



# Soft System of Chicago Lakeside Master Plan

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# Team Members



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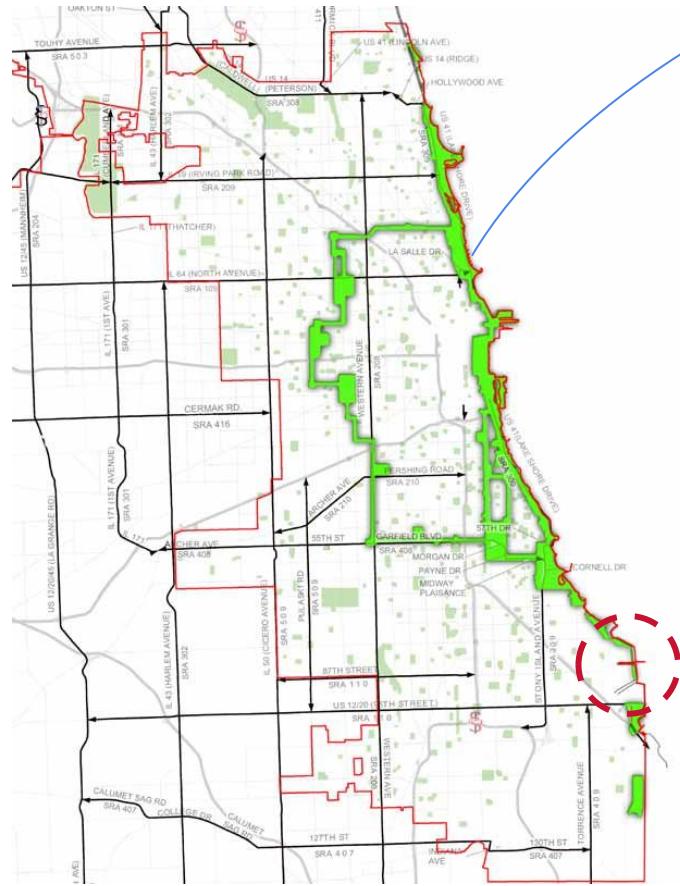
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# Recap



The Chicago Lakeside Master Plan aimed to redevelop the 600-acre former U.S. Steel South Works site on Chicago's South Side into a sustainable, mixed-use community. Inspired by Chicago's distinctive city grid and Daniel Burnham's legacy of parklands, developer McCaffery sought to reconnect the area to the city. Conceived by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM), the project focused on renewable energy, zero waste, and biodiversity, setting a model for future LEED-ND developments and boosting the local economy. However, it ultimately failed when U.S. Steel and McCaffery Interests parted ways.

# Goal

**Reconnect the area to the city**

## Sustainable development

# Mixed-use community and Environmental leadership

- Lakefront Park and Boulevard Network
- Parks
- ↔ Regional Arterial Routes



# Contents

1. What makes a park successful? — Insights from Jane Jacobs
2. Cultural Identity and Historical Continuity in Urban Design
3. Social-economic systems influencing the site
4. Political and Governance Systems influencing the park





# Current Street View





# Current Street View





# Current Street View





# Current Street View





# Death and Life of Great American Cities —Jane Jacobs

Jane Jacobs, OC, O.Ont (May 4, 1916 – April 25, 2006) was an American-born Canadian writer and activist with primary interest in communities and urban planning and decay. She is best known for *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), a powerful critique of the urban renewal policies of the 1950s in the United States. The book has been credited with reaching beyond planning issues to influence the spirit of the times.

Along with her well-known printed works, Jacobs is equally well-known for organizing grassroots efforts to block urban-renewal projects that would have destroyed local neighborhoods. She was instrumental in the eventual cancellation of the Lower Manhattan Expressway, and after moving to Canada in 1968, equally influential in canceling the Spadina Expressway and the associated network of highways under construction.





