Annual Luncheon & Conference Focuses on \textit{Rethinking the Role of Chicago’s Parks: Parks as Democracy}?

Nearly 250 park enthusiasts joined Friends of the Parks for our Annual Luncheon & Conference at Roosevelt University on June 9 and 10. This year’s theme was \textit{Rethinking the Role Of Chicago’s Parks: Parks as Democracy?} Together, we learned about the history of parks as democratic spaces, formed new relationships, and developed plans for future park advocacy.

The conference opened with a festive picnic-style luncheon. While we dined, a fantastic group of “soapbox performers” entertained and educated us in the tradition of the historic Bughouse Square Debates at Washington Square Park. Among the performers were FOTP board member Paul Boyd, who graced us with the words (and attire!) of Daniel Burnham, and Timuel Black, who inspired us with stories of Washington Park’s impact on him as a young man and of the fight for racial equality at Rainbow Beach.

During the luncheon, we also honored two park champions: Julia Bachrach, who was presented with the “Leon Despres Lifetime Commitment to Parks Award,” and Alicia Pond, who was presented with the inaugural “Erma Tranter Award for Service & Commitment to Friends of the Parks.” Julia Bachrach recently retired from the Chicago Park District, where she worked as the Historian and Preservationist for nearly three decades. She continues to write about the history of American landscape architecture, lead park tours, and give lectures on preservation planning. Alicia Pond has been a dedicated member of FOTP for more than two decades, supporting the organization with her financial generosity and serving on the policy committee, the executive committee, and the board. While accepting her award, Alicia noted, “Our parks can truly be considered a small-d democratic treasure... We are all inhabitants and stewards of parks.”

(continued on p. 7)

Speak Up for Green Space: Chicago Park District Announces Comprehensive Planning Process for Jackson Park

While Friends of the Parks has expressed its disappointment that the Obama Presidential Center will be located in a park, Friends of the Parks has repeatedly and vociferously called for a true, transparent, comprehensive park planning process for Jackson Park and South Shore Park through which local residents and Chicagoans can provide community input. Therefore, Friends of the Parks considers it a victory that the Chicago Park District and the City of Chicago have announced a planning process to do an updated Framework Plan for Jackson Park, South Shore Park, and Washington Park. Now is the time to speak up for green space!

The Park District and the City announced that they would hold community meetings to discuss the future of Jackson and South Shore Parks “in light of the addition of the Obama Presidential Center and related park improvements.” A series of three public meetings were held in late June, one at the South Shore Cultural Center, one at Hyde Park High School, and one during Alderman Leslie Hairston’s ward meeting at La Rabida

Plans are underway for the construction of the Obama Center and other new developments in Jackson Park.
Love Your Mother Earth: 5,000 Volunteers Make Earth Day a Success!

Friends of the Parks is grateful to each and every volunteer who contributed to the success of our 28th Annual Earth Day Parks and Preserves Clean-up: Love Your Mother Earth!

The incredible Earth Day achievements include:

- 110 clean-ups in Chicago Parks (on Earth Day) and 25 clean-ups in Forest Preserves (throughout April), for a total of 135 clean-ups.
- More than 5,000 volunteers worked together to clean and beautify parks throughout the city, just as part of Earth Day.
- Many site captains noted that this event was a great inspiration for future stewardship opportunities and community engagement programs in their parks.

This is an amazing feat, and it would not have not been possible without all of you—members, volunteers, park advisory councils, park partner organizations, community organizations, partner organizations, our generous sponsors, and everyone who cares about parks. We are especially grateful to our site captains for their extraordinary leadership and dedication to stewardship. Aside from being a fun event, Earth Day truly makes a difference in the quality of green space in Chicago and the engagement of local residents with their parks.

