

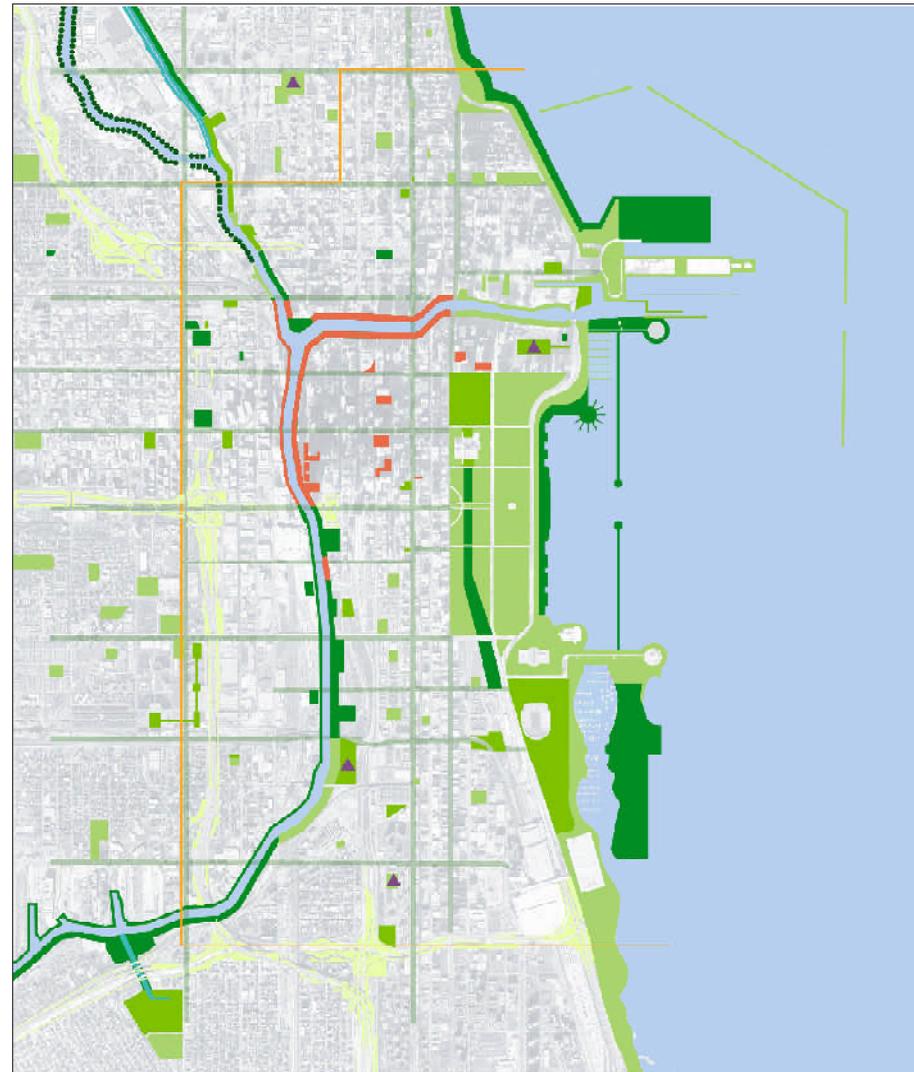


## Chapter 4 : THEME 3

# Waterfronts and Open Spaces

Expand and connect Waterfronts and Open Spaces to create great public places

CENTRAL AREA OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES



**Figure 4.3.1**  
Central Area Open Space

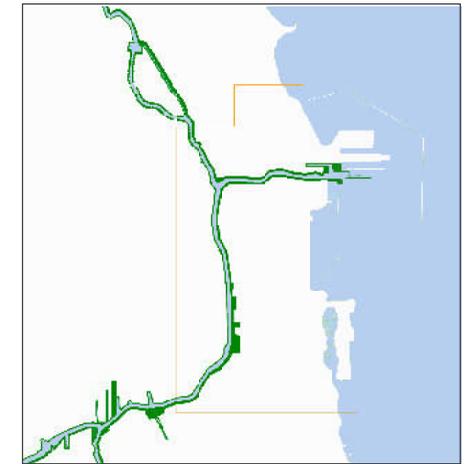
Open spaces and rich landscaping make the Central Area livable and help to attract business and visitors. Chicago's lakefront park system is known worldwide. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century it will also become known for its outstanding continuous riverfront open space.



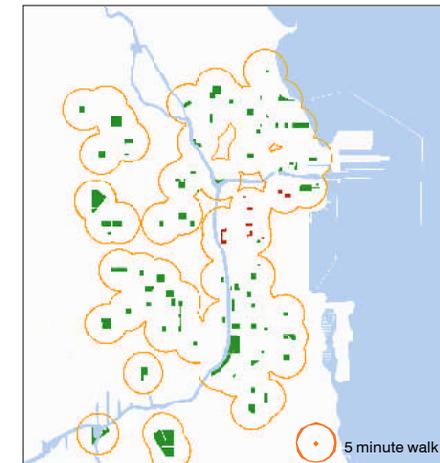
CENTRAL AREA OPEN SPACE SYSTEMS



**Figure 4.3.2** Strengthen the Lakefront as Chicago's great public space



**Figure 4.3.3** Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous park system



**Figure 4.3.4** Create the next generation of parks and plazas



**Figure 4.3.5** Complete the framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards.

# Theme 3: Waterfronts and Open Spaces

Expand and connect Waterfronts and Open Spaces to create great public places.