# Key insights from Chapter 5: The uses of neighborhood parks

The success of  
neighborhood parks

Integration with  
Neighborhood Life

Dangers of Isolated  
Parks

Importance of Proper  
Scale

Require Mixed Uses

Role of Eyes on the Park



# Integration with Neighborhood Life

*"In short, Rittenhouse Square is busy fairly continuously for the same basic reasons that a lively sidewalk is used continuously: because of functional physical diversity among adjacent uses, and hence diversity among users and their schedules."*

*(Jacobs, 97)*



# Dangers of Isolated Parks & Role of Eyes on the Park

Statistic	South Chicago /100k People	Chicago /100k People	Illinois /100k People	National /100k People
Total crime	5,441 (estimate)	3,673	1,970	2,324
Murder	n/a	22.8	7.8	6.3
Rape	n/a	51.8	48.1	40.0
Robbery	n/a	337.4	84.7	66.1
Assault	n/a	128.0	146.7	268.2
Violent crime	1,066 (estimate)	540	287	370
Burglary	n/a	287.5	208.5	269.8
Theft	n/a	2,046.4	1,192.7	1,401.9
Vehicle theft	n/a	799.0	281.6	282.7
Property crime	4,375 (estimate)	3,133	1,683	1,954

South Chicago crime rates are not available from the FBI's UCR (uniform crime reporting) program, as a result, estimates are displayed in the table above. The crime reporting program from the FBI does cover more than 98% of the larger metropolitan areas, which represents more than 309 million U.S. residents. This data is gathered from more than 18,000 law enforcement agencies which include tribal, state, county, college, university and city levels. However, the FBI does not report crime on a neighborhood level, therefore estimates were used to calculate the South Chicago crime data. These estimates take into account the overall Chicago crime rates (violent and property), as well as multiple other factors which include: poverty rates, unemployment rates, income, educational achievement, home prices, rent prices and population density. To view crime rates on a block group level, the South Chicago crime map below provides a hyper-local overview of all crimes reported throughout Chicago.

## Lack of Foot Traffic:

- Isolated parks do not attract enough people, leading to underutilization and an unsafe atmosphere.

## Increased Risk of Crime:

- Without regular surveillance ("eyes on the park"), these spaces can become hotspots for undesirable behavior and crime.

## Absence of Community Engagement:

- Parks disconnected from neighborhood life do not foster community identity, making them feel irrelevant and unused. In our case, only the newly built neighborhood would be the primary users.

# Importance of Proper Scale



## PARK 566

	Square Feet	Acres
Parcel 1a	187,083	4.295
Parcel 2a	481,322	11.050
Parcel 3	617,308	14.171
Parcel 4a	991,638	22.765
Parcel 4b	784,079	18.000
Total Area Surveyed	3,061,430	70.281

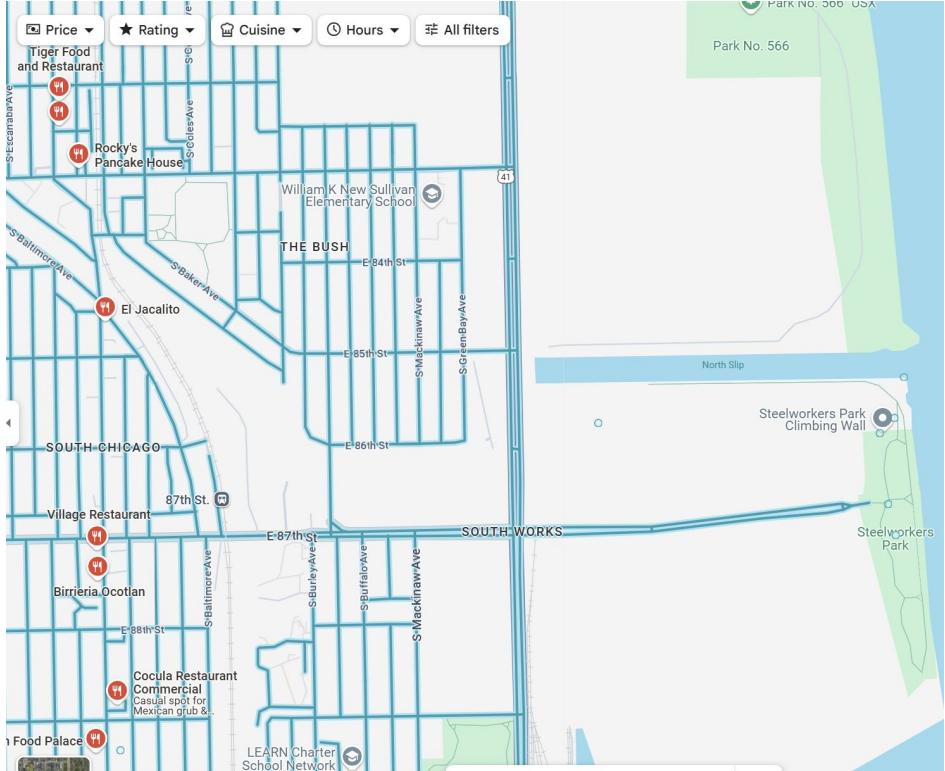
Small neighborhood parks, when integrated into the urban grid and close to residents, can be more successful than large, sprawling parks, allowing residents to spontaneously visit and enjoy them as part of their daily routines.



