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CHICAGO SOUTH PARK COMMISSION

REPORT

ACCOMPANYING PLAN FOR LAYING OUT

THE

SOUTH PARK

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OLMSTED, VAUX & CO.

Landscape Architects

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# REPORT

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TO THE CHICAGO SOUTH PARK COMMISSION:

*Gentlemen:* We present for consideration at this time a design, prepared under your instructions, for laying out the three tracts of land which are comprised under the title of the South Park, and before proceeding to describe the special features of our plan, we wish to draw your attention to the leading considerations which have determined its general character.

There are two broad types of public parks, by reference to which the discussion of a plan may be most readily opened. Richmond Park is, for instance, a very useful adjunct of the park system of London, and Fontainebleau of that of Paris, but both are useful in a quite different way from St. James's or the Parc de Monceau; the first being great roaming grounds, to which people go out by railway, generally spending a day in the excursion; the other, garden-like enclosures into which people are constantly strolling in great numbers for a short diversion from the ordinary occupations of the day.

Your territory lies at the distance of six miles from the center of business of Chicago, and quite beyond its corporate limits. Its neighborhood is mainly an uncultivated country, much of it unenclosed and sparsely inhabited—the thousand acres of the park site having included not more than a dozen small dwellings.

Under these circumstances, it may be thought that the park to be formed upon it will not be much used by the citizens of Chicago, except as a distant suburban excursion ground. The population of the city might indeed be doubled several times, and if it should be built as compactly as most great towns hitherto have been, and the advance of building should spread equally to the North, South and West, the South Park would, undoubtedly, still be in the midst of a rural district.

Against any such presumption, however, stands the fact that in all large and flourishing cities throughout the world, there has been manifest of late, a strong and steadily increasing tendency to abandon the old, cramped manner of building, and to adopt a style of dwellings with individual and villa-like characteristics that involve a greater ground space, and a corresponding tendency at the same time to widen streets and public places, and separate domestic more and more distinctly from commercial quarters. This tendency is especially strong where it has free play in American communities, and except where it goes so far as to lead people to dispense with appliances of health, which, on account of their costliness, require a certain degree of density of building, there is abundant evidence that it is, in the long run, economical, beneficent and favorable to the prosperity of the whole community. This being the case, it may be observed incidentally, that in designing a park in the environs of a rapidly growing town, it is proper to have in view, as a secondary purpose, the general improvement of the neighborhood with reference to its healthfulness as a residence, as, for instance, by facilitating its drainage.

In Chicago the banks of the navigable streams are unattractive for domestic purposes and cannot fail to be required for commerce. Special business quarters may hereafter grow up in some directions at a considerable distance from them, but if so a more or less complete connection of business streets will soon follow between the two, and under the operation of the tendency to separate domestic from commercial life, the intermediate districts will become less and less valuable for dwellings. The most desirable domestic quarters therefore in the

early future are likely to be those in which building has never been compact and which are in no danger of being invaded for commercial purposes.

In regard to the district about your site there are, in the first place, nowhere near it any special inducements to the rise or extension of a commercial quarter; in the second place, the interpolation of the large closed spaces of the Park, turning transportation out of direct channels, will be obstructive to business, and finally, the advantage which will come with the Park for securing domestic comfort can hardly fail to soon establish a special reputation for the neighborhood and give assurance of permanence to its character as a superior residence quarter.

There are other circumstances which it is unnecessary to specify here which add weight to these considerations, and it thus becomes highly probable that before any proper plan of a park designed at the present time shall be fully realized, not only will a large number of the citizens of Chicago be living much nearer to your site than now, but it will be in the center of a really populous and wealthy district. In addition then, to its holiday use by the whole body of citizens, a large number must be expected to resort to it for their daily exercise and recreation. To be well adapted to such habitual use, it will need to have a much greater variety of features and much larger and more varied accommodations than if it were so remote to the population of the city on an average, that few would see it except occasionally and it were only rarely to be used by great numbers, and then as a pic-nic and roving ground.

If it were now to be improved with a view to the latter use only, it would be impossible at a later period to change its character, by the introduction of much enlarged accommodations and new landscape features of interest, without destroying and wasting much of what had first been prepared, and this consideration would probably prevent any but feeble and insufficient changes being made.

