

Lakefront Improvement Plan (Grand Avenue to North Avenue) and the Lake Shore Drive Redesign and Reconstruction Plan



Statement by Parks Taskforce and the Board of the Streeterville Organization of Active Residents (SOAR) 08/29/13

SOAR has long supported and been instrumental in the development of the Lakefront Improvement Plan. The key components of the plan are:

- 1) The use of landfill to create additional parkland between Ohio Street Beach and Oak Street Beach
- 2) The creation of a modern interchange at Chicago Avenue where it intersects with Lake Shore Drive.
- 3) Elimination of the curve where Lake Shore Drive passes Oak Street Beach at East Lake Shore Drive. The most viable plan includes moving Oak Street Beach to the east, which would create a significant new park between the Inner-Drive and the reconfigured Outer-Drive.
- 4) Reconfiguring and enhancing the northern entrance to North Michigan Avenue.
- 5) The creation of additional parkland between Oak Street Beach and North Avenue Beach in the area between Lake Shore Drive and Lake Michigan.
- 6) Development of one of the barrier islands proposed by Daniel Burnham north of Oak Street Beach to protect the shoreline between Oak Street Beach and North Avenue Beach.
- 7) The creation of modern underpasses or other means of accessing the Lakefront.

The Lakefront Improvement Plan is a major component of the current Central Area Plan and compliments the Lake Shore Drive Redesign and Reconstruction Plan:

- 1) The curve at East Lake Shore Drive is a major traffic hazard. Its elimination will save lives and eliminate a major bottleneck.
- 2) The creation of an interchange at Chicago Avenue will greatly improve access to Streeterville, which has seen a significant growth with respect to its medical and educational district as well as its residential population over the last fifty (50) years.
- 3) The creation of additional parkland between Lake Shore Drive and Lake Michigan will protect the roadway from the perennial problem of waves coming over Lake Shore Drive and creating hazardous water and ice buildups on the Drive as well as periodically closing the Drive.
- 4) Reconfiguration of the entrance to North Michigan Avenue will improve traffic flow and enhance the experience of entering one of the most important retail streets in the United States.

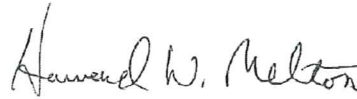
- 5) Whether by redesigned pedestrian underpasses or walkways over Lake Shore Drive, the Lake Shore Drive Redesign and Reconstruction Plan will greatly improve access to Chicago's Lakefront Parks.
- 6) All of the major components of the Lakefront Improvement Plan are included in Chicago's Central Area Plan.

Secondary benefits of these two projects include:

- 1) The creation of approximately sixty (60) additional acres of parkland for the Streeterville neighborhood, which has the least parkland per capita of any neighborhood in Chicago.
- 2) The enhancement of the Chicago's lakefront park system by creating an additional mile of park between Ohio Street Beach and North Avenue Beach.
- 3) Since the revetments east of Lake Shore Drive need to be replaced, the timing is ideal to move the revetments further east and, in the process, protect Lake Shore Drive from storm waves and create additional parkland.