Here at Friends of the Parks, we celebrate our parks all year long. Earth Day is just the kickoff to the summer volunteer season and to a full calendar of park-related programming. We hope that you think of Earth Day in a similar way—as a chance to reconnect with your local park and as the beginning of a long-term relationship. Public green spaces depend on our constant care and advocacy, but they reward us generously with their gifts of fresh air, open skies, diverse wildlife, safe play places, and strong communities.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities and other ways to get involved with Friends of the Parks’ ongoing programs, visit fotp.org/get-involved.
Dear friend of the parks,

A little more than one year ago, we came to the successful climax of Friends of the Parks’ fight to save Chicago’s lakefront from the Lucas Museum. And as I write this note, we are celebrating the small victory of winning a comprehensive park planning process for Jackson Park, South Shore Park, and Washington Park, while organizing to make sure it’s meaningful.

Similar to this time last year, we are hearing from those of you who applaud our stance and those who wish we’d taken another approach.

We know that our members and friends do not all have the same opinion on every single park issue. But we applaud any and all Chicagoans who are taking notice of our parks and considering how to engage. Whether it’s the park planning process or mulching a tree or raising funds for a new playground or taking a walk in the woods, we believe that your involvement with Chicago’s parks is key them being and remaining true public assets.

We also just wrapped up our “Parks as Democracy?” luncheon and conference, at which many of you gathered with us to explore the statement: “parks are democratic spaces.” From the perspective of landscape architects’ roles in making parks approachable and accessible to the masses; to community engagement to ensure public participation through the park advisory council system; to mobilizing neighbors to articulate the need and fight for new parks in underserved neighborhoods; to asking what it means when new park investments contribute to displacing long-time neighbors, we examined the theme from various points of view. Through the luncheon panel, the conference workshops, and the On the Table dialogues presented in partnership with The Chicago Community Trust, the On the Table “Your Voice Matters” theme rang loud and clear.

While we review and synthesize the feedback from all of the above conversations, we have yet more opportunities to offer your opinions about Chicago’s parks as well as the work of Friends of the Parks!

Staff is engaged in a Listening Tour process while our board of directors has begun strategic planning conversations. So watch for a Listening Tour meeting near you and/or an invitation to a one-on-one strategic planning interview or focus group to solicit your input.

And absolutely everyone is invited to fill out our strategic planning questionnaire. Complete it by July 31 for the chance to win a Friends of the Parks goodie bag, including a complimentary 2018 individual membership! You can do it on-line here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FOTPExternalSurvey or contact Sandra Del Toro at (312) 857-2757 x1 to get a hard copy that you can fill out by hand and return by mail.

Meanwhile, don’t forget to make your voice heard as part of the Obama Presidential Center planning process and any and all other parks issues that interest you! The more of us that are speaking up for open space, the better!

In partnership,

Juanita Irizarry
Executive Director

Charles Staples, a long-time member and donor to Friends of the Parks, was recently honored on Wednesday, May 3, at a VIP ceremony and the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert which was dedicated to him for his decades of volunteer service to the City of Chicago and “The People’s Palace.” Mr. Staples played a significant role in the campaign to save the Chicago Cultural Center in the 1960s and 70s and he volunteers to this day, providing visitor information in the Washington Street Lobby. The Cultural Center he helped save is the host each quarter to our Netsch Lecture series.

Congratulations, Mr. Staples!
PROGRAMMING

Park Tours Get People Walking and Talking Across Chicago

Friends of the Parks was delighted to team up this spring with Friends of Downtown, the official organizer of Jane’s Walk Chicago, to support free guided tours in parks and neighborhoods across the city. The tours were part of the international Jane’s Walk weekend event.

Jane’s Walk is based on the philosophies of Jane Jacobs (1916-2006), an urban activist whose writings championed a community-based approach to city planning. The tours are walking conversations that get people to explore their cities and connect with their neighborhoods. Each walk is led by a local volunteer. Leaders not only share their own knowledge but also encourage discussion and participation among the walkers. In 2016, more than 1,000 walks took place in 212 cities and 36 countries across 6 continents.