# Require Mixed Uses

*“The uses that directly surround the park include the Central Library, two churches, the Masonic temple. Residential apartments, government offices, the Sports Hall of Fame, office towers, a barber shop, the Hotel Saskatchewan, and several restaurants, lunch spots, and cafes...”*

(Jacobs, 110)



## 2. Cultural Identity and Historical Continuity



## 2.1. Historical Continuity and Cultural Preservation

Urban continuity is crucial for understanding the cultural identity of cities, as it reflects the historical legacy that shapes current urban life (Mayes, 2017).

The park's failure reflects a missed opportunity to commemorate the industrial legacy of South Works.

A historical narrative that could have connected generations was lost due to poor integration of the site's past into the park's design.

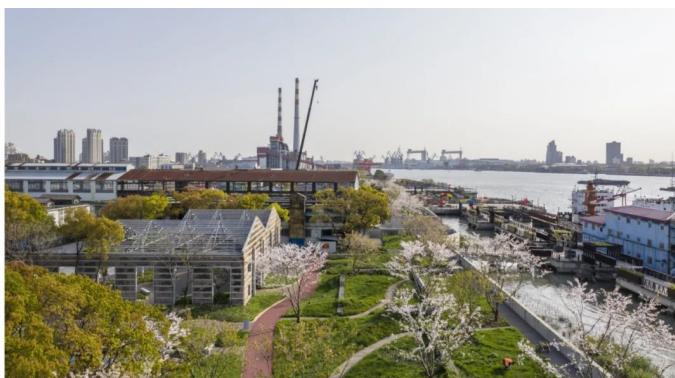
### Key Points:

- Lack of monuments or plaques commemorating the steel industry.
- Absence of storytelling about the role of workers and the site's contribution to Chicago's development.





Before



After

## 2.1. Historical Continuity and Cultural Preservation

### Case 1: The transformation of the industrial heritage along Shanghai's Yangpu Riverside

By preserving and repurposing the area's industrial past, the project successfully connects generations and fosters a deeper sense of place and continuity.



# 2.1. Historical Continuity and Cultural Preservation

**Case 2: Commemorating Industrial Heritage Through Memorial Preservation - The Steelworkers Veterans Memorial in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania**

- How industrial heritage can be preserved while honoring the contributions of veterans.

- By **rededicating the Steelworkers Veterans Memorial**

Commemorates the legacy of steelworkers.

Reinforces the historical and cultural significance of industrial sites for future generations.





## 2.1. Historical Continuity and Cultural Preservation

Cultural identity plays a significant role in shaping urban environments that reflect the values and traditions of local communities (Tweed & Sutherland, 2007).

The park design neglected to incorporate cultural and historical features that would engage local communities and honor South Chicago's industrial history.

It was a chance to foster pride in the area's cultural identity, but this was overlooked.

### Key Points:

- No community-driven cultural programs.
- Industrial history could have been used as a theme for public art, exhibitions, or even small museum-like installations.



