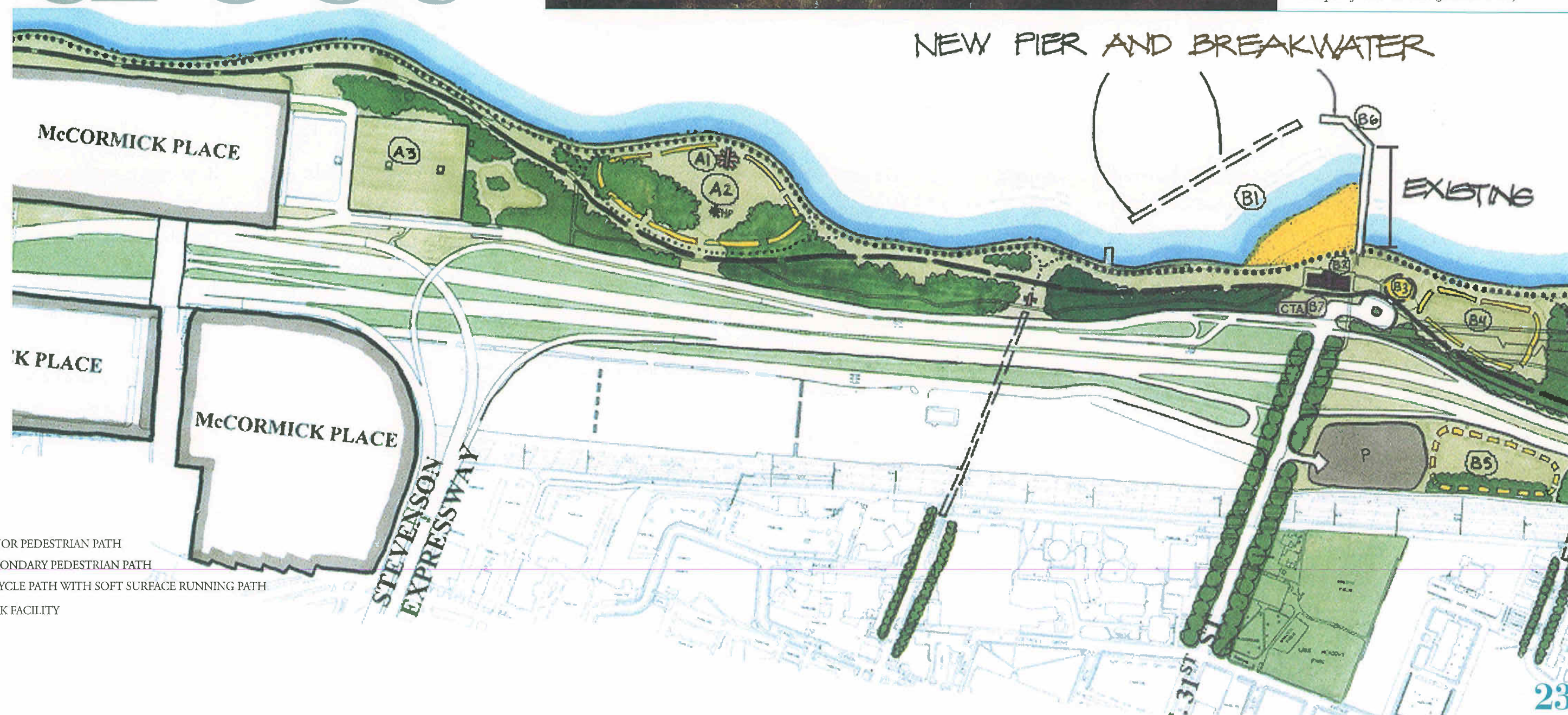
- Provide kayak and canoe access to the lake.
- Maintain mature planting around Beach House while opening views of the lake from the bridge.
- Establish a picnic area with a family picnic shelter.
- Provide a bus stop with rider amenities for access to public transportation. Location of bus stop should be coordinated with Illinois Dept. of Transportation SRA study. Rider amenities should tie into the site furnishing palette for Burnham.
- Provide a drop-off and parking for people with disabilities adjacent to the beach house.
- Reconfigure entrance and exit ramps to maximize parkland.
- Remove existing parking from the east side of Lake Shore Drive. Create a landscaped parking area on the west side of Lake Shore Drive, with lighting, and clear accessible pedestrian access.
- Locate a neighborhood sports area with toilets, lighting and landscaping on the west side of Lake Shore Drive. Develop programming for the area with community input.



# Street



Example of bird habitat (Jackson Park)





# 31st St.—Oakwood

## Park Link #2 Legend: 31st Street to Oakwood Boulevard

COMMUNITY GARDEN  
C1. PLAY SCULPTURE OVERLOOK  
C2. RESTROOM

Revetment Reconstruction, 31st Street to 37th Street:  
In progress

Revetment Reconstruction, 37th Street to Oakwood  
Boulevard: 2001-2005



Water's edge at Oakwood Boulevard

## Recommendations

- Add a new Sculptural Playground Overlook with signage, seating and lighting.
- Provide accessible toilet facilities.
- Develop the landscape in conjunction with the local community to reflect and tie into the historic Bronzeville district.
- Provide an interpretive educational and historical information area near the overlook, and adjacent to the Douglas Memorial at 31st Street.
- Remove existing basketball courts. Basketball court removal should be linked to the development of new courts in an Outdoor Activity area or in an adjacent community park.
- Use landforms and landscape plantings along Lake Shore Drive to reduce traffic noise from the Drive.
- Provide new accessible bicycle/pedestrian bridges at 33rd Street and 37th Street.

## Park Room #2 Legend: Oakwood Gateway

D1. BEACH  
D1a. DEEP WATER SWIMMING LANES  
D2. COMMUNITY/BEACH BUILDING  
D3. PLAY AREA  
D4. PICNIC AREA  
D5. IN-LINE SKATING / ICE RINK  
D6. TERRACED LAWN  
D7. GREAT LAWN  
D8. OVERLOOK  
D9. CTA BUS STOP  
D10. METRA STOP  
D11. PARK DISTRICT BUILDING  
D12. FISHING PIER

Revetment Reconstruction: 2001-2005

## Recommendations

- Create additional park land, through lakefill.
- Create a new beach, fishing piers and Beach Building with concessions and community multi-purpose rooms.
- Provide lanes for deep water swimming from Oakwood Beach to 31st St. Beach
- Provide kayak and canoe access to the lake.
- Provide fishing piers and fish habitat.
- Provide new in-line/ice skating rink.
- Design and build a play area. Incorporate a water play sculpture.
- Provide a terraced lawn for multi-purpose uses including use as an outdoor community performance area to showcase community song, dance, children's theater, and acting companies.
- Establish a picnic area with a family picnic shelter.
- Provide a great lawn for multi-purpose uses including use for informal recreation.
- Provide a bus stop with rider amenities for access to public transportation. Rider amenities should tie into the site furnishing palette for Burnham Park.