Chicago has participated in the event since 2013. This year, Friends of the Parks helped host and promote tours at natural and historic sites all over the city, including the Dunning Read Conservation Area, The 606, Jackson Park (at night!), the DuSable Heritage Corridor, Grand Crossing Park, the Pullman National Monument, Ping Tom Memorial Park, and the Montrose Lakefront. In total, Jane’s Walk Chicago offered 27 free, community-led walks. We heard from several leaders that their walks were full and that many positive new connections were made.

Later in May, Friends of the Parks hosted our own spring bike tour of Humboldt Park, The 606, and Palmer Square Park. Led by Tom Drebenstedt, chair of FOTP’s Park Partners Advisory Committee, and John Paige, board member of the Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail PAC, the leisurely ride was replete with history about the parks, the boulevard system, and landscape architecture. Talk along the trail included a discussion of the historic visions of William LeBaron Jenney and Jens Jensen, as well as an exploration of current trends in urban planning. Together, we learned how our public spaces evolve as our city evolves. For example, just as the historic boulevard system connected great parks, the new Bloomingdale Trail connects great neighborhoods.

Friends of the Parks is making plans for a full 2017-2018 Tour Series. See the back page for details about a summer tour at Northerly Island.

“No one can find what will work for our cities by looking at … suburban garden cities, manipulating scale models, or inventing dream cities. You’ve got to get out and walk.”

~Jane Jacobs, 1958

Downtown is for People

1. Gené Moreno introducing the DuSable Park walk at the site of the DuSable bust.
2. Paul Boyd leading a Last Four Miles Initiative walk, with a stop at Osterman Beach.
3. A group of walkers in Grand Crossing Park.
4. Nicole Machuca with walkers at Montrose Beach, the site of our Nature Along the Lake youth program.
5. Bikers on our tour of Humboldt Park and The 606.
Seed Grants Spur Creative Investments in Neighborhood Parks

In 2000, Friends of the Parks initiated the Seed Grant program to award small grants to park advisory councils, park partnering organizations, and open space stewards for projects that would directly improve Chicago’s parks. Since then, we have awarded more than $150,000 in grants for cultural programs, movies in the parks, mural projects, recreation equipment, education programs, and garden development—just to name a few examples.

The intent of the Seed Grant program is to build community alliances, enhance green spaces, and support park groups. Through this program, we are able to leverage the dollars that are spent on parks in Chicago, promote and support community groups and community assets, develop leaders who can share their knowledge with others, and provide additional resources to park advisory councils and other park partners.

It is always a tough task for our review committee to select the Seed Grant winners since we are able to fund only a small fraction of the applications we receive. Our modest grants are meant to encourage further investment in our parks through matching funds, hence the name “Seed Grants.” We also provide technical assistance, when possible, to each of our award recipients. We were thrilled to honor our 2017 Seed Grant awardees at the Annual Luncheon in June, and we were especially excited to raise almost half of next year’s Seed Grant starter fund through donations from luncheon attendees.

We continue to be amazed by and proud of the work that park volunteers do. With your support, we hope to fund more of the creative and engaging Seed Grant proposals that come our way in the future.

Photos (from top to bottom)
1. Some of the 2017 Seed Grant winners with FOTP Board President Lauren Moltz.
2. The McKinley Park Advisory Council used their 2016 Seed Grant funds to build easels for a series of free youth painting classes.
3. Growing Power, Inc. used their 2016 Seed Grant funds to buy blueberry bushes for their community farm at Clara Schafer Park.