Regarding it on the other hand as an urban park, that is to say, as a ground to which large numbers of people will resort every day, rather than as a remote or holiday park, it has to be

considered that it will be but one of a series of such grounds and will be further from the present town centre than any of the others. It is then a question how far it should be treated purely as a local park.

It is clearly most undesirable that the existing territorial divisions of interest and policy by which all comprehensive improvement of your city are embarrassed should be unnecessarily perpetuated, and with whatever motives the choice has been made of the park sites now fixed in its general plan, present duty is first of all to the whole city. We are bound, that is to say, to look upon the park to be formed on your site simply as one member of a general system of provisions upon which as a whole the health of the city, its attractiveness as a residence and its prosperity will in all future time be largely dependent. In the process of design, therefore, one of the first duties is to study the comparative value of one or another possible function, or class of features or source of interest of each site.

The marked circumstances of the South Park site when compared with the others are, first, the groves of comparatively large trees which it contains; second, the greater spaciousness of two of its divisions; and, third, the longer frontage and greater depth of that division of it which looks upon the Lake.

The first, though it makes the Park more available for certain purposes at an early day, is of little importance with reference to a plan except as it may be an indication that the natural conditions are more favorable than elsewhere for the growth of large trees, and we are of opinion that with skillful management very much better trees than any on the South Park may be grown upon each of the other park sites of the city.

It is an advantage of great space that one part of those who resort to a park for recreation can be engaged in a class of exercises which, in order to be pursued by different parties without clashing, require much breadth of open ground, that another part can look upon the first from a suitable distance with convenience and safety, while a third, interested neither as participants nor spectators, can seclude themselves completely from both and straying into other parts of the Park pursue entire different methods of recreation. Another advantage is

that, without any sacrifice of convenience for the class of exercises first referred to, elements of interest may be multiplied and yet, if the natural features oppose no obstacle, a larger, simpler and more tranquil landscape character be given to the Park as a whole.

Of the other park sites reserved for the future benefit of Chicago but one offers this class of advantages in any degree to compare with that of the South Park, and that, as it should be, is the one which is at the greatest distance from it. The two outer divisions of the South Park being connected more directly, however, and by a division considerably wider than any connecting any other two park divisions of the whole series, it is possible to associate them much more intimately in design than any other two, so that each may in many particulars complement the other and the whole be classed together as one park. If we add to this possibility those which grow out of its situation with reference to the Lake, there can be little room for doubt that you have the opportunity, and consequently the duty, of adopting a scale of scenery and at certain points a scale of public accommodations larger than can elsewhere be attempted, without a restriction upon design with reference to depth and variety of sylvan elements of interest, which would be unfortunate.

By a course of reasoning thus barely indicated, but which will be more evident as we proceed with the consideration of details, we are led to think that, while the local urban use of the South Park will not be unimportant, its availability for general purposes in which the city as a whole will be interested is considerably greater than that of any other of the sites which have been reserved for parks.

It follows that the South Park should belong to a third class, of which the type in London is found in Hyde Park with Kensington Gardens, and in Paris in the Bois de Boulogne; a class which should not be a compromise between the two extremes first named, but in which the advantages of each should be completely reconciled and united.

That some one park will be required to assume this position and will be more or less satisfactorily adapted to it, may, from

the experience of other cities, be assumed and that neither of the others is as well suited to the purpose, must, we believe upon a comparison of situations, outlines and topographical conditions, be admitted.

Before discussing what should be demanded in such a park and the availability for various required provisions of different parts of your ground, it is necessary that the fact should be recognized that none of the sites and no part of any one of the sites which have been reserved for parks at Chicago, would generally elsewhere be recognized as well adapted to the purpose. The undertaking involved in the series is, indeed, a bold one and can be justified only by the conviction that a city of great importance to the world at large—a city which should have a metropolitan character and influence, and to which great numbers of men should be drawn, not only on account of its commercial, but of its scientific, artistic, scholarly, domestic and social advantages—is here to be built upon ground plans now forming and foundations now laying. It is undeniable that it would be a most serious drawback to such a city not to be provided with parks. It is equally undeniable that when the best has been done that is possible, it will be a long time before parks can be formed for it which will compare satisfactorily with such as already have been secured by most important cities of the civilized world. It is a courageous forecast which reasons from these premises that the sooner all that is done that is possible to be done for overcoming this disadvantage of the city is set about, the better.