# d Blvd.

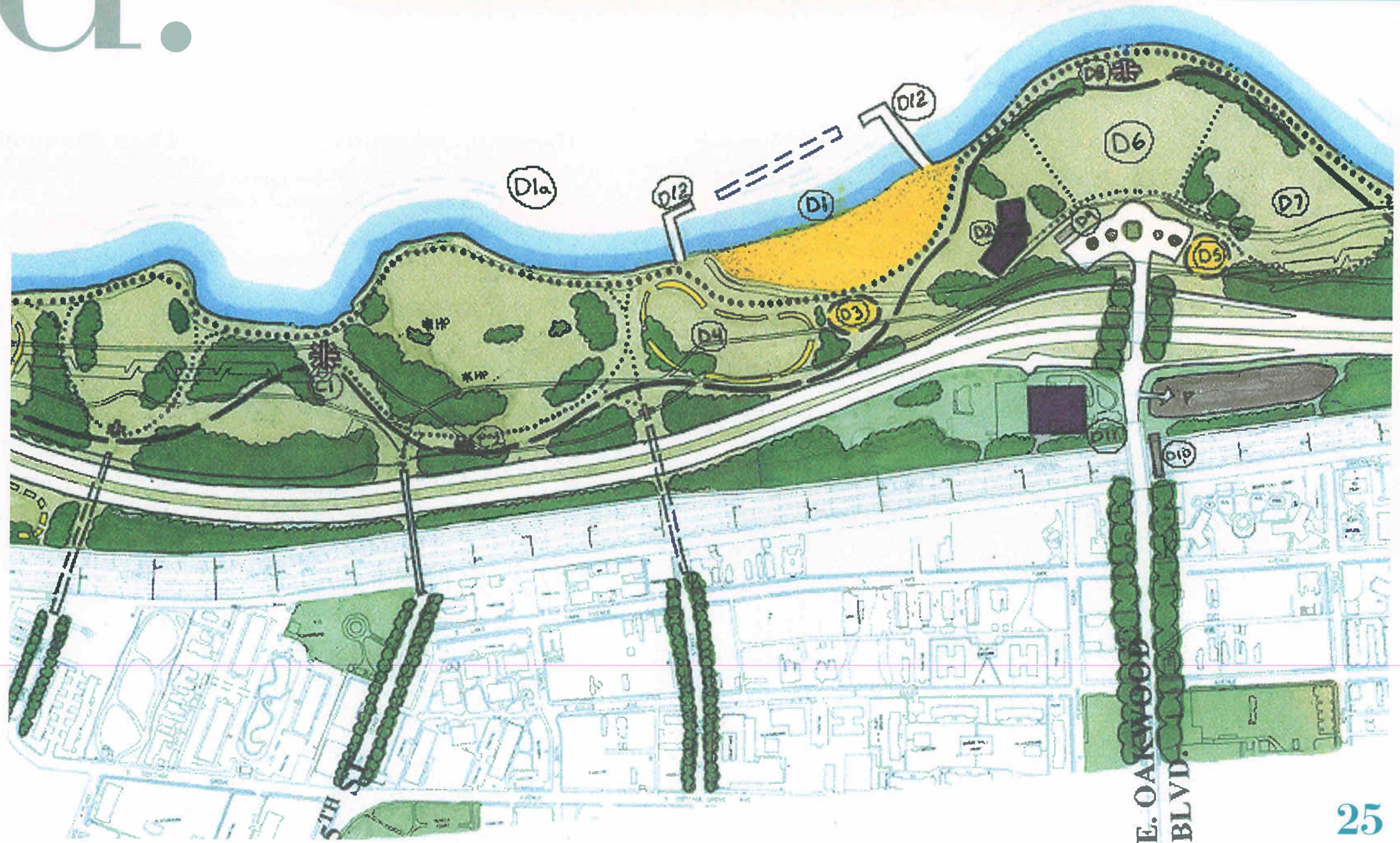


*Example of community garden  
(Jackson Park)*

## Recommendations (continued)

- Provide a drop-off and parking for people with disabilities adjacent to the Beach Building.
- Use landforms and landscape plantings along Lake Shore Drive to reduce traffic noise.
- Remove existing parking from the east side of Lake Shore Drive. Create a landscaped parking area on the west side of the drive with lighting, and clear, accessible pedestrian access.

- MAJOR PEDESTRIAN PATH
- SECONDARY PEDESTRIAN PATH
- BICYCLE PATH WITH SOFT SURFACE RUNNING PATH
- PARK FACILITY





# Oakwood—47th

## Park Link #3 Legend: Oakwood Boulevard to 47th Street

### CHICAGO URBAN DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

E1. RESTROOMS (EXISTING)

E2. PLAY AREA

E3. GARDEN OVERLOOK

Revetment Reconstruction: 2001-2005



Typical overlook in Burnham Park

## Recommendations

- Establish a Chicago Demonstration Garden and Arboretum with demonstration gardens cared for by volunteer groups.
- Establish a Garden Overlook with signage, seating and lighting.
- Relocate existing playground.
- Remove existing basketball courts. Basketball court removal should be linked to the development of new courts in an Outdoor Activity area or in an adjacent community park.
- Improve existing restrooms to provide a safe, attractive and accessible facility.
- Use land forms and landscape plantings along Lake Shore Drive to reduce traffic noise from the Drive.
- Provide new, accessible bicycle/pedestrian bridges at 41st and 45th Streets.

## Park Room #3 Legend: 47th Street Gateway

F1. BEACH

F2. COMMUNITY/BEACH BUILDING

F3. COVE OVERLOOK

F4. PLAY AREA

F5. PICNIC AREA

F6. CTA BUS STOP

F7. PLAYGROUND (EXISTING)

F8. BASKETBALL COURTS (EXISTING)

F9. ATHLETIC FIELDS (EXISTING)

F10. COMMUNITY GARDEN (EXISTING)

F11. METRA STOP

F12. BUTTERFLY GARDEN (IN PROGRESS)

F13. FISHING PIER

Revetment Reconstruction: 2001-2005

## Recommendations

- Create a new beach, expand the width of the park, and add a Beach Building with concessions and community multi-purpose rooms, through lakefill.
- Construct a new cove and wetland area to create a more naturalistic edge on the lake, through lakefill.
- Provide a Cove Overlook with signage, seating and lighting.
- Provide canoe and kayak access to the lake.
- Provide fishing piers and fish habitat.
- Establish a picnic area with a family picnic shelter.
- Provide a bus stop with rider amenities for access to public transportation. New rider amenities should tie in with the site furnishing palette for Burnham Park.
- Create a new, accessible bicycle/pedestrian bridge across north-bound Lake Shore Drive (in-progress, CDOT)
- Maintain views of lake and skyline.
- Provide toilet facilities in the vicinity of the existing playground, athletic fields, and basketball courts on the west side of Lake Shore Drive.



# Street



*Example of arboretum landscape (Burnham Park)*





# 47th Street–56th

## Park Link #4 Legend: 47th Street to 56th Street

### NATURE GARDEN

- G1. NATURE TRAIL
- G2. COUNCIL RING OVERLOOK
- G3. PLAYGROUND (EXISTING)
- G4. ATHLETIC FIELDS (EXISTING)
- G5. WATERFRONT PROMENADE
- G6. TENNIS COURTS (EXISTING)
- G7. PLAYGROUND (EXISTING)
- G8. MODEL YACHT BASIN (EXISTING)
- G9. CHESS PAVILION
- G10. DROP-OFF

Revetment Reconstruction, 47th Street to 51st Street:  
2001-2005

Revetment Reconstruction, 51st Street to 54th Street:  
2000-2001

Revetment Reconstruction, 54th Street to 56th Street:  
2000-2003

## Recommendations

- Construct a new cove and wetlands area to create a more naturalistic edge on the lake and provide an outdoor area for nature interpretation.
- Provide an Overlook with signage, seating and lighting.
- Provide a chess pavilion which can support winter use as a warming station for the Model Yacht Basin.
- Reorganize pedestrian paths between amenities.
- Enhance existing plant materials.
- Provide programming to support use of Model Yacht Basin. Develop the Yacht Basin for use as an ice skating rink, and provide required facilities in conjunction with the chess pavilion.
- Create a waterfront promenade linking Promontory Point and a new cove area.
- Rebuild 51st Street passarelle as an accessible bicycle/pedestrian bridge.
- Reconfigure existing access ramp to provide a drop-off and parking for people with disabilities.

