

OPENLANDS PROJECT



PRESENTS AN OPEN SPACE PLAN FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.

In 1909, Daniel Burnham co-authored an ingenious plan for Chicago and Northeastern Illinois.

A key part of his vision, and of others before him, was to provide a connected system of open land—parks, forest preserves, boulevards—throughout the metropolitan area to provide peaceful, interconnected spaces for anyone seeking refuge from hectic everyday urban life.

Unfortunately, only part of this plan was ever realized. But the portion that was has helped give Chicago its unique and vibrant identity, an identity we all take pride in.

Today, there is still a chance to build upon the work that Burnham began.

But it must happen now if we are to save our remaining open spaces. To that end, Openlands Project announces its 21st Century Open Space Plan.

A NETWORK OF LIVING LAND IN NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS. The 21st Century Open Space Plan will add thousands of acres of green open spaces to existing holdings. We envision a thousand miles of greenbelts linking parks, gardens, forest preserves and other open spaces, all within the reach of everyone. In other words, the plan will create a network of living land in Northeastern Illinois.

We intend to make this living network a reality by:

1. Saving sizable, diverse parcels of open spaces in outlying areas.

2. Greening the city through tree-planting and reclaiming derelict, vacant land for new gardens and parks.

3. Connecting new and existing open spaces to form ribbons of green, called "greenways," throughout the region—adding to the 300 miles of greenways already existing.

Once the plan is in place, strolls down tree-lined nature trails will become commonplace in hundreds of communities. Neighborhood gardens will blossom. And activities such as

hiking, bicycling, canoeing and enjoying nature will be easily accessible throughout this large metropolitan area.

All in all, the opportunities for recreation will be as diverse as the lands themselves.

But as beneficial as our 21st Century Plan is to Northeastern Illinois, the chance to enact it is running out.

Careful planning and coordinating will be necessary to accomplish our task in the face of predicted growth in this region.

But it is possible to achieve.

Forecasts of future development in metropolitan Chicago predict that by the year 2010, an area larger than the city of Chicago will be lost to explosive growth.

In fact, the effects can already

be seen today. Shopping malls now stand where prairies once flourished. Office buildings cover wetlands. Concrete replaces rich forest undergrowth.

Not only has this resulted in a shortage of open space (of major cities, Chicago ranks among the lowest in open space per capita), it has meant severe environmental consequences as well. Flooding now too frequently occurs because the developed land can no longer naturally absorb rainfall. Wildlife habitats are disappearing, and along with them, the natural beauty of the region.

And every day we wait, the 21st Century Plan remains only a dream. We need your help to make this vision a reality.

Supporting our work on the 21st Century Open Space Plan is your chance to improve the environment right here in your own back yard. By becoming an Openlands Project member, you will help us carry on our long-standing tradition of preserving open space in Northeastern Illinois for public enjoyment.

But don't let time or precious open space slip away. Become a member today. The sooner you help, the sooner we can not only save our priceless land, but return life to it.

**OPENLANDS PROJECT.
RETURNING LIFE TO THE LAND.**



WHO WE ARE.

Since forming in 1963, Openlands Project has been a leader in preserving open spaces for public use here in Northeastern Illinois.

By uniting diverse public and private forces, we've been able to serve as conservation advocates, negotiators, technical experts and educators.

As a result, we've been able to save and return to life over 18,000 acres of land.

- Lands such as the 51-mile Illinois Prairie Path, the nation's first rail-to-trail conversion.
- The 120-mile Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, the first greenway of its kind.
- And significant areas of unplowed prairie and such natural rarities as the Volo Bogs.

HOW WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THE PLAN.

To complete the 21st Century Open Space Plan, we will continue to work in concert with our affiliates, public agencies, civic groups and dedicated citizens to:

1. Identify opportunities to form greenways. And then cultivate and manage their development from inception to completion.
2. Acquire land for greenways and other open spaces through our affiliate, CorLands, by using innovative preservation techniques, which not only save land but also millions of taxpayer dollars.
3. Develop, through our affiliate, Wetlands Research, Inc., new technologies for restoring wetlands as part of a joint venture with the Lake County Forest Preserve District.
4. Re-green Chicago neighborhoods by preserving and expanding the urban forest and transforming derelict land into community gardens.
5. Shape public policies by educating the general public and advocating legislation sensitive to conservation issues.

Openlands Project dedicates the 21st Century Open Space Plan for Northeastern Illinois to Dorothy and Gaylord Donnelley to honor their lifetime commitment to the environment.

THE PLAN

AN OPEN SPACE PLAN FOR THE 21ST CENTURY.

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THE 21ST CENTURY OPEN SPACE PLAN.

In 1909, Daniel Burnham coauthored a plan for the Chicago Area. It was ingenious—and farsighted. It aimed to create a vibrant and liveable city. A major part of the plan was the creation of large interconnected open spaces throughout the metropolitan area.

Much of our existing park system drew its inspiration from Burnham's plan. The 21st Century Plan draws upon what needs to be done.

In green are the open lands the Burnham plan helped inspire—our existing open spaces and greenways.

In yellow are the new open lands envisioned in the 21st Century Plan. There will be new parks, forest preserves and greenways throughout Northeastern Illinois.

Once in place, the elements of the 21st Century Plan will protect the beauty of thousands of acres in nine counties and form a diverse network of living land.

July 1991