2017 Seed Grant Recipients

- Ogden Park Advisory Council: $600 for senior programming
- West Chatham Park Advisory Council: $500 for their Summer of Peace Community Picnic
- Rainbow Beach Park Advisory Council: $250 for enhancing their summer camp
- Hamilton Park Advisory Council: $600 for expanding the Englewood Art Fair to include a youth component
- West Ridge Nature Preserve: $500 for citizen science programming
- Ping Tom Park Advisory Council: $600 for the community kayak program
- Kelvyn Park Advisory Council: $250 for gymnastics equipment
- Douglas Park Advisory Council: $600 for special recreation equipment
- Euclid Park Advisory Council: $600 for the Euclid Neighborhood Park Festival
- Chopin Park Advisory Council: $200 for gymnastics equipment
- Pottawatomie Park Advisory Council: $300 for two raised beds in the community garden
Speak Up for Green Space (continued from p. 1)

Children’s Hospital. The Park District said these meetings would “kick off a framework planning process for a new South Lakefront Framework, an updated version of the 1999 framework plan encompassing Jackson Park, Washington Park, and South Shore Cultural Center. Given the addition of the Obama Presidential Center and related park improvements, the framework will first focus on changes to Jackson and South Shore Parks, with a discussion about Washington Park to be held at a later date.”

The original South Lakefront Framework Plan was intended to define the changing needs of the parks, provide a plan to enhance each of the park’s commitments to the neighboring communities, and preserve the historic character of the parks. This plan served as a guide to future improvements within the parks. According to the Park District, “many of these improvements have been completed, including ecosystem restoration and cultural landscape preservation of Wooded Island in Jackson Park, interior and exterior renovations to South Shore Cultural Center in keeping with its historic character, and new neighborhood activity centers such as playgrounds, basketball courts, and a dance studio in Washington Park.”

Friends of the Parks has called for a community-inclusive, transparent, comprehensive planning process for Jackson Park since the Obama Foundation first announced that the presidential center would be built in the park. We reiterated this request when plans for a nearby professional golf course were publicized last fall and again in early May when the preliminary design for the presidential center was unveiled.

Our concerns include the fact that the public has not yet seen the results of the engineering study conducted in relation to the proposed professional golf course in Jackson and South Shore Parks. Furthermore, the local community has not been presented with a thorough analysis of traffic issues that might result from the proposed closure of streets to accommodate both the presidential center and the golf course. In addition, there remain equity questions regarding the funding of the significant infrastructure improvements required for the golf course, the cost to community members to use the course, the need for repairs to existing park amenities, and the replacement of sporting fields slated for removal to make way for the presidential center. Finally, local residents have great concerns about ensuring that benefits from the center accrue to the immediate community and that longtime park neighbors are not displaced by broader developments in the area.

Jackson Park provides a much-needed oasis of green space on the city’s South Side. It is critical that this sanctuary remain physically and financially accessible to all of the local residents who use its amenities for recreation, relaxation, and community building. As FOTP Executive Director Juanita Irizarry said in our statement on the presidential center’s design, “We now have a rare opportunity to honor the spirit and design of Jackson Park’s landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted—who believed deeply in parks as democratic spaces—as well as the President’s and Mrs. Obama’s stated desire to establish the Obama Presidential Center as a promoter and convener of citizen participation and engagement.” Irizarry noted in an interview with the Chicago Tribune that if park amenities become too expensive for the average person in the community, it raises the question of whether a park is truly public. “Whether it’s a golf course or other proposed amenity in a park, when is that line crossed?” she asked. “If you honor the spirit of Olmsted, are you marching away from that if you charge for things?”

The time is ripe for opening the door to greater community conversation. Although we must agree to disagree with the Obama Foundation on their decision to build the presidential center in a park, we are grateful that our pleas for a comprehensive planning process have been heard. We intend to speak up for green space for all of Chicago’s residents.
Parks as Democracy? (continued from p. 1)