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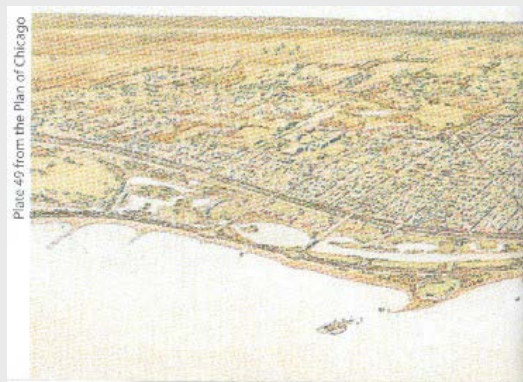
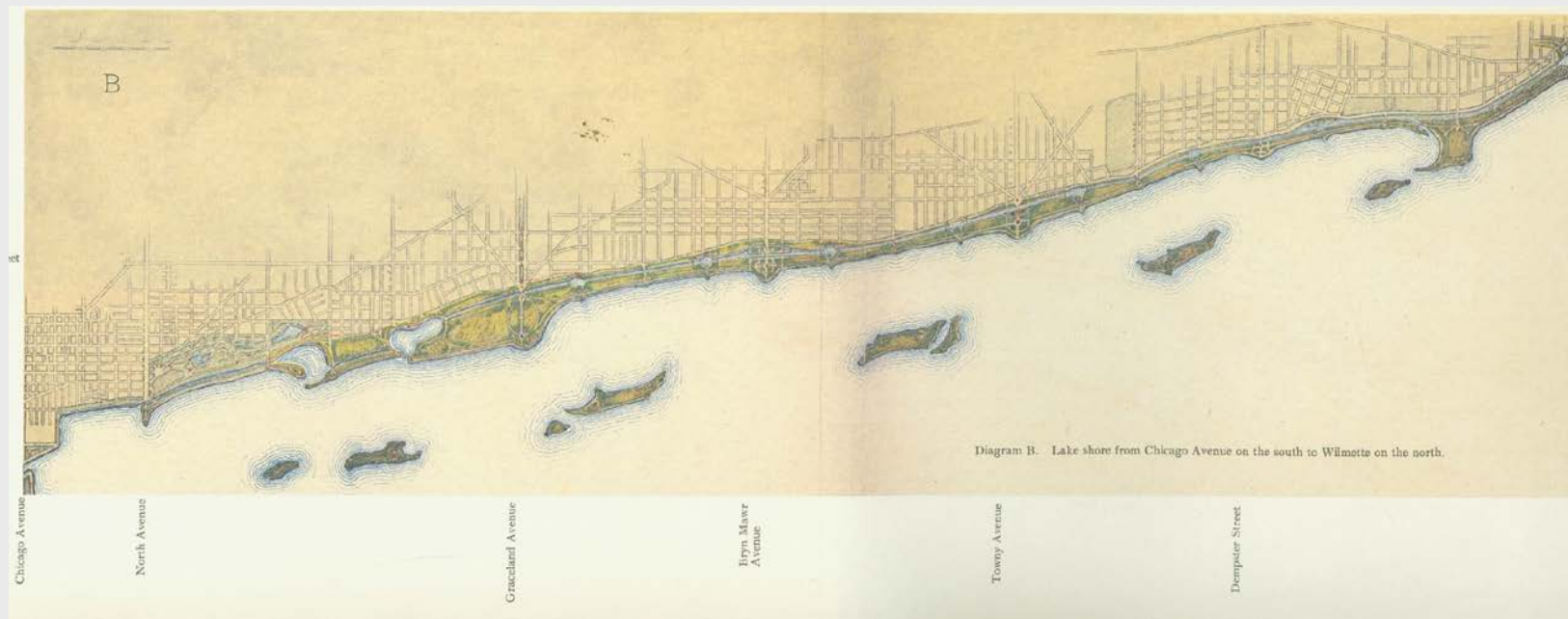
Proposed Lakefront Improvements

Grand Avenue to North Avenue
Chicago, IL



architecture + planning + interior design

Historic Context



Chicago's population exponentially in its first 50 years, no end in sight.