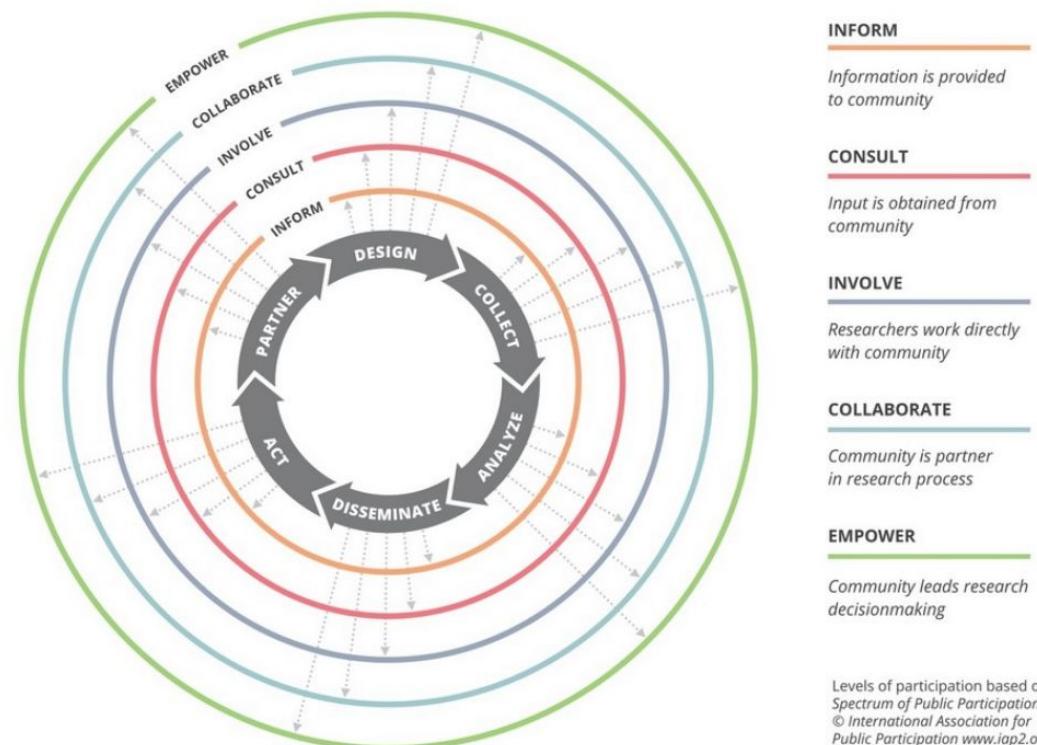
## 2.2. The Role of Community Participation in Cultural Spaces

### Key Insights:

- Deeper engagement leads to greater community agency and inclusivity.
- Higher levels of participation allow for **redistribution of power** and **collective action** in design and research.
- Participatory approaches **resist traditional top-down structures**, fostering environments where diverse voices shape outcomes.

### Participation Choice Points in the Research Process

At each step in the research process, there is a choice about the degree of participation. The choice guides the selection of research methods and tools.



## 2.2. The Role of Community Participation in Cultural Spaces



## 2.2. The Role of Community Participation in Cultural Spaces

The High Line in New York exemplifies community-driven design in a reclaimed industrial space (Garon, 2019).

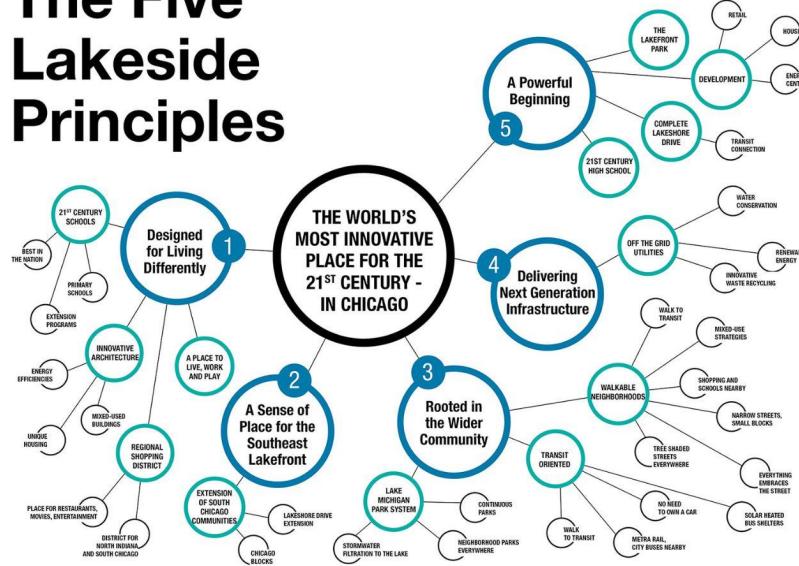
Initially an elevated rail line, it was transformed with active public engagement into **a park that includes gardens, art installations, and free events**, making it a vibrant cultural hub.