## Park Room #4 Legend: Promontory Point

H1. PROMONTORY POINT FIELDHOUSE  
(EXISTING)

H2. CALDWELL LANDSCAPE

Revetment Reconstruction: 2000-2003

## Recommendations

- Rehabilitate the Field House to allow access to lower level.
- Maintain historic Alfred Caldwell designed landscape at Promontory Point.
- Plant wildflower and perennial plant materials as intended by Alfred Caldwell in his 1938 planting plans.
- Rehabilitate existing pedestrian underpass at 55th Street to Promontory Point, and enhance underpass landscape.



*Promontory Point*



# Street



*Example of natural dune landscape  
(Illinois Beach State Park)*





# Park Circulation

*Burnham Park should be reinforced as a safe and accessible destination with improvements to entrances, parking areas, public transportation, pathways, lighting and signage. Pedestrian access to the park should be improved with new accessible entrance points over Lake Shore Drive at quarter mile intervals. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be expanded within the park with separate trails for each.*

## Park Entries

“Gateways” and “Greenways” create a clear hierarchy for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. These entry points improve accessibility, safety, and appearance going into Burnham Park from the communities to the west and from Lake Shore Drive.

**Community Gateways** are visual organizing elements in the park and neighboring communities that provide clear directions to the park for both motorists and pedestrians through the use of signage, light fixtures and distinctive landscaping. Gateways provide access for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. Gateways are larger than Greenways and have a boulevard-like character.

**Neighborhood Greenways** are pedestrian connections to the park from adjacent neighborhoods. Greenways provide access for cyclists and pedestrians. Greenways have a smaller scale and have a streetscape-like character.

The Gateways and Greenways, and other transit related projects that impact Burnham Park, should be developed with participation and input from all appropriate governmental agencies and community groups.

## Community Gateways: Vehicular, Bicycle, & Pedestrian Access Points

Gateways should be established along 31st Street, Oakwood Boulevard, and 47th Street.

Gateways should:

- Extend the open space character of Burnham Park into local neighborhoods with expansive plantings and rows of shade trees.
- Provide landscaped links from neighborhood parks to these “greened” streets, creating a network of green-space within local communities.
- Provide vehicular drop-off points adjacent to park facilities at the 31st and Oakwood Boulevard Gateways. Reconfigure existing access ramp at 51st Street to provide a vehicular drop-off and parking for people with disabilities.
- Provide public transportation at each Gateway through the addition of bus stops with rider amenities.
- Provide safe, well-marked crossing zones for pedestrians to access the Gateways and the park.
- Provide bicycle lanes along 31st Street, Oakwood Boulevard, and 47th Street. Provide well-marked crossing zones for cyclists to access the Gateways and the park.
- Provide regularly scheduled Metra Service at the Oakwood Boulevard and the 47th Street Gateways.

## Neighborhood Greenways: Bicycle, & Pedestrian Access Points

Greenways should be established approximately every 1/4 mile to provide increased neighborhood access to Burnham Park. They should extend the landscape of Burnham Park into the neighborhoods through the use of trees, shrubs, and perennials.

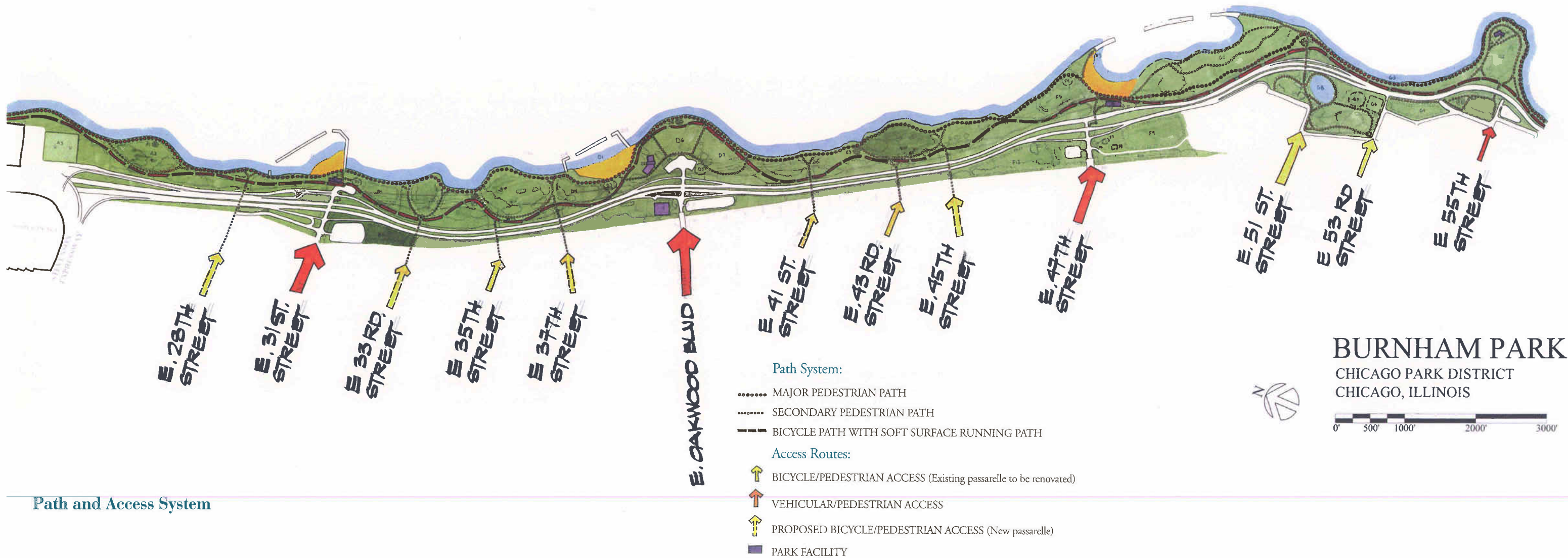
- New bicycle/pedestrian bridges should be established at 29th, 33rd, 37th, 41st, 45th, 49th, and 53rd Streets.
- New bridges should be fully accessible and should provide a direct connection from the neighborhoods west of Lake Shore Drive to the Lakefront.
- Existing pedestrian bridges at 35th Street, 43rd Street, and 51st Street should be improved to provide a barrier-free, bicycle friendly, and attractive entry into the park. The east end of all existing bridges should be reconfigured so that the pedestrian enters facing the park, not Lake Shore Drive.
- Where feasible, close dead-end streets at new or existing bridges to extend pedestrian walks and green-space into neighborhoods.
- The underpass at 55th Street should be renovated and retained in its current form as pedestrian and bicycle access only.