from Daniel H. Burnham, Architect, Planner of Cities

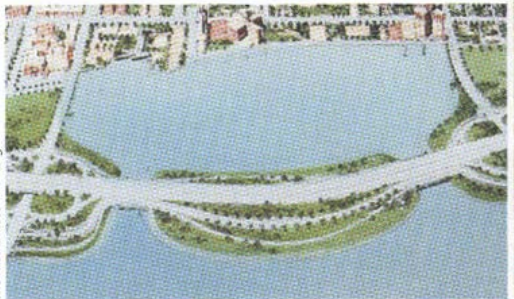
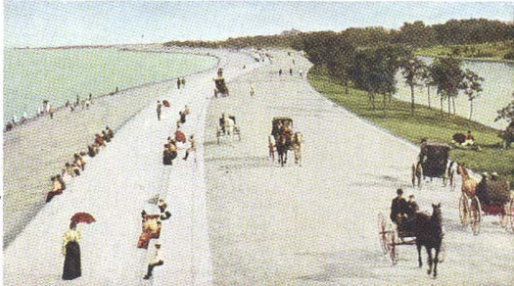
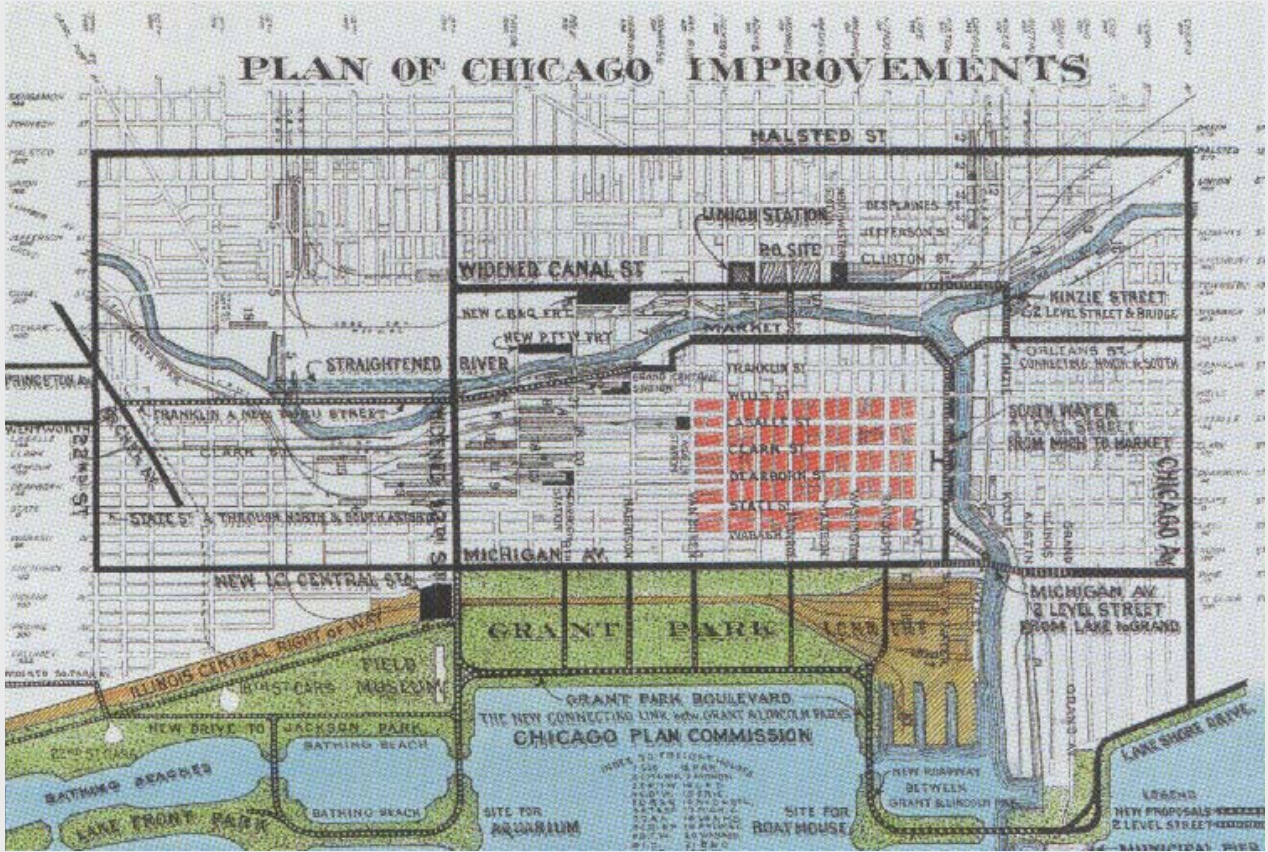


Daniel Burnham, architect, planner, and primary author of the Plan of Chicago.