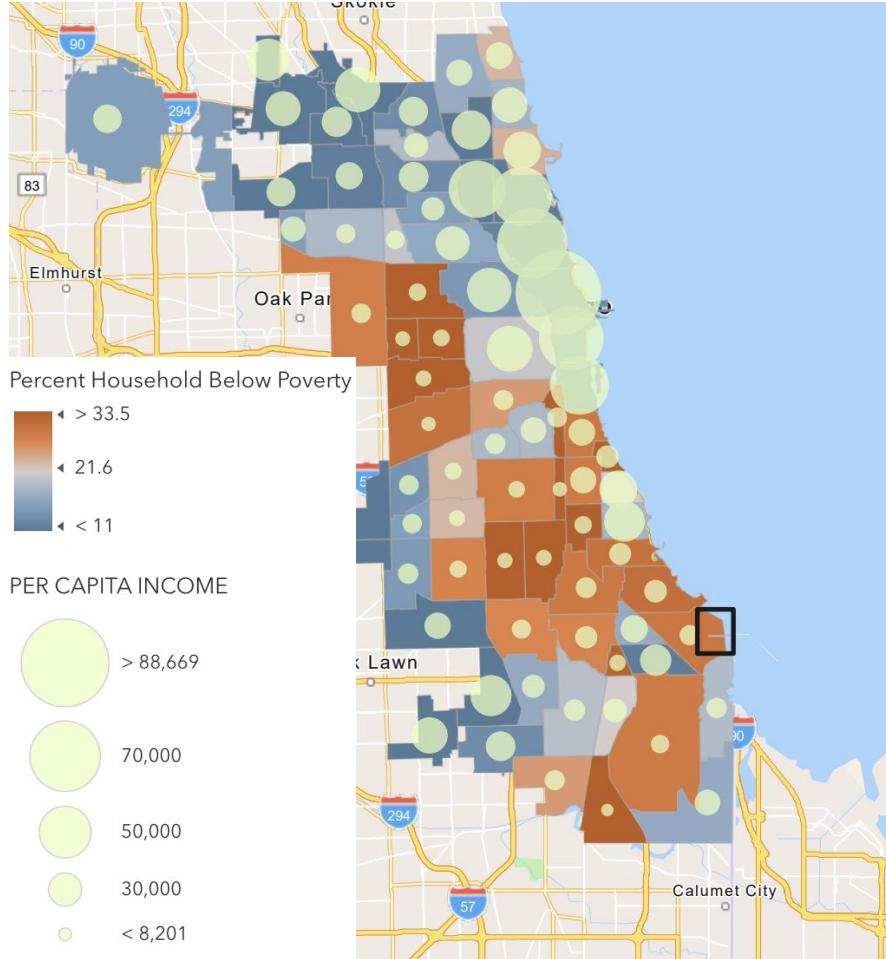
The High Line project **involved public feedback and workshops**, aligning with a collaborative approach that preserved industrial heritage while creating an inclusive public space.



# 3. Social-economic Systems influencing the site

## The Five Lakeside Principles





## Local Economic Challenges

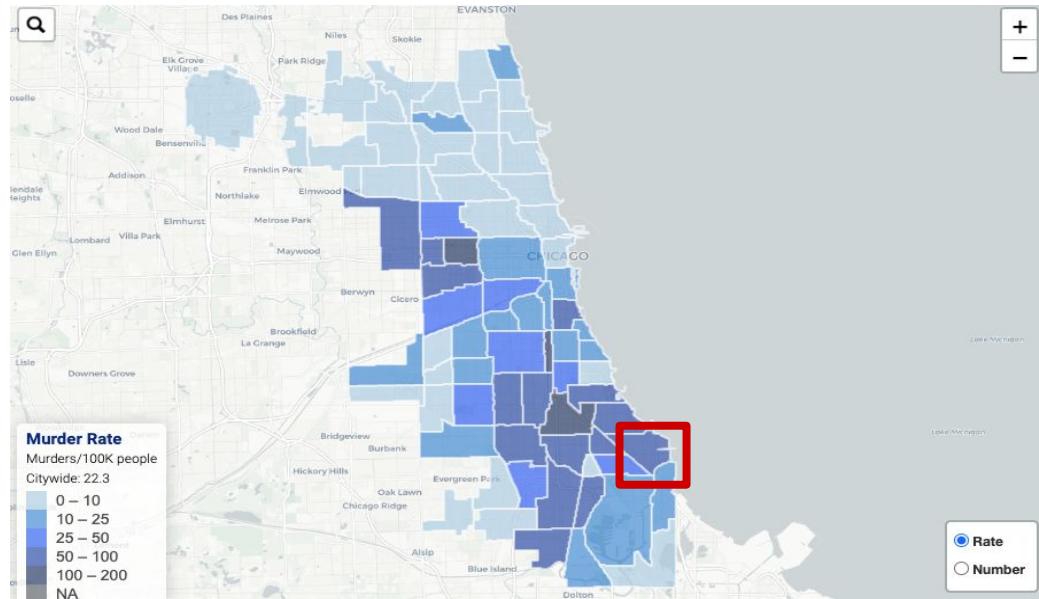
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Under-education