A phenomenal lineup of keynote panelists helped us kick off our exploration of parks as democratic spaces. Michael Strautmanis, Vice President for Civic Engagement at the Obama Foundation, cautioned that “civic engagement means disagreement and it means messiness... You can’t let that deter you.” He said his job is “to create space for future generations.” Terry Guen, principal and founder of Terry Guen Design Associates and Master Landscape Architect of Chicago’s Millennium Park, warned that nothing happens quickly in the field of landscape architecture. She noted that Millennium Park was an idea 25 years in the making and advised focusing on the long game. She said she strives “to create places that are alive.” Kimberly Wasserman, Executive Director of the Little Village Environmental Justice Organization, emphasized the importance of community involvement in park decision-making. She described how the residents of Little Village spent five years designing the neighborhood’s first park to make sure it met local needs. The park opened in 2014 on a 23-acre site and now houses the largest playground in the city, serving the 5,000 children under the age of five who live within a quarter mile of the park. Community members patrol the park daily, ensuring it remains a safe space for all. “Our young people own and run that park,” said Kimberly.

These important discussions carried over into “On The Table” dialogues, which we hosted with the support of materials from the Chicago Community Trust. We were proud to see a diverse group of Chicagoans coming together to discuss the city’s parks and generate ideas for building a more democratic park system. Among the topics discussed were the bylaws imposed on Park Advisory Councils by the Chicago Park District, the lack of teenage and senior programming in some parks, the struggle to engage more community members with their local parks, and the question of who really owns the parks.

Breakout sessions with an array of guest speakers helped everyone delve deeper into these topics. For example, during a panel titled “Assessing the Bloomingdale Trail: Impacts of The 606,” researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago and DePaul University discussed preliminary findings about who is using the trail and how it has impacted neighborhood housing prices. A member of the local community then discussed a proposed housing policy to stave off the rapid displacement of longtime residents in the area. Other sessions examined the efforts of “parktivists” across the city to make their voices heard, the outlook for big projects like the Last Four Miles Initiative and Great Rivers Chicago, the lessons learned from efforts to secure Community Benefits Agreements, the role of Park Advisory Councils in advocating for their communities, the best models for maintaining local control of linear parks, and the pros and cons of hosting concerts in parks. The weekend also included a free showing of the WTTW documentary “10 Parks That Changed America” and a set of working group meetings on key park issues.

So what is the answer—Parks as Democracy? At Friends of the Parks, we know there isn’t just one answer. There are many. These answers lie in our ability to participate in democracy itself—the freedom to ask questions, to learn from each other, and to join together in building strong communities centered around beautiful parks. Thank you for joining us as we continue to explore this question and foster an exciting future for Chicago’s parks!
Planning Tomorrow’s Parks Today: A Look at Park-Related Projects Across the City

From the Obama Center in Jackson Park (p. 1) to the North Lake Shore Drive redesign (below), it’s a busy time for anyone interested in the future of Chicago’s parks. Friends of the Parks is at the table, listening to community members, participating in planning discussions, and advocating for parks throughout the city. Here are just a few of the projects we’re monitoring:

NORTH LAKE SHORE DRIVE

As a member of the "Redefine the Drive" task force, Friends of the Parks has provided input to the proposed plans to redesign North Lake Shore Drive from Grand Ave. all the way up to Hollywood Ave. The latest framework, intended to protect the drive from winter storms and improve traffic flow at the Chicago Ave. intersection, include sinking a portion of the drive underground and adding 70 acres of new lakefront parkland. We’re excited about the potential enhancements to green space, bike trails, public transit, and lakefront access, but we’re wary of promoting the idea of Lake Shore Drive as a super highway and reducing drivers’ views of precious green and blue space. Mark your calendars for a July 12th open house on the process. You can also find updates at northlakeshoredrive.org.

NORTH BRANCH INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR

The 760-acre North Branch Industrial Corridor is the first of the city’s 26 industrial corridors to receive an updated plan. Sterling Bay, LLC is now poised to proceed with a nearly 40-acre development centered on the former Finkl Steel plant. The plans for this area suggest that the site can expect high-density, mixed-use developments with trails and other open spaces along the river. However, it remains unclear how much of the riverfront will be publicly accessible. Friends of the Parks has joined a coalition of local residents, elected officials, and regional groups calling for increased public parkland, including recreational fields, within the corridor. In a joint statement, the coalition noted that Lincoln Park has seen a 65 percent increase in the number of children since 2000, overtaxing Oz Park, while Logan Square and Wicker Park residents are even more “park-starved.” The modernization plan does not sufficiently correct that deficit, which will only grow worse as more residents move into the newly developed area.