Regional and birds eye views of the Chicago plan, and a picture of Daniel Burnham, all circa 1909.

Proposed Lakefront Improvements, Chicago, IL

Historic Context



Summaries of central area projects, historical photographs of Lake Shore Drive and bridges

Proposed Lakefront Improvements, Chicago, IL

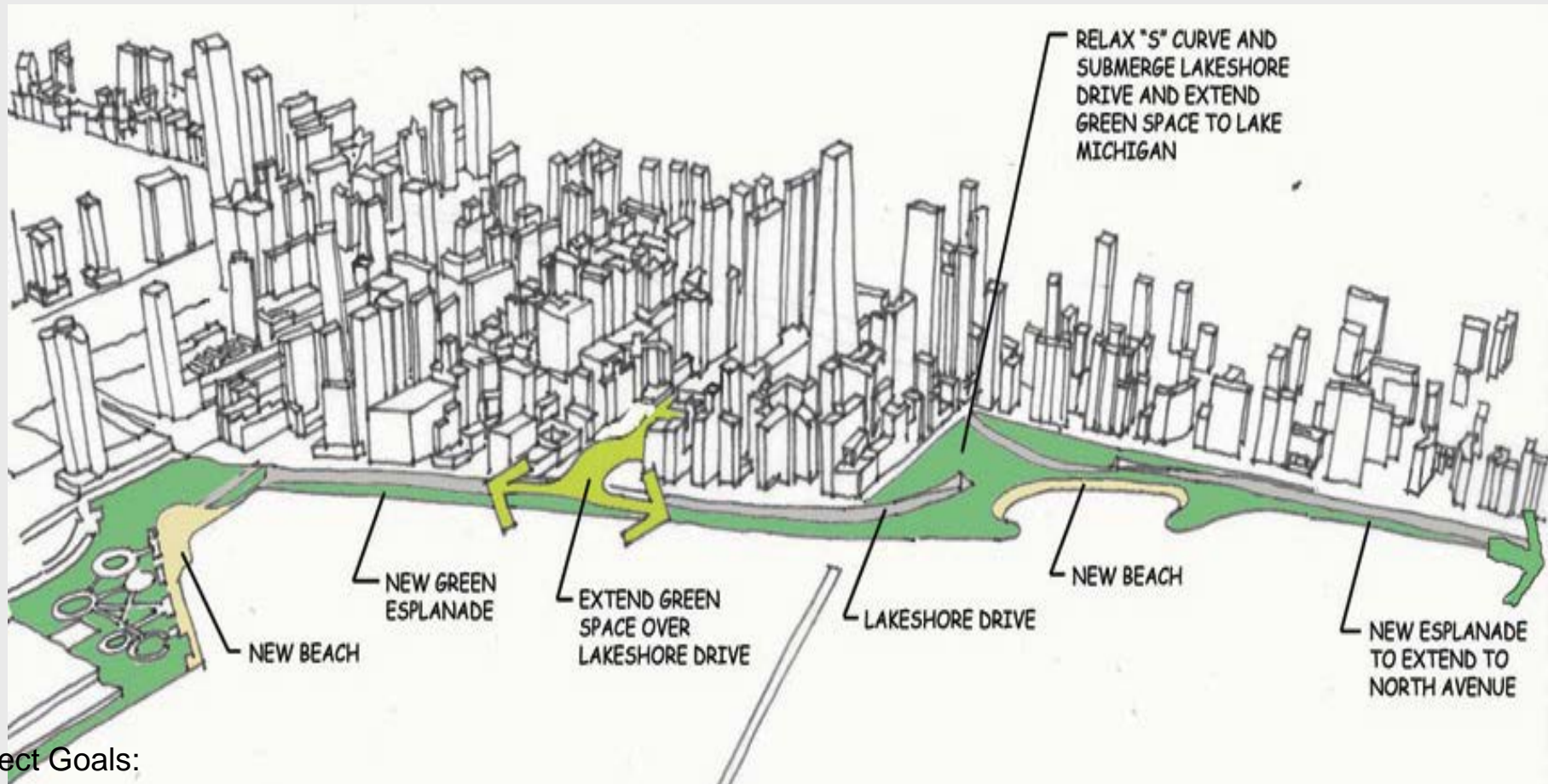
Grand Avenue to North Avenue Existing Conditions



