Historic Maps of Jackson Park

1871 Plan
Olmsted & Vaux

1893 Plan:
Worlds Columbian Exposition
Olmsted, Codham, Burnham & Root

1895 Plan:
Post-Exposition
Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot

1968 HABS Documentation
(After NIKE sites close.)

2017 Plan
(Roadway Changes and the Obama Center)
Notes:
Jackson Park, Midway Plaisance, and South Shore Cultural Center Park are all individually listed on the NRHP. A nomination of Burnham Park for the NRHP is in progress.
Area of Potential Effect (Architecture)

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Proposed Roadway Improvements
Proposed Obama Presidential Center
In 1871: Water Park, Olmsted & Vaux

Olmsted found the site of the Lower Division (later, Jackson Park) a deplorable swamp when he first visited in 1869. A common weed, the ragged robin, was the predominant plant at the site. A few trees were present, and the only structures were shacks and sheds. Olmsted enlisted the help of John A. Archbold, a New York architect, to design a master plan for the site. Olmsted recommended the use of water features, including lakes and streams, to create a naturalistic landscape. The park was to include a central lake, a large marsh, and a series of smaller ponds and streams. The park was to be sited on the southern shore of Lake Michigan, with views of the city and the surrounding countryside. The design included pathways, benches, and picnic areas, as well as a central pavilion and a band shell. The park was to be a place for relaxation, leisure, and recreation, with a focus on natural beauty and environmental sustainability.

In 1893: World’s Fair, Olmsted & Burnham

Olmsted and Burnham worked together to design the site for the 1893 World’s Fair, which was held in Chicago. The fair was a major event in American history, and Olmsted and Burnham were appointed to design the park that would serve as the site of the fair. The park was to be a place of beauty and spectacle, with a focus on creating a natural setting that was both functional and aesthetically pleasing. The park was to include a large lake, a series of smaller ponds and streams, and a central pavilion. The park was to be sited on the southern shore of Lake Michigan, with views of the city and the surrounding countryside. The design included pathways, benches, and picnic areas, as well as a central pavilion and a band shell. The park was to be a place for relaxation, leisure, and recreation, with a focus on natural beauty and environmental sustainability.

In 1895: Original Plan, Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot

Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot were then charged with finding the best sites for the fair in the Park. They removed the existing edges of the park and added several buildings and structures to the park. They expanded the park to include a large lake, a series of smaller ponds and streams, and a central pavilion. The park was to be sited on the southern shore of Lake Michigan, with views of the city and the surrounding countryside. The design included pathways, benches, and picnic areas, as well as a central pavilion and a band shell. The park was to be a place for relaxation, leisure, and recreation, with a focus on natural beauty and environmental sustainability.

In 1909: Active Recreation

All previous designs for Jackson Park included forms of active recreation—boating, swimming, and boating among them. In the 1899 Olmsted Brothers’ plan, active recreation had proliferated, creating new opportunities for the park. The lake, tennis, and golf courses remained fixed, but new opportunities were added, including a large lake, a series of smaller ponds and streams, and a central pavilion. The park was to be sited on the southern shore of Lake Michigan, with views of the city and the surrounding countryside. The design included pathways, benches, and picnic areas, as well as a central pavilion and a band shell. The park was to be a place for relaxation, leisure, and recreation, with a focus on natural beauty and environmental sustainability.

In 1945-1972: Decline

Following a brief period in the early 1940s when the WPA took control of the park’s operations and maintenance, Jackson Park fell into a period of neglect. From 1950 to 1970, the park was neglected and the surrounding area declined. The lake was drained, and the park was closed. The park was later restored, and the lake was refilled. The park is now a popular destination for visitors and residents, with a focus on natural beauty and environmental sustainability.

In 1981: Present: Restoration

Attempts to revitalize the park began in the early 1970s and have largely flourished since then. Landscape maintenance began with the addition of new plantings to improve the park’s appearance and to create a sense of place. The park was then restored and the lake was refilled. The park is now a popular destination for visitors and residents, with a focus on natural beauty and environmental sustainability.
Currently Identified Historic Features

1. IOWA BUILDING
2. MUSIC COURT COMFORT STATION
3. BOWLING GREEN CLUBHOUSE
4. MUSIC COURT BRIDGE
5. EAST BRIDGE (C. DARROW BRIDGE)
6. MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY (CHICAGO LANDMARK)
7. PERRINIAL GARDEN
8. CHENEY GOODE MEMORIAL BENCH
9. 59TH/60TH STREET VIADUCT
10. MASARYK MONUMENT
11. LINNE MONUMENT
12. ENGLISH COMFORT STATION
13. JAPANESE GARDEN
14. SHELTER/COMFORT STATION (DRIVING RANGE COMFORT STATION)
15. 59TH STREET INLET BRIDGE
16. MIDDLE BRIDGE (HAYES DRIVE BRIDGE)
17. SOUTHERN SHORE YACHT CLUB
18. LIFE SAVING STATION (COAST GUARD STATION)
19. STATUE OF THE REPUBLIC (CHICAGO LANDMARK)
20. CECIL PARTEE GOLF SHELTER
21. MAINTENANCE BUILDING
22. JACKSON PARK FIELD HOUSE
23. JACKSON PARK YACHT CLUB
24. LA RABIDA CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL
25. GOLF SHELTER
26. SOUTH HAVEN BRIDGE (ANIMAL BRIDGE)
27. 63RD STREET BEACH HOUSE (CHICAGO LANDMARK)

See handout for details
Landscape Features

- Circulation Roads + Paths
- Golf Course
- Berms + Sunken Lawn Panels
- Historic Walls + Balustrades
- Paved Granite Beach/Beaches
- Japanese Garden
- Perennial Garden
- Naturalistic Designs

Plantings and waterway systems including lagoons, harbors and islands
Buildings + Structures

Museum of Science and Industry; 1893
Designated Chicago Landmark

63rd Street Bathing Pavilion; 1919
Designated Chicago Landmark

Music Court Comfort Station; 1888/1936

La Rabida Children’s Hospital; 1932

Jackson Park Fieldhouse; 1957

Iowa Building; 1936-40

9th Hole Golf Shelter; 1912

English Comfort Station; 1934
Buildings + Structures

Jackson Park Yacht Club; 1906-30
Southern Shore Yacht Club; 1934
Maintenance Building; 1936
Life Saving (Coast Guard) Stn; 1906
Cecil Partee Golf Shelter; 1900
Shelter/Comfort Station; 1936 (Driving Range)
Bowling Green Clubhouse, 1927
C. Darrow Bridge; 1880; 1893-5; 1957-63

59th Street Inlet Bridge; 1895

Hayes Drive Lagoon Bridge; 1901

Music Court Bridge; 1904-06

South Haven Bridge (Animal Bridge); 1904

59th/60th Street Viaduct; 1893
HISTORIC FEATURES

Monuments

- Statue of the Republic; 1918
  Designated Chicago Landmark
- Masaryk Monument; 1955
- Linne Monument; 1891/1976
- Cheney Goode Memorial Bench; 1932