LAKE CALUMET

Friends of the Parks supported more than 30 community groups this spring in advocating for public access to the Illinois International Port District’s property at Lake Calumet. Community members have long sought access to the underused land, which lies gated behind a high fence. In late May, the state assembly passed HB 1797, which if signed by the governor, will grant the port forgiveness for $15 million plus interest in debt to state taxpayers. Local residents had urged legislators to oppose the bill unless the port agreed to make some of its acreage available to the public for rowing, hiking, fishing, and other recreational activities. Community activists are now monitoring the port’s development plans, which include upgrading its infrastructure and potentially building a marina and a hotel. In an interview with WBEZ, Tom Shepherd of the Southeast Environmental Task Force voiced his concern that the port will build “a playground for people who are well-heeled and not the people in the neighborhood that live on my block.”

RED LINE EXTENSION

Friends of the Parks is monitoring the potential park impacts of the Chicago Transit Authority’s proposal to extend the Red Line from the existing terminal at 95th/Dan Ryan to 130th Street. The 5.3-mile extension would include four new stations near 103rd Street, 111th Street, Michigan Avenue, and 130th Street. There are currently two proposed routes, each of which would cross through parkland. Along the east route, the elevated track would overlap 0.7 acres of Wendell Park and 0.9 acres of Block Park. Along the west route, the track would overlap 1.9 acres of Fernwood Parkway. According to a DNAinfo article, Chicago Park District spokeswoman Jessica Maxey-Faulkner said, “Any parkland lost in the extension will be replaced and could receive additional enhancements.”
**Two New Staff Members Join Friends of the Parks**

We are pleased to welcome two new staff members to Friends of the Parks: Sandra Del Toro, Deputy Director of Program and Resource Development, and Sarah Hess, Office Manager.

**SANDRA DEL TORO**
Ms. Del Toro joined Friends of the Parks in early 2017. As Deputy Director, she oversees program and resource development, as well as policy and advocacy strategies. Prior to joining Friends of the Parks, Ms. Del Toro served in non-profit leadership roles spanning academic and community settings. She has more than 15 years of experience in non-profit leadership, with expertise in development, grant writing, and grant-funded programs. She has additional experience in government and community relations, public policy and advocacy, staff supervision, strategic planning, and budget oversight.

Ms. Del Toro previously served as Vice President of Development and Communications for Mujeres Latinas en Acción, the nation’s oldest Latina-serving and Latina-led organization. At Mujeres, she worked with staff and institutional leadership to leverage nearly $1 million in federal funds for program expansions and new initiatives, including the establishment of a play therapy program for child witnesses of domestic violence and programs establishing the institution as a national leader in cultural competency in mental health. As a Senior Education Organizer for the Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP), Ms. Del Toro expanded grant initiatives by $3.7 million and developed school-based programming designed to encourage parental leadership development, teacher quality and retention, and teacher and family engagement. At the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Ms. Del Toro led state-level policy advocacy.

Ms. Del Toro received her Master’s degree in Public Policy Studies from the University of Chicago and her undergraduate degree from Stanford University. She was a fellow in the 2012 class of the National Hispana Leadership Institute, which included studies at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the Center for Creative Leadership. She is bilingual in Spanish.