2008-2012	South Chicago Stats
Percent Households Below Poverty	29.80%
Percent Aged 16+ Unemployed	19.70%
Percent Aged 25 Without High School Degree	26.60%
Per Capita Income	16,579

- 2023 Real estate vacancy rate: 35.8%

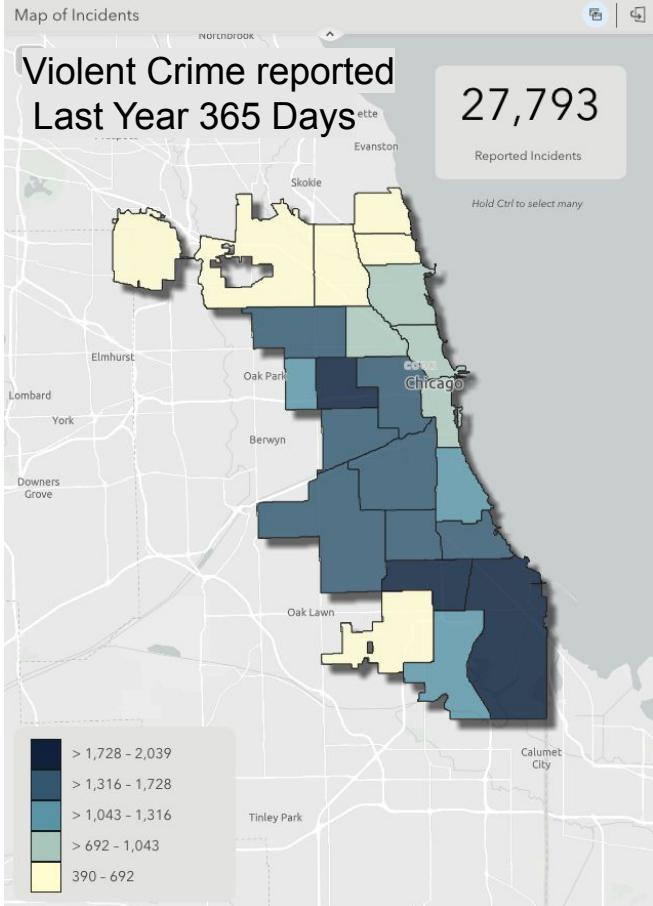


# Social Challenges



Homicide Rate at  
East Chicago South  
Per 100k population

	Rates	Chicago overall
2020	85.2	28.1
2021	44.4	29.66
2022	74.1	26.07
2023	59.3	22.85





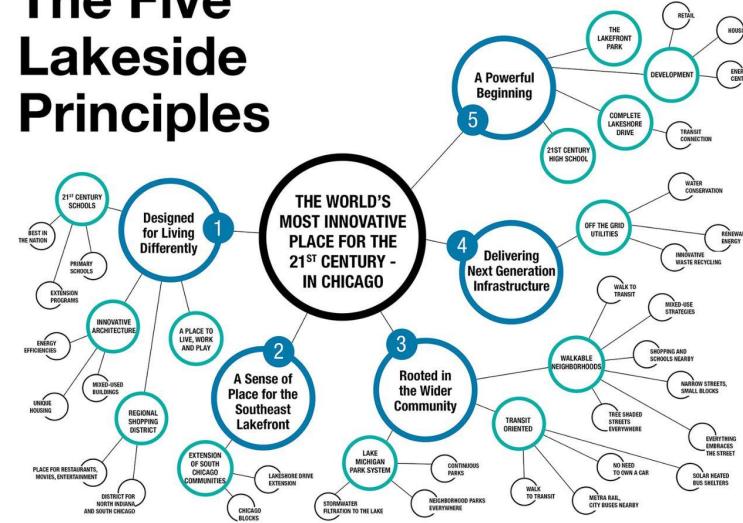
## The Success of Chicago

- Benefits of density while still remaining affordable and pleasant.
- information-intensive industries
- high-quality, attractive real estate
- Plenty of offices

— Glaeser, *Triumph of the City*



## The Five Lakeside Principles



Is Lakeside Master Plan following the **success** pattern of Chicago?