# & Access



Pedestrian access from neighborhood



Path and Access System



# Park Circulation



Bus drop-off at Community Gateway

## Park Circulation

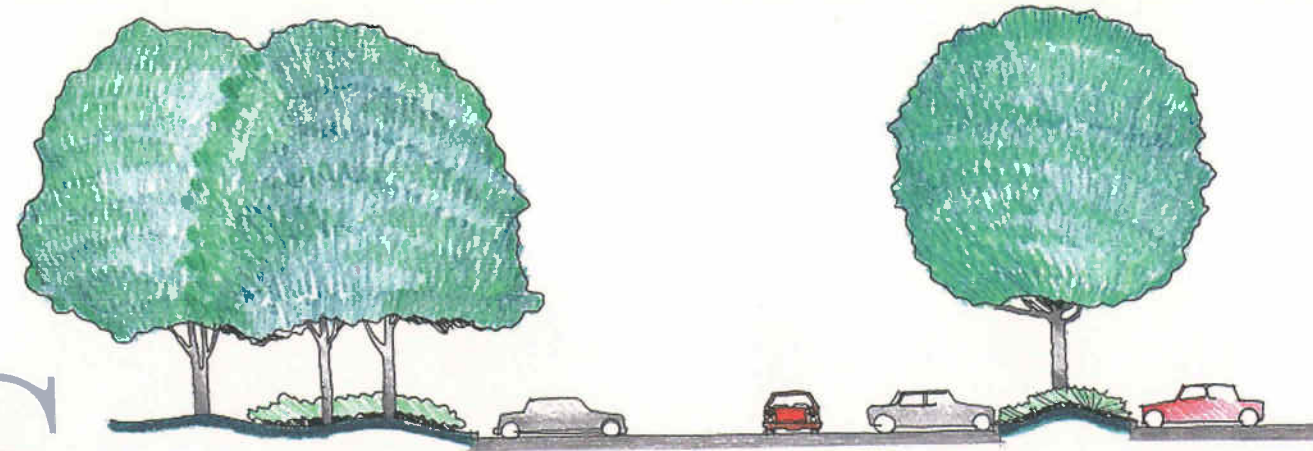
- Maintain and develop a continuous pedestrian path at the lake edge along the new revetment.
- Provide a new bike path with an adjacent soft surface running path. The bike path should be the standard 14' width to accommodate bicyclists, roller bladers, and emergency and maintenance vehicle.
- Provide interior trail loops to connect pedestrian & bike routes within the park. Develop loop trails to reinforce and complement the open and closed landscape character of the park links. (See page 41).
- Improve the appearance and use of pathways with plants and canopy trees for summer relief and shade, ample lighting for comfortable evening use and signage for directional information and orientation.
- Provide emergency vehicle and service access to all facilities within the park.
- Provide barrier-free accessible access to every facility within the park.
- Provide clear sidewalk markings at crosswalks at all entrances to the park and within the park.
- Provide seating areas for pedestrians to sit close to the lake and within natural settings.

## Parking:

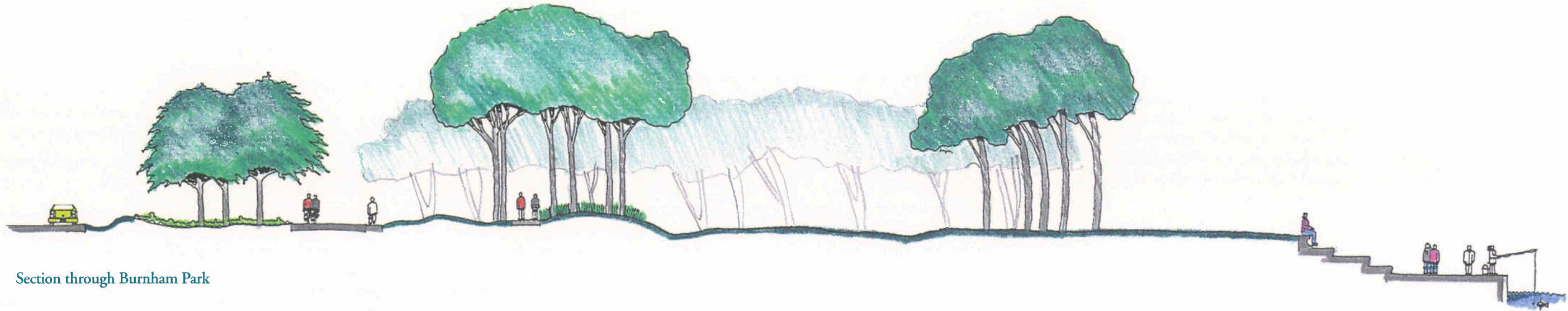
- Remove existing parking on the east side of Lake Shore Drive at 31st Street and at Oakwood Boulevard.
- Provide surface parking areas on the west side of Lake Shore Drive, adjacent to all Gateways to expand the amount of parking that serves facilities within the park and limit parking along the lakeshore.
- Provide drop-off areas and parking for persons with disabilities on the east side of Lake Shore Drive at each Gateway. Reconfigure the existing access ramp at 51st Street to provide a drop-off and parking for people with disabilities.
- Install lighting, signage, and plantings around parking areas to enhance appearance and make them easily accessible and identifiable. Design parking areas with planted access lane islands, end islands, and interior plantings, to meet or exceed the requirements of the Chicago Landscape Ordinance
- Screen large areas of surface parking from Lake Shore Drive with landforms and plantings.



# & Access



Parking area at west side of Lake Shore Drive



Section through Burnham Park



Section at Lake Shore Drive



# Park Character

*Burnham Park should be a place where nature and culture flourish, where every visitor is welcome and comfortable, and where the local community goes to relax and enjoy the lakefront. This principle improves the landscape quality and diversity of the waterfront, while protecting and enhancing views of the lake and the Chicago skyline. It should vary the park experience by creating a series of open sunny areas and enclosed shady spaces organized around a series of "Garden Room" links.*

## Overall Character Improvements

Burnham Park will be improved by developing a consistent character and design quality throughout the park. The following recommendations outline specific improvements that would benefit the character of the entire park. These are further defined on the following pages.

- Protect and enhance designated views of the lake and Chicago skyline from the Community Gateways to the park, along Lake Shore Drive, and within the park itself.
- Enhance the park experience by varying the park topography and using landforms and vegetation to reduce the visual and noise impact of roadways and parking areas on the park.
- Achieve a distinct and recognizable image that reinforces the unique character of the park within the City.
- Use elements and materials that focus on the local character of the neighboring community to help create an identity for the park and connect people to the place.
- Establish a series of garden links with different themes reflecting the diverse character of the park and the City of Chicago. These rooms include: Commemorative Art Garden, Community Garden, Chicago Urban Demonstration Garden, Nature Garden, and historic Alfred Caldwell Landscape.
- Enhance park landscape by increasing the density of plantings and varying the character of plantings along the length of the park.

- Improve the lake's edge by restoring the revetments and beaches and enabling visitors to get down to the water.
- Provide site furnishings to enhance the visitor experience and comfort throughout the park.

## Special Areas

The Burnham Park Framework Plan recommends a series of community activity centers or Park Rooms connected by passive garden Links. This sequence of spaces and activities establishes a hierarchy within the park that coincides with a series of Gateways and Greenways where visitors access the park. This structure is further described in the Park Organization, Programs and Amenities, and Circulation sections of the Guidelines.

The Framework Plan treats the Gateways and Garden Links as special areas that reflect the overall hierarchy of park elements. Using special plantings, landforms, lighting, and site furnishings, common elements are sited across the park to help visitors understand their location, while special features create a unique identity for each room and link. The following recommendations describe specific improvements associated with the Community Gateways, Neighborhood Greenways, and Garden Rooms.