Existing conditions with Olive Park on left, and North Street beach visible on the right.

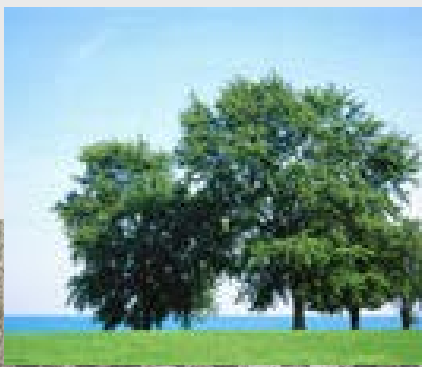
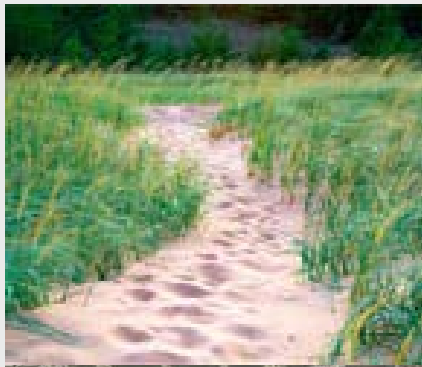
Proposed Lakefront Improvements, Chicago, IL.

Grand Avenue to North Avenue The Expanded Vision



Project Goals:

- Provide direct connection between lakefront and neighborhoods.
- Expand park space available to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Mitigate Lakeshore Drive hazards and noise.
- Create “green” terminus to Michigan Avenue.
- Develop shoreline protection measures.
- Introduce Landscape elements appropriate to Lake Michigan shoreline.



Proposed character of North Lake Shore Drive proposed Improvements

Proposed Lakefront Improvements, Chicago, IL.



200' x 3763'
Park Promenade linking
Olive Park to Oak Street Beach

Lake Shore Park to extend
over Lake Shore Drive to create
direct connection to park promenade

New park to extend
over Lake Shore Drive
between Bellevue
Place & Scott Street to
provide direct connection to Oak

Oak Street Beach to be
reconfigured to create 'protected beach'

Existing Lake Shore between Goethe Street & West
North Boulevard to receive water edge restoration
measures and improved pedestrian & bicycle paths

1965' x 379'
Coastal Island to provide
additional protection to
lakeshore

Proposed Improvements





Existing Conditions



Proposed Improvements

Left: Oak Street Existing Conditions

Right: Oak Street Beach with proposed improvements



Left: Lakeshore Park and Promenade Existing Conditions Right: Lakeshore Park and Promenade with proposed improvements and expansion



Aerial view of Lake Shore Drive proposed improvements

Proposed Lakefront Improvements, Chicago, IL

In Conclusion:

- **This plan will add nearly 60 acres of park land area and 1.2 miles (6,258 feet) of additional shoreline**
- **This will be a legacy project for Chicago, emphasizing ideas and concepts reflected in the Burnham Plan, efforts to preserve and enhance the lakefront, and the Central Area Action Plan**
- **The project is a complement to memorialize the centennial of the Burnham Plan**
- **The inclusion of highway reconstruction and replacement of the deteriorated revetments along this portion of the shoreline enhances the possibility of multiple funding sources**