# Transformation of Community Proposed by Lakeside Master Plan

## Housing

13,575 new homes  
50,000 new residents



- a series of neighborhoods, each built around a “center” with restaurants, a school, a dry cleaner, and boutiques
- 1,500-boat marina and harbor
- Waterfront parks, public-use lands

## Jobs

17,500 square feet of retail and commercial space



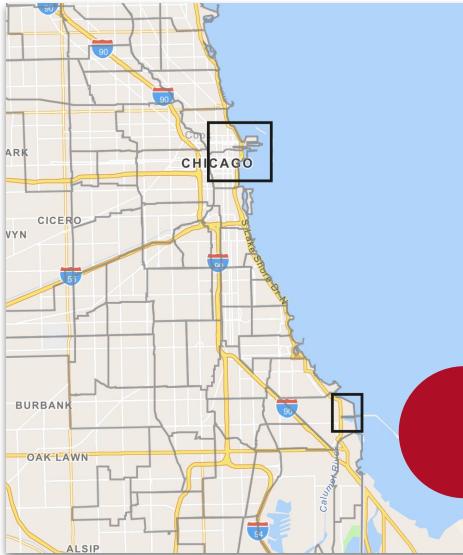
- New retail and commercial will create permanent jobs
- The innovation zone will create industries and employment

## Education

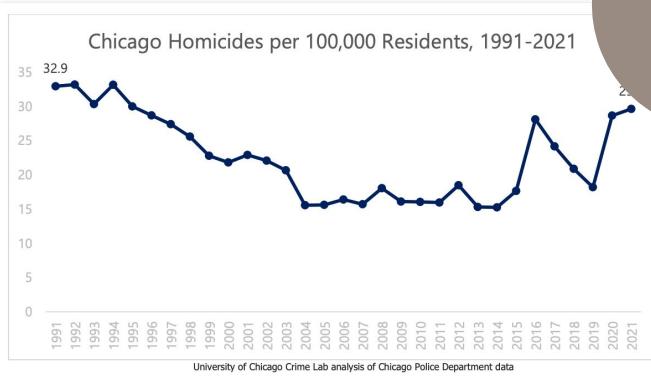
New High School



- EPIC Academy Charter School
- Chicago Public Schools' Sullivan Elementary School



## Failure to Address Critical Challenges

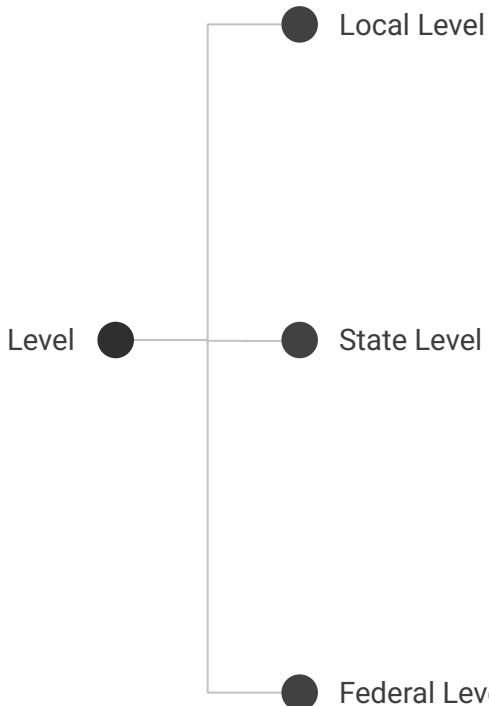


# **4. Political and Governance Systems**



## 4. Political Systems

# Regulatory framework



The Official Website of the  
**CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT**

<https://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/>



Illinois  
Department of  
**Natural  
Resources**



<https://dnr.illinois.gov/>



[National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration \(noaa.gov\)](http://National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (noaa.gov))

- The District oversees the **restoration and construction of the park**, ensuring it fits within the city's broader green space plans.
- They also manage **land acquisition** and the development of nature trails, landscaping, and amenities.
- **Community involvement** is encouraged through advisory councils and public engagement during the planning phase

- the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is involved in the project, notably through initiatives like the "**Mud to Parks**" program. This program repurposes sediment from Illinois rivers to improve soil quality in former industrial areas like Park 566

- the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) **contribute grants** to support restoration efforts, which is essential for environmental conservation projects.

# Regulatory framework



# 4. Political Systems

CORNELL  
TECH

HOME OF THE  
JACOBS  
INSTITUTE



## Regulation impact

### Land-Use Regulations



The area is part of Chicago's planned development zoning.