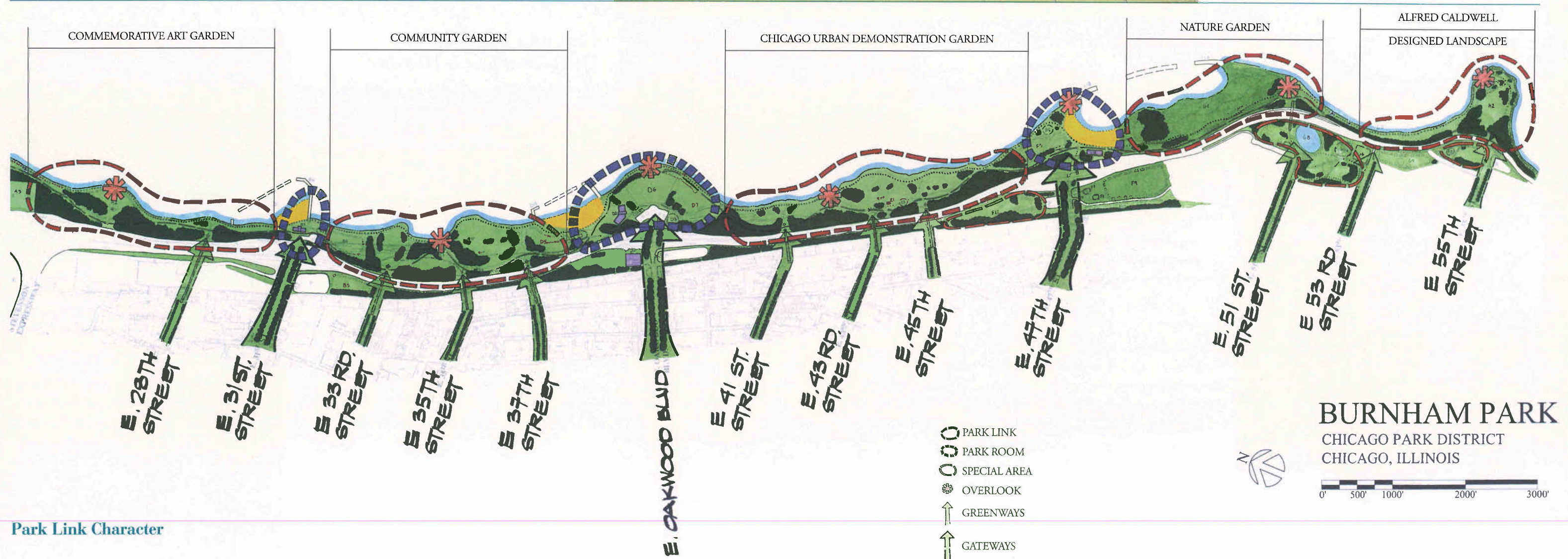
## Gateways and Greenways

- Extend the open space character of Burnham Park into local neighborhoods at the Community Gateways with signage, benches, expansive plantings, rows of shade trees, street lights, and other design elements, such as decorative railings and low walls.
- Use signature plantings and design elements to distinguish Community Gateways.
- Make parking areas at Gateways as visually unobtrusive as possible. Use plantings of trees and shrubs to reduce the heat islands and improve the aesthetics of the lots without creating visual barriers.
- Provide special seating areas at Overlooks associated with Neighborhood Greenways.
- Use design elements, such as neighborhood markers, to distinguish and recognize Neighborhood Greenways.





Example of community garden feature.  
Photo Credit: Dixie Carrillo / EDAW



Park Link Character



# Garden Rooms



*Example of Commemorative Art Garden.  
McCormick Boulevard Sculpture Walk, Skokie, Illinois*

## Commemorative Art Garden

The Commemorative Art Garden will feature commemorative and public art set in a garden landscape that showcases public sculpture with plant material that promotes migratory bird habitat. The garden will feature both permanent and temporary exhibitions and educational and interpretive elements describing the bird wildlife. These features will be connected by a pedestrian paths that enable visitors to experience both the commemorative art and the migratory habitat.

- Hire a landscape architecture design firm or hold a design contest to design the Commemorative Art Garden.
- Use plantings to emphasize outdoor sculptures and provide a variety of sensory experiences.
- Use plantings in combination with sculptural earthworks and walkway alignment to create a sense of space and sequence.
- Establish plantings along the paths that can be used for educational programs on wildlife, plant identification, and special programs for children.
- Incorporate plant material that promotes migratory bird habitat.
- Identify mowing, tree removal, and management practices that will enhance habitat.



*Example of interactive play sculpture  
Photo Credit: Dixie Carrillo / EDAW*

## Community Garden

The Community Garden will feature elements and plantings that reflect the character and desires of the local community. Specific areas within the garden may be adopted by local groups to create seasonal garden displays.

- Obtain landscape architecture design assistance from the public, not for profit, or private sector to work with community residents to design the Community Garden.
- Feature areas that are designed and maintained by community groups, such as garden clubs, churches, or youth groups.
- Use plantings in combination with sculptural landforms and walkway alignment to create a sense of space and sequence.
- Incorporate plant material from the overall plant list.

## Chicago Urban Demonstration Garden

The Chicago Urban Demonstration Garden will showcase native Illinois plants, especially those that distinguish Chicago's unique character.

- Showcase native Illinois trees, shrubbery, groundcovers and grasses in the garden.
- Design Urban Demonstration Garden with a series of beds or rooms that can be planted and cared for by local volunteer groups and garden clubs from the city at large. These smaller gardens should have distinct themes using a variety of different plants.
- The Chicago Urban Demonstration Garden should provide signage that informs and educates the viewer about the different plant materials and their growth habit changes in a variety of different situations.



*Example of urban demonstration garden overlook.  
Photo Credit: Dixie Carrillo / EDAW*





*Restored Council Ring at Promontory Point*

## Nature Garden

The Nature Garden will feature a naturalistic landscape recalling the dune landscape that existed in areas along the lakeshore prior to development. A series of ridges and sloughs will be developed to reflect the sand ridges that are created by the combined action of the lakeshore and its winds over time. These alternating landforms will be planted with native dunesland vegetation to create a habitat that will evolve with natural succession. A boardwalk and interpretive signs will be constructed through the garden to enable visitors to experience the landscape and learn about its unique ecological system.

- Design Nature Garden with ridges and sloughs to be similar to a real dunes environment.
- Plant native dunesland vegetation and develop a maintenance program that enables these plants to thrive while reducing the effects of potential invasive volunteer species.
- Construct boardwalk to accentuate the experience of the garden and provide easy interpretive opportunities.
- Install interpretive signage system to help visitors learn about the garden and its plant species.

## Special Features

Although Burnham Park is largely characterized today as a large open space along the waterfront, it has several special features which should be preserved and enhanced. These features include the historic Alfred Caldwell designed landscape at Promontory Point, the Model Yacht Basin, and the Butterfly Garden. The following recommendations offer ways to support and reinforce these special features in Burnham Park.

- Preserve the historic Caldwell landscape and setting for Promontory Point by reinforcing historic plantings with young trees, shrubs, and flowers maintaining the original design intent.
- Reinforce existing plantings of flowering trees around the Model Yacht Basin and reduce the basin's exposure to Lake Shore Drive with landscape buffers.
- Enhance the Butterfly Garden with signage, benches, and lighting to make it more accessible to City residents.



*Native Illinois dune grasses*



*New shoreline revetment at Solidarity Drive  
Photo Credit: Harza Engineering / CDOE*

## Revetment (Shoreline Protection)

- New structure will comprise steel sheet pile and reinforced concrete.
- Typical profile includes wide concrete promenade (25 - 30 ft) about 3 feet above average lake level, with concrete steps behind promenade.
- New structure is typically 2 - 3 feet higher than existing revetment (more where existing revetment is seriously deteriorated).
- Each step is typically 2 - 3 feet high, with smaller intermediate steps at 100 - 200 foot intervals.
- ADA access will be provided periodically. Typically this will occur close to existing Park Access points, such as 31st Street Beach.
- Water which overtops the revetment during severe storm events will return to Lake Michigan through drainage gaps, reducing flooding of parkland and Lake Shore Drive.

