

# Protect, Preserve and Expand our Green Legacy: Chicago Riverfront Trail



Richard Mariner

## REGIONAL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Our region's communities are connected through a network of open spaces and natural areas — greenways and trails, wetlands, parks and forest preserves — from southeastern Wisconsin through Illinois to northwestern Indiana.

A century ago, Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett unveiled their Plan of Chicago, a framework for growth in the greater Chicago area. Their vision included a network of forest preserve districts, open spaces and trails that laid the foundation for the green infrastructure that so enriches the quality of life in our three-state Chicago metropolis.

## GREEN LEGACY PROJECTS

One of the priority goals of the Burnham Plan Centennial is to make real progress in closing important gaps in the region's green infrastructure, and to build momentum for creating the nation's greenest region during the next 100 years. Across the metropolitan area, the Burnham Plan Centennial and the nonprofit organization Openlands have identified more than 20 "Green Legacy" projects that close some of these critical gaps. When completed, these projects will help to:

- Complete Our Region's Trail System
- Connect Us to Our Rivers and Streams
- Expand Neighborhood Green Space
- Protect Our Shoreline
- Preserve Regionally Significant Open Space

## CHICAGO RIVERFRONT TRAIL

On June 19, 2009 the City of Chicago opened the first section of the Chicago Riverwalk — between Michigan Avenue and Wabash Avenue and under the Michigan Avenue bridge. By retrofitting the riverfront to give pedestrians direct river access and green space in the heart of downtown, Chicago's City's Green Legacy Project is advancing the next generation of public shoreline — the river's edge -- to provide health and recreation as well as aesthetic and economic development benefits. The Michigan Avenue Bridge designed by Plan of Chicago co-author Edward Bennett is a major legacy of the Plan, and the under-bridge connection ushers in a new era of connected public space.

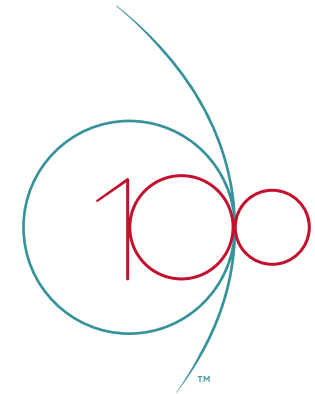


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The Burnham Plan Centennial year is also the 10th anniversary of the "Chicago River Corridor Development Plan," a plan for public and private development along a highly diverse 22-mile river corridor running through one of North America's densest urban areas. The plan also achieves the two Green Legacy goals of connecting us to our rivers and streams and expanding neighborhood green space by creating public access to the river's edge via a continuous greenway along at least one bank. Protecting and restoring riverbank landscaping and pre-development natural habitat will promote economic development and enhance quality of life along a once-industrial Chicago River.



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The Chicago Riverfront Trail partners include the city of Chicago. All of the Burnham Plan Centennial Green Legacy Projects build on many years of hard work by civic organizations, community residents, foundations and government. They are the enduring legacy of Daniel Burnham's Plan of Chicago, are critical to the long-term health of the region, and serve as catalysts for improving our quality of life over the next 100 years.

For more information about the Burnham Plan Centennial and its Green Legacy Projects visit

[burnhamplan100.org](http://burnhamplan100.org)

# BURNHAM PLAN CENTENNIAL GREEN LEGACY PROJECTS

- **COMPLETE OUR REGION'S TRAIL SYSTEM**
  - Burnham Greenway
  - Calumet-Sag Trail
  - Fox River Trail
  - Kankakee Riverfront Trail
  - Marquette Greenway Trail
  - Old Plank Road Trail
  
- **CONNECT US TO OUR RIVERS AND STREAMS**
  - Chicago Riverwalk
  - Little Calumet River Water Trail
  
- **EXPAND NEIGHBORHOOD GREEN SPACE**
  - Bloomington Trail
  - Englewood New ERA Trail
  
- **PROTECT OUR SHORELINE**
  - Lake Michigan Water Trail
  - Last 4 Miles
  - Marquette Plan
  - Openlands Lakeshore Preserve
  - Waukegan Lakefront
  
- **PRESERVE OPEN SPACE**
  - Calumet Open Space Reserve
  - Deer Grove Preserve
  - Hack-ma-tack Reserve
  - Kankakee Sands
  - Lockport-Joliet Heritage Park
  - Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie
  - Rock Run Greenway
  
- Existing and Proposed Trails
  
- Water Trails
  
- Green Infrastructure