The Chicago Department of Planning and Development (DPD) oversees zoning compliance to ensure the park's layout fits into broader urban development strategies. This includes green space integration and maintaining the lakefront's accessibility to the public

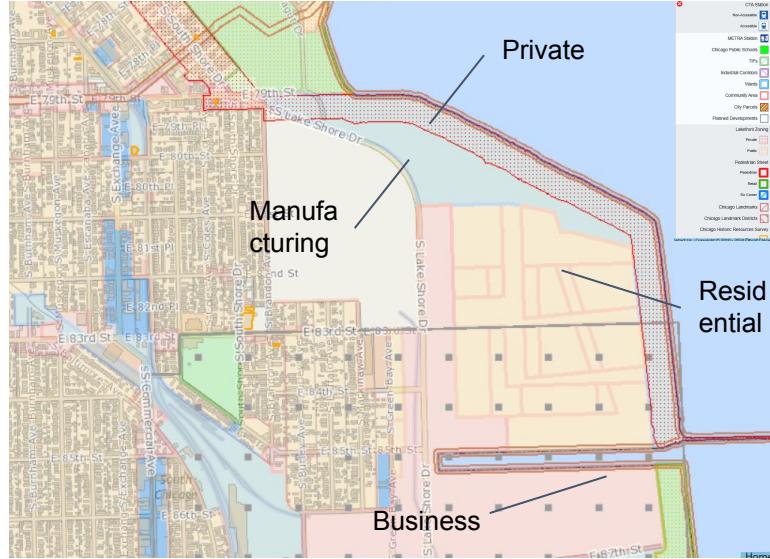


The Illinois Department of Natural Resources' **"Mud to Parks"** program, which recycles sediment from Illinois rivers to restore soil quality, has been instrumental in making the land viable for park development.

In March 2013, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn appointed the Millennium Reserve Steering Committee to unite civic, community, and business leaders around significant regional initiatives. Numerous partners are supporting projects to advance the **Millennium Reserve** vision.

### Environmental Protections

### Urban Developmen t Guidelines



The park is part of Chicago's broader lakefront development vision, which aims to create interconnected green spaces. As part of this vision, Park 566 must comply with guidelines related to accessible trails, wildlife habitats, and integration with surrounding parks.

# Political and regulatory reason for its failure

Financial Ambition

McCAFFERY

McCaffery

\$4 billion too ambitious

“all that’s beyond our paygrade”  
— President Woodbury

Corporate Realignment



U.S. Steel

changes in leadership

realignment of priorities

Bureaucratic Complexity



city of Chicago

Coordination with various agencies and stakeholders

lead to serious delays and complications in approvals

Possible reasons

Environmental Remediation

Bureaucratic Challenges

Political and Institutional Complications

Funding Gaps

Community and Environmental Justice

## 4. Political Systems

# Political and regulatory reason for its failure

## Environmental Remediation

The site has a long history of industrial use, which left behind significant contamination. The area was filled with slag, debris, and industrial waste from the steel manufacturing processes. Cleaning up this land to make it suitable for public use is a costly and time-consuming process. Regulatory hurdles regarding environmental safety, soil remediation, and hazardous waste management slow down development



## Bureaucratic Challenges

The involvement of multiple agencies at the local, state, and federal levels complicates the process. The Chicago Park District, NOAA, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and various city planning departments need to collaborate effectively. Coordinating funding, land acquisition, and development plans across these bodies introduces delays due to different bureaucratic processes



## Funding Gaps

Despite receiving grants from NOAA and other agencies, the long-term nature of the park's transformation requires consistent financial support. Economic priorities may shift over time, resulting in budget constraints that delay progress. Additionally, the Chicago Park District's capital improvement plan focuses on numerous projects, meaning Park 566 competes with other city parks for resources



# Political and regulatory reason for its failure

## Political and Institutional Complications

Park 566's development has also been affected by broader political and institutional hurdles, particularly related to **zoning and land use policies**. Historically, the area has been designated as part of the Calumet Industrial Corridor, limiting its transformation into a green space. Efforts to change the area's industrial identity and to address environmental justice issues have faced resistance from both the city and industrial interests



## Community and Environmental Justice

There is significant community concern about environmental justice in the area. The Southeast Side of Chicago, where Park 566 is located, has long been burdened by polluting industries, disproportionately impacting **minority communities**. Local advocacy groups have raised concerns that the city has not done enough to mitigate the environmental impacts on these communities while trying to develop the park. This has led to tensions between city officials, developers, and local residents



During February and March of 2015, Chicago Park District hosted three meetings, aimed at developing a vision for Park 566 and to build consensus for potential use.



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# Thank you!

## Q&A