## Guiding Principles

- **THE LAKEFRONT**  
Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space
- **THE RIVERFRONT**  
Develop the Chicago River as a premier public place and continuous open space system
- **PARKS AND PLAZAS**  
Create the next generation of urban and neighborhood parks to support the growing population
- **GREEN STREETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**  
Complete the Central Area's framework of richly landscaped streets and boulevards

As the Central Area grows, new open space and parks will be required. Access to green space is a basic human need. It is particularly important in the Central Area, where most streets lack the grassy parkways and yards of outlying residential neighborhoods. Downtown parks provide beauty to the hundreds of thousands of people who pass through the Central Area every day. They soften the urban environment and make downtown Chicago a more desirable place to live, work, and visit.

The Central Area cannot accommodate the same amount or types of open space as other parts of Chicago. There are fewer families with children, but more visitors and workers. The downtown open space system and the design of individual parks will reflect these unique needs and provide access to a park or open space within a five-minute walk of everyone living or working in the Central Area. The Central Area will also reflect Chicago's high standards for the design and quality of public open space.

The City of Chicago's Cityspace Plan established a hierarchy of varying scales and functions:

- Magnet parks - lakefront parks attracting people from throughout the metropolitan area. Grant Park and Burnham Park serve this purpose in the Central Area.
- Regional parks - parks with fieldhouses serving several adjacent neighborhoods. The Central Area has two such parks within its borders, Ping Tom Park on the South Branch of the Chicago River, and the proposed Lakeshore East Park at Illinois Center, and another close by, Seward Park at Division and Orleans streets. Ping Tom Park is slated for expansion, as discussed below.
- Neighborhood parks - parks serving nearby residents. A number of such parks are to be constructed throughout the Central Area.
- Campus parks - green space on public school grounds serving nearby residents. Cermak Elementary and Teachers Academy will provide such a park at Cermak Avenue and State Street.
- Plazas/squares - outdoor spaces serving nearby office workers. Most such spaces are built by private developers under the City's "zoning bonus" program. The City has established more rigorous standards for such spaces.
- Greenways - landscaped pedestrian ways along the river or public streets that connect parks. The river walk is a major focus of this Plan.

Location	Existing	Pending <sup>1</sup>	Buy/Build <sup>2</sup>	Air Rights	Total New
Riverfront	9 (7)	40 (21)	0 (1)	–	40 (22)
Lakefront	-	–	3 (1)	–	3 (1)
City Parks	13 (5)	4 (3)	10 (6)	27 (5)	41 (14)
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 (12)</b>	<b>44 (24)</b>	<b>13 (8)</b>	<b>27 (5)</b>	<b>84 (37)</b>

<sup>1</sup>Due to required 30' river setback or parcel already owned by city.

<sup>2</sup>River parcel proposed for purchase.

Source : Chicago Department of Planning and Development



**Figure 4.3.6** Open space systems in the Central Area will form a connected network for residents and visitors.

**Figure 4.3.7**  
The lakefront open space system

■ Existing Open Space  
■ Planned Open Space  
■ Open Space Vision



## The Lakefront Open Space System

*Planned, proposed and envisioned lakefront recommendations.*

### KEY LAKEFRONT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Complete Millennium Park
2. Implement the Grant Park master plan to create new active and passive open spaces
3. Create Wacker Pier and a new public institution or museum  
Renovate the U.S. Coast Guard Station
4. Continue decking over the railroad in Grant Park to create new open spaces and minimize barriers
5. Expand Monroe Harbor
6. Create Northerly Island Park on the former Meigs Field
7. Create new parkland over the railroad at Central Station
8. Widen the lakefront path from North Avenue beach to Olive Park by 100 feet and create a wider public waterfront
9. Integrate park lands with the Jardine Water Filtration Plant

# The Lakefront

## Strengthen the Lakefront - Chicago's great public space

### Key Lakefront Recommendations

- Complete Millennium Park
- Implement the Grant Park master plan, creating new active and passive open spaces
- Continue decking over the railroad in Grant Park to create new open spaces and minimize barriers
- Expand and complete Monroe Street Harbor including legacy projects inspired by the 1909 Plan of Chicago
  - Create Wacker Drive Pier with remodeled Coast Guard Station and a public feature or new museum
- Create new parkland over the railroad at Central Station
- Widen the lakefront path from North Avenue beach to Olive Park by 100 feet and create a new landscaped embankment
- Integrate expanded park lands with the Jardine Water Filtration Plant

Chicago's spectacular lakefront was created as a result of the implementation of major projects identified at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Burnham's Plan of Chicago. Today, its attractions include Grant Park and Burnham Park with its festivals and gardens, Navy Pier, beaches, boating, and bike trails. Chicago's lakefront open space system will be strengthened, with new recreational and landscaped spaces and easier access and movement.

### GRANT PARK AND MILLENIUM PARK

Much of the annual visitor traffic is focused in a small area around the Petrillo Music Shell at Jackson Boulevard and the Museum Campus and Soldier Field south of Roosevelt Road. The Grant Park Master Plan calls for redistributing attractions along the lakefront, improving circulation, and creating all-season venues. At the northern end of Grant Park, Millennium Park will attract new visitors year round with the addition of the Music and Dance Theater and the music pavilion. At areas of high traffic, decks will be built over the Metra Electric tracks to create new open spaces and permit easier pedestrian access to the lakefront.

### SHORELINE NORTH OF NAVY PIER

To make more room for pedestrians and cyclists and provide much-needed landscaping, the shoreline can be extended 100 feet to the east between Olive Park and Oak Street Beach. In addition to the lakefront multi-use path, this new park land can incorporate seating and a landscaped embankment.

### NORTHERLY ISLAND PARK

Meigs Field will become Northerly Island Park, a 50 acre park featuring native landscaping and adaptive reuse of airport buildings. The new park will be a destination for nature-based recreation and environmental education.



Figure 4.3.8 Implement the Grant Park Master Plan