## Approximate schedule for reconstruction:

I-55 to 37th Street - In Progress  
37th to 51st Street - 2001 - 2005  
51st to 54th Street - 2000 - 2001  
54th to 57th Street - 2000 - 2003



# Park Views

## Park Views and Landscape Buffers

Park views are an important element of the visual character and visitor experience of Burnham Park. Views of Lake Michigan and the Chicago Skyline are some of the park's greatest assets; however, these views are undefined and unprotected. The Burnham Park Framework Plan enhances existing park views by siting vegetation and park elements to frame important views, as well as providing seating areas for visitors to rest and enjoy them.

Landscape buffers, made up of land forms and vegetation, are used to reduce the noise impact of Lake Shore Drive on the park experience. Landforms are also used to help vary the topography within the park and provide a diverse visitor experience. The following recommendations describe specific methods to enhance views within the park:



*View from 43rd Street pedestrian bridge*



*View of Promontory Point from Lake Shore Drive*

## Gateways and Greenways

Accentuate vistas and protect dramatic views of the lake, park and Chicago skyline from the Community Gateways and Neighborhood Greenways.

- Site facilities and plantings to frame and accentuate views of the lake, park and skyline.
- Minimize views of parking areas and Lake Shore Drive by using landforms and plantings.

## Lake Shore Drive

- Use sculpted landforms and plantings to frame park and lake views from the southbound and northbound lanes of Lake Shore Drive.
- Improve the visual character of the landscape along Lake Shore Drive with landforms and plantings to create a strong impression of Burnham Park for motorists.
- Identify areas and features of the park that should be screened from Lake Shore Drive and use sculpted landforms and plantings to reduce exposure to those areas.

## Chicago Skyline

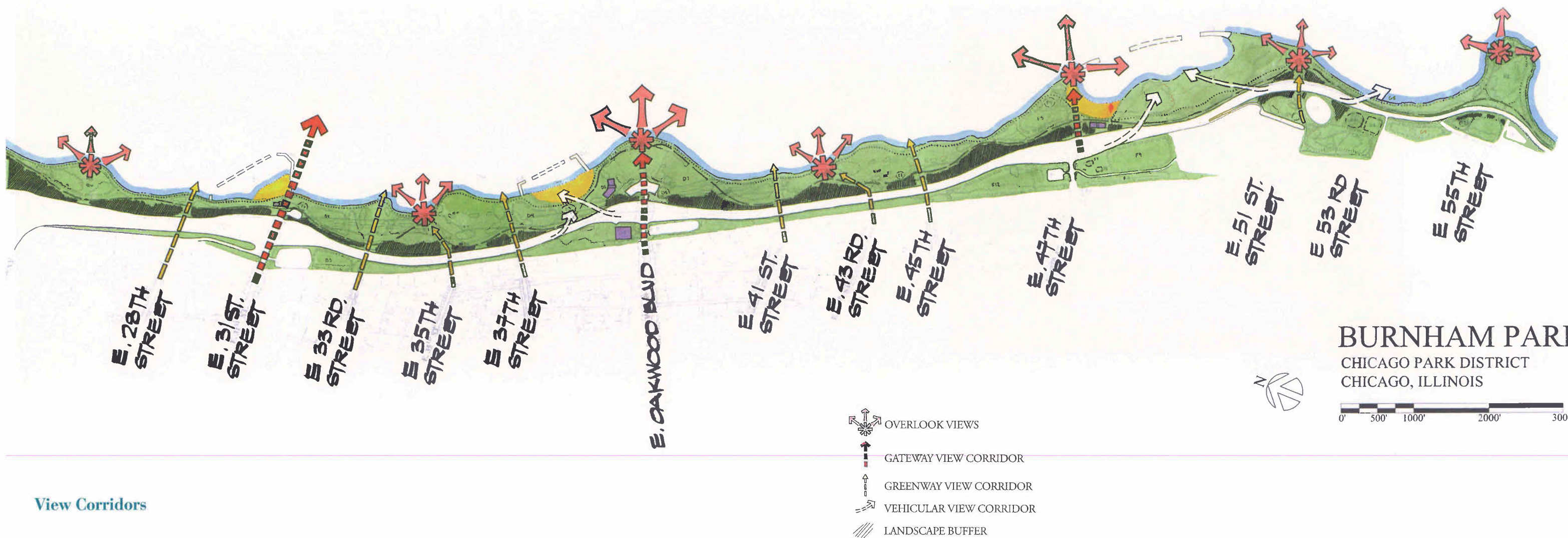
- Identify and protect areas along the waterfront with clear views of the Chicago skyline, such as from Promontory Point.
- Preserve highpoints within the park as open areas with clear views of Lake Michigan and the Chicago skyline.
- Use plantings to frame and accentuate views of the Chicago skyline.
- Provide benches, tables, signage or other appropriate site furnishings at points where visitors may come to enjoy views of the skyline and the lake.

## Overall Park Areas

- Create an extensive and interesting landforms display from McCormick Place south to Promontory Point.
- Use landforms to vary the visitor experience along bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- Use landforms to mitigate noise and visual impacts from Lake Shore Drive and parking areas.
- Use landforms as sculptural elements in garden areas of the park.



View of skyline from shoreline at Oakwood Boulevard.



View Corridors



# Park Vegetation



*Bicycle Path near McCormick Place*

Plants are an important element of the visual character and pedestrian environment envisioned in the Burnham Park Framework Plan. Not only do they reinforce pedestrian scale, mitigate noise, and provide shade, they also provide a lasting impression of the park as an attractive destination for community residents.

The plant palette for Burnham Park is designed to portray a distinct sense of place, evoking the region's natural beauty and environmental sensitivity. The recommended plant species, provided in the appendix, are indigenous to the area. They were selected for their ability to add color and diversity to the landscape for extended periods of time throughout the season, and for their ability to tolerate wind, flood, drought, and urban conditions.

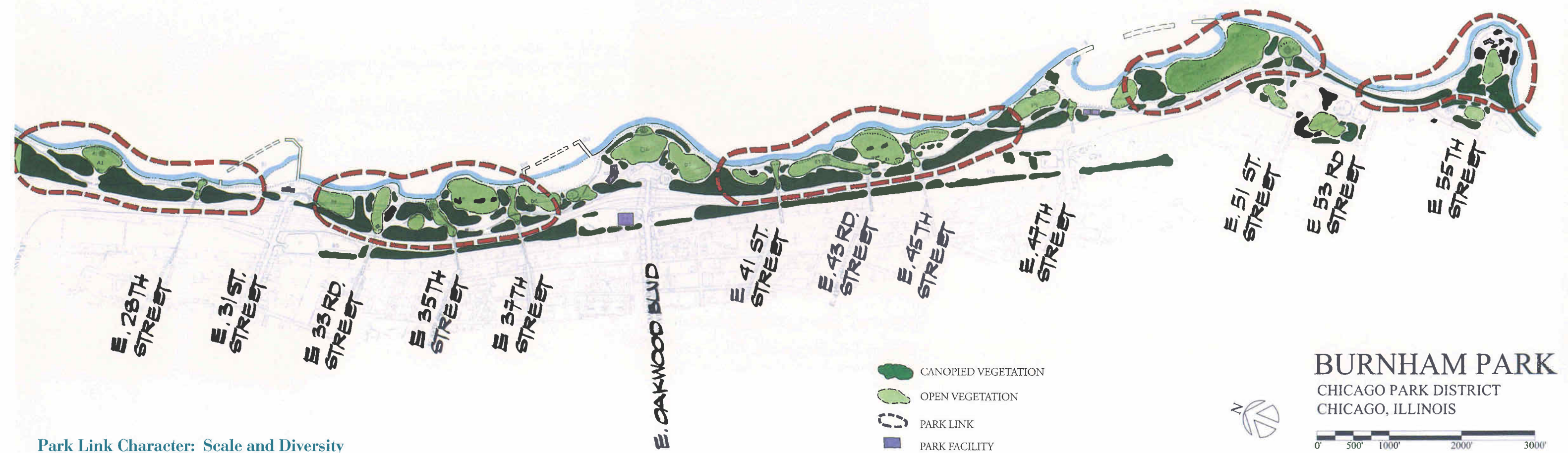
The following recommendations describe specific ways to plant vegetation in the park:

- Enhance plantings within the park to provide a diversity of experiences within the park and establish areas with more naturalistic character.
- Arrange plantings of canopy trees to provide both open and shaded lawn areas, and to create a variety of scaled spaces within each Link.
- Improve the appearance and use of pathways within the park by using plants and canopy trees to mark paths and provide shade and interest in the summer.
- Use vegetation to increase bird habitat within the park.
- Use indigenous and native plantings, especially those that are drought tolerant and disease resistant.
- Design plantings to enhance the appearance of parking areas and make them easily accessible and identifiable.
- Design planting areas to increase the efficiency of maintenance operations.
- Use plantings to reduce erosion and maintenance on steep slopes.
- Locate plantings to improve usability and minimize areas for hiding by placing tall, densely planted areas away from paths and park facilities.
- Establish landscape plantings that will help to minimize noise and visual impacts from Lake Shore Drive and parking areas.





Open Lawn, defined by canopied vegetation,  
Burnham Park at 43rd Street



Park Link Character: Scale and Diversity



# Site Furnishings

Site furnishings are important to both the visual character and pedestrian experience of Burnham Park. They establish continuity within the park and help create a park identity.

The following recommendations provide guidance on lighting, benches, trash receptacles, and signage.



## General Recommendations:

- Standards for lighting, seating, trash receptacles, and signage should be developed in conjunction with each other for use throughout the park.
- Site furnishings should contribute to the special character of Burnham Park, and should work to create a unique place within the City of Chicago.
- Site furnishings should be used consistently throughout the park. Signature furnishings should be developed to mark Community Gateways, and to enhance the overlooks within the park links.
- Provide water fountains near all athletic fields and activity areas.

## Lighting:

Site lighting improves security, pedestrian safety, circulation, and the visual character of a site. Lighting should be designed as a coordinated system that is attractive, energy-efficient, cost effective, and easy to maintain.

- Use signature lighting at each of the Gateways and Greenways to mark entrances to the park.
- Provide or improve standard lighting around each park facility for security.
- Install standard lighting around parking areas to enhance their appearance and make them easily accessible and identifiable.







## Seating:

Seat benches are an integral part of the pedestrian network; they provide seating for relaxation, waiting, and resting.

- Locate special seating areas at overlooks along the lakeshore to provide areas for small meetings or interpretive talks.
- Use signature seating at overlooks to develop a unique character for each overlook, related to the character of the park link. For example, provide a council ring at the overlook near the 51st Street Pedestrian Bridge.
- Provide standard seating areas for pedestrians to sit close to the lake and within natural settings.
- Locate standard seating every quarter mile along secondary pedestrian paths and every eighth mile along the waterfront.
- Locate standard benches near restrooms, park facilities, entrances, drop-offs, playgrounds, and outdoor sports areas.
- Locate standard benches at high points within the park and create informal seating areas within the undeveloped areas of the park.

## Trash Receptacles:

Trash receptacles contribute to the overall character of the park by discouraging litter. As part of the family of site furnishings, they are an attractive site element promoting a unified visual image throughout the park.

- Locate standard trash receptacles near restrooms, park facilities, entrances, drop-offs, playgrounds, beaches, outdoor sports areas and parking areas.
- Use signature trash receptacles at Gateways and Greenways coming into the park.
- Provide recycling receptacles in addition to trash receptacles at parking areas and major park facilities.
- Develop a management schedule that picks up trash more frequently in heavily used areas of the park.
- Provide receptacles for hot coals in designated picnic areas.

## Bike Racks:

Bicycle racks should be skillfully integrated into the park. They should be readily accessible to high-activity areas, yet not impede vehicular or pedestrian circulation. Racks should also be sited in highly visible locations to decrease the opportunity for bicycle theft.

- Locate bike racks near restrooms, park facilities, entrances, drop-offs, playgrounds, beaches, outdoor sports areas, and parking areas.
- Place bike racks in well lit areas with high visibility.
- Locate bike racks at pedestrian crossings on the bike path to enable cyclists to park their bicycles and visit the waterfront and park facilities.

## Signage:

Signage is integral to both the experience and the character of Burnham Park. It contributes to the overall image of the park, complementing the landscape plantings and site amenities. Signage also helps provide clear directions and information, improving both visitor experience and safety.

- A signage standard should be developed for Burnham Park for both educational and directional signage
- Provide standard signage from Lake Shore Drive and other major traffic routes to the park.
- Provide signature signage at park Gateways and Greenways to lead visitors from neighboring communities to the park.
- Provide directional signage at park overlooks that gives information about natural, historical, or cultural features within the park. Provide interpretive signs along pathways throughout the links.
- Create a series of signature community markers at each Neighborhood Greenway that reflect and express the character, history, events, and people of each neighborhood along the park.
- Install signage around parking areas to make them easily accessible and identifiable.





# Plant List

## Overall Park Plant List

### Trees

Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple
Acer nigrum	Black Maple
Acer saccharinum	Silver Maple
Aesculus glabra	Ohio Buckeye
Betula nigra	River Birch
Carpinus caroliniana	Blue Beech
Celtis occidentalis	Hackberry
Cercis canadensis	Red Bud
Crataegus crusgalli	Cockspur Hawthorn
Fraxinus americana	White Ash
Fraxinus pennsylvanica	Green Ash
Fraxinus quadrangulata	Blue Ash
Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermis	Honey Locust
Gymnocladus dioicus	Kentucky Coffee Tree
Juglans nigra	Black Walnut
Juniperus virginiana	Red Cedar
Ostrya virginiana	Ironwood
Pinus strobus	White Pine
Populus tremuloides	Quaking Aspen
Populus deltoides	Cottonwood
Prunus virginiana	Choke Cherry
Quercus alba	White Oak
Quercus bicolor	Swamp White Oak
Quercus imbricaria	Shingle Oak
Quercus macrocarpa	Burr Oak
Quercus palustris	Pin Oak
Quercus rubra	Red Oak
Salix nigra	Black Willow
Tilia americana	Basswood

### Shrubs

Amelanchier canadensis	Amelanchier
Aronia melanocarpa	Black Chokeberry
Cornus alternifolia	Pagoda Dogwood
Corylus americana	Hazelnut
Diervilla lonicera	Dwarf Honeysuckle
Hamamelis virginiana	Witch Hazel
Hydrangea arborescens	Wild Hydrangea
Ilex verticillata	Winterberry
Juniperis horizontalis	Trailing Juniper
Physcarpus opulifolius	Ninebark
Potentilla fruticosa	Shrubby Cinquefoil
Rhus aromatica	Fragrant Sumac
Rhus typhina	Staghorn Sumac
Salix discolor	Pussy Willow
Viburnum lentago	Nannyberry
Viburnum prunifolium	Black Haw
Viburnum trilobum	High-bush Cranberry

## Migratory Bird Plant List

Plants to be used in addition to the species listed on the over-all plant list.