**SARAH HESS**
Ms. Hess is thrilled to be working with Friends of the Parks. A proud Cleveland native, she has long had a personal and professional commitment to inclusive urban development and green space accessibility. She has experience in non-profit and arts management, having provided programming and development support to environmental and neighborhood organizations, including Parkworks, Inc. (now, LAND Studio), Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, Earth Day Coalition, and Campus District, Inc. In addition, Ms. Hess spent 12 years on production teams at the non-profit Near West Theatre and six years as the Performance Director of the nationally recognized Kringle’s Inventionarium. Ms. Hess has a B.A. in Political Science from Ohio University.
Friends of the Parks Donors at or above $250, January 1st — June 30, 2017

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Thank You!
To all who have donated over the past 40+ years, we offer our sincere thanks. We look forward to the next 40 years with your support!

FOTP’s Lauren Moltz and Juanita Irizarry with special guest Timuel Black at the Annual Luncheon & Conference in June (p. 1).

Geoff Smith of DePaul University discussing the Bloomingdale Trail’s impact on area housing prices during a conference session (p. 1).
**Executive Committee**
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Sarah Hess, Office Manager
Gené Moreno, Project Consultant
Noah Temaner-Jenkins, Grant Writer
Elizabeth Cooke, Newsletter Writer
Gabriel Najera, Strategic Planning Consultant
Daniel La Spata, Planning and Policy Intern

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**Special Appeal to Members**

Dear Friends,

Our parks need us, and we need you!

We know that not everyone has the time or ability to sit in on Chicago Park District meetings and ask tough questions about the city’s funding priorities. Or to train Park Advisory Councils on how to advocate effectively for their neighborhoods’ needs. Or to teach local middle schoolers about the rich natural resources in their backyards.

That’s why we’re here. To be where you can’t be. To listen to those who so often go unheard. And to amplify the voices of everyone who is doing the hard, grassroots work of fighting for local parks and preserves. Whether it’s attending community meetings about the Obama Presidential Center in Jackson Park (p. 1), monitoring plans for the North Branch Industrial Corridor (p. 8), or getting our hands dirty with Earth Day clean-ups (p. 2), we are fighting for our parks every day.

But we can’t do it alone. Your commitment to a safe, equitable, thriving park system gives us the tools we need to train and inspire park champions all across the city. We believe strongly in the power of parks to build healthy communities—and in the power of people to protect those parks.

Please consider renewing or upping your membership contribution today. Your donation will help us plan our policy and programming goals for the rest of 2017 and into 2018. With your help, we can ensure that Chicago’s parks remain a beautiful place of rest and recreation for centuries to come.

Thank you for all you do,

Friends of the Parks

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**Help preserve Chicago’s parks.**

Join our 4,000 members for 40 years challenge!

- $50 Individual
- $75 Family
- $100 Corporate/Steward
- $250 Conserver
- $500 Sustainer
- $1,000 Benefactor

Name: ____________________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________
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Email: ____________________________________________________

You can also join or renew online at www.fotp.org.
Friends of the Parks is a 41-year-old non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve, protect, improve, and promote the use of parks and open spaces in Chicago for the enjoyment of all residents and visitors.

Explore Northerly Island with Friends of the Parks

Daniel Burnham had a vision for Northerly Island as a park dating back to 1909, but the potential for private use affected the land for almost 100 years. Beginning in 1996, Friends of the Parks and the Chicago Lakefront Coalition advocated for the conversion of Meigs Field, a single runway airport on Northerly Island, into a park. In a report called the “People’s Case for Northerly Island Park,” they argued that the land would provide greater public benefit as a park than as an airfield. Nearly a decade later, in 2015, the battle was won and a new eco-park was officially unveiled. Many now cite Northerly Island as an oasis in the hustle and bustle of downtown.

Join Tom Drebenstedt of Friends of the Parks for a guided walk through this historic park on Sunday, August 6th at 10:00 a.m. Along the way, you will learn about the many past and present visions for Northerly Island and discuss whether Burnham’s vision can be seen in the island’s new park. The cost is $10 for members and $20 for non-members. To RSVP or request additional information, please email info@fotp.org.

Stay tuned for more park tours later this year!