### Trees

Asimina triloba	Paw Paw
Carya cordiformis	Bitternut Hickory
Carya laciniosa	Kingnut Hickory
Carya ovata	Shagbark Hickory
Celtis occidentalis	Hackberry
Morus rubra	Red Mulberry
Prunus serotina	Wild Black Cherry
Quercus coccinea	Scarlet Oak
Quercus muhlenbergii	Chinquapin Oak
Thuja occidentalis	Eastern White Cedar

### Shrubs

Amelanchier laevis	Allegheny Shadblow
Cephalanthus occidentalis	Buttonbush
Cornus stolonifera	Red-osier Dogwood
Juniperus horizontalis	Trailing Juniper
Lindera benzoin	Spicebush
Prunus americana	Wild Plum
Rhus copallina	Shining Sumac
Rhus glabra	Smooth Sumac
Vaccinium corymbosum	Highbush Blueberry

## Perennials, Grasses, and Vines

Agastache nepetoides	Yellow Giant Hyssop
Asclepias incarnata	Swamp Milkweed
Asclepias sullivantii	Prairie Milkweed
Asclepias syriaca	Common Milkweed
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterfly
Asclepias verticillata	Whorled Milkweed
Bouteloua curtipendula	Side-Oats Gramma
Caulophyllum thalictroides	Blue cohosh
Elymus virginicus	Virginia Wild Rye
Elymus canadensis	Nodding Wild Rye
Helianthus grosseserratus	Sawtooth Sunflower
Helianthus mollis	Downy Sunflower
Monarda fistulosa	Wild Bergamot
Monarda punctata	Horse Mint
Parthenocissus quinquefolia	Virginia Creeper
Rudbeckia laciniata	Green-headed Coneflower
Rudbeckia subtomentosa	Sweet Black-eyed Susan
Rudbeckia triloba	Brown-eyed Susan
Silphium integrifolium deamii	Rosin Weed
Silphium laciniatum	Compass Plant
Silphium perfoliatum	Cup Plant
Silphium terebinthinaceum	Prairie Dock
Solidago canadensis	Canada Goldenrod
Solidago graminifolia	Common Grass-leaved Goldenrod
Solidago riddellii	Riddel's Goldenrod
Solidago nemoralis	Old-field Goldenrod
Sorghastrum nutans	Indian Grass

## Natural Area Plant List

Plants to be used in the Nature Garden.

### Shrubs

Archtostaphylos uvi-ursi coactilis	Bearberry
Ceanothus ovatus	New Jersey Tea
Juniperus horizontalis	Horizontal Juniper
Prunus pumila	Sand Cherry
Prunus virginiana	Choke Cherry
Quercus velutina	Black Oak

## Perennials, Grasses, and Vines

Allium canadense	Wild Garlic
Allium cernuum	Nodding Wild Onion
Andropogon scoparius	Little Bluestem
Anemone canadensis	Meadow Anemone
Anemone cylindrica	Thimbleweed
Arenaria stricta	Stiff Sandwort
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterfly Weed
Aster azureus	Sky-blue Aster
Aster ericoides	Heath Aster
Baptisia leucantha	White Wild Indigo
Bidens coronata	Bur Marigold
Coreopsis sp.	Coreopsis
Desmodium canadense	Showy Tick Trefoil
Dodecatheon meadia	Shooting Star
Elymus canadensis	Canada Wild Rye
Eryngium yuccifolium	Rattlesnake-master
Eupatorium perfoliatum	Boneset
Euphorbia corollata	Euphorbia corollata
Fragaria virginiana	Wild Strawberry
Galium boreale	Northern Bedstraw
Gentiana crinita	Fringed Gentian
Helenium autumnale	Sneezeweed
Helianthus divaricatus	Woodland Sunflower
Helianthus occidentalis	Western Sunflower
Hypoxis hirsuta	Yellow Stargrass
Iris virginica shrevei	Wild Iris
Lespedeza capitata	Round-Headed Bush Clover
Liatris aspera	Rough Blazing Star
Lithospermum sp.	Puccoon
Lupinus perennis occidentalis	Wild Lupine
Oenothera biennis	Common Evening Primrose
Opuntia humifusa	Prickly Pear Cactus
Pedicularis canadensis	Wood Betony
Petalostemum purpureum	Purple Prairie Clovers
Phlox pilosa	Prairie Phlox
Potentilla arguta	Prairie Cinquefoil
Ratibida pinnata	Yellow Coneflower
Rudbeckia hirta	Black-Eyed Susan
Silphium integrifolium	Rosinweed
Smilacina stellata	Starry Solomon's Seal
Solidago sp.	Goldenrod
Thalictrum dasycarpum	Purple Meadow-Rue
Tradescantia ohiensis	Spiderwort
Viola papilionacea	Common Blue Violet
Viola sagittata	Arrow-Leaved Violet
Vitis riparia	Wild Grape



# Questionnaires

## Public Meeting Surveys; Meetings 1, 2, and 3.

### How do you use Burnham Park today?

Relaxing	43
Running / Walking	35
Picnics	33
Biking/ Roller Blading	24
Swimming	19
Sports	15
Plays / Concerts	15
Fishing	13
Playground	13
Bird Watching	2

### What area of Burnham Park do you use?

Promontory Point	20
31st St. Beach	43
Oakwood	15
43rd Street	8
47th Street	11
55th Street	18
57th Street	20
Bike Route	2
Museums	2
Dunbar	2

### What do you like most about the park today?

Lakefront Views	55
Beaches	29
Green Space	29
Walking/ Running Path	24
Promontory Point	20
Landscape	18
Bike / Roller Blade Path	17
Playgrounds	2
Quietness	1
Lake access	1
Cans for hot coals	1
Spaciousness	1

### What don't you like about the park today?

Restrooms	35
Maintenance	30
Access	30
Parking	26
Security	23
Landscaping	23
Revetment	21
Walking / Running Path	15
Biking Path	11
Beaches	11
Hills / Bike path	11
Traffic in park	1
Trails not wide enough	1
Walled off from neighborhoods	1
Combined bike / roller blade	1

### What do you imagine doing in Burnham Park ?

Relaxing	48
Running / Walking	46
Picnics	38
Plays / Concerts	31
Biking	25
Swimming	20
Sports	17
Fishing	17
Roller Blading	13
Playgrounds	2

### What do you imagine the park will look like in 10 to 20 years?

Improved natural landscape	43
Improved landscape area	37
Improved tree landscape	36
Improved revetments	33
Access improved	30
Outdoor sculptures	26
Improved play space	3
Improved flowers	2
AIDS for living project	2
Improved bike paths	2

### How often do you go to the park ?

Daily	11
Weekly	25
Monthly	7
Seasonally	17
Occasionally	15
Family Reunion	1
Winter	2

### What are the major issues facing the park?

Appearance	34
Access	34
Security	31
Parking	31
Maintenance	30
Facilities	26
Limited width	22
Dog issues	1
Access to lake	1
Drinking Fountains	1

### What other Park facilities do you use ?

Grant Park	48
Lincoln Park	33
Jackson Park	32
Rainbo beach	30
South Shore Cultural Center	28
Washington Park	25
Hayes	2
Ravinia	1
Conservatory	1
Zoo	1
Northerly Island	1
Calumet Park, Forest Preserve, Garfield park, Wells, South Commons	1 each

### What activities do you par- ticipate in at these Parks?

Festivals/ Concerts	36
Walking / running	31
Biking	23
Theater plays	21
Basketball	18
Volleyball	17
Baseball	16
Swimming	15
Tennis	13
Fishing	12
Solitude	3
Lawn bowling, badminton,boating, exercise, day camps, playground, sailing, zoo, bird watching	1 each



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