If this is the justification of the enterprise which in its most important feature it has been given you to inaugurate, it follows that while the immediate reward of those who now plan, prepare and tax themselves for the general good in this matter, should be reasonably consulted, their benefit should not be held of paramount importance, nor should any plan be adopted or anything be done with a view to their gratification, by which a permanent obstacle would be placed in the way of arrangements which would be appropriate and sufficient for a city of several times the present population and wealth of Chicago.

The general class, scope and character of the proposed park having been thus approximately determined, we may proceed to consider the limitations fixed by the conditions of the site upon the design.

The first obvious defect of the site is that of its flatness. That this is to be regretted is undeniable, yet it is a mistake to suppose that a considerable extent of nearly flat ground is inadmissible or undesirable in a great park, or that it must be overcome, at any cost, by vast artificial elevations and depressions, or by covering all the surface with trivial objects of interest.

The Central Park of New York, having been laid out for the most prodigal city in the world, is one of the most costly constructions ever made for public, open air recreation. The view just expressed may then be thought to be strengthened by the fact that one of the largest items in its cost, and unquestionably, one of the most profitable, was that for reducing considerable portions of its surface to a prairie-like simplicity. In our judgment, it still comes far short in this particular of what is chiefly desirable in the principal recreation ground of a large city, in a temperate climate.

It should especially be considered that where there is a broad meadow with ever so little obvious play of surface, an irregular border formed by massive bodies of foliage will in a great degree supply the place in landscape of moderate hills and particularly will this be the case if it contains water in some slight depression, so situated as to double these masses.

Chicago in the future would no doubt be glad if there should have been provided for it, somewhere within the thousand acres of its principal park, a considerable district of a highly picturesque character, a mountain glen with a dashing stream and cascades, for example, but, agreeable as this might be if it were to be obtained by the simple appropriation and development of conditions already existing; as in the valley of Wissahickon at Philadelphia, it would, after all, in a thoroughly well ordered park, be an episode, not essential, and far less useful than a district of low rolling prairie.

There is but one object of scenery near Chicago of special grandeur or sublimity, and that, the Lake, can be made by artificial means no more grand or sublime. By no practical elevation of artificial hills, that is to say, would the impression of the observer in overlooking it be made greatly more profound. The Lake may, indeed, be accepted as fully compensating for the absence of sublime or picturesque elevations of land.

There are three elements of scenery however, which must be regarded as indispensable to a fine park to be formed on your site, the first being turf, the second foliage, the third still water. For each of these you are bound, at the outset, to make the best of your opportunities, because if you do not, posterity will be likely to lay waste what you have done, in order to prepare something better.

Water wells up abundantly a few feet below the surface in nearly all parts of your ground, and may therefore be easily introduced when required in your plan. Turf may also be secured in a few years, by the common agricultural process. But the adequate development of foliage is not so sure and simple a matter.

Great spreading trees, are the distinctive glory of all park scenery in which broad spaces of level greensward are the central features. But park-like great trees are hardly more natural to your conditions than hills, crags, or dashing streams. There is no difficulty in making young trees live and flourish in Chicago, but sooner or later, always before they reach what should be their finest estate, they seem to lose vigor, and a large number come to untimely death. The trees at present on your ground are, many of them, of considerable size, but not one of these has a character which would be of high value in a park. Most of them are evidently struggling for mere existence, and the largest are nearly all decrepid. The unfortunate influences affecting them are of two classes, those which act upon the foliage, and those which act upon the root.

In regard to the first we have seen an effect produced upon tender foliage and twigs by a high wind suddenly coming off

the Lake after a warm day in Spring, so remarkable that if often repeated it could not fail to result in permanent constitutional injury. This and other atmospheric difficulties you cannot expect to lessen, on the contrary, as the fumes, smoke and dust of the town increase, they are likely to be aggravated. The obvious root evils are a cold, wet, sometimes permanently water-soaked soil or sub-soil, and inadequate or unsuitable root food. By reducing the general level of the ground water as far as practicable, the temperature of the soil in your Upper Division may probably be elevated from ten to fifteen degrees of Fahrenheit, and the average length of the season in which wood will grow and ripen may be extended about a month. With an improved ground temperature and deep soil, moderately rich but not at all stimulating, trees may be expected to grow which will possess much greater vigor and powers of resistance and recuperation with reference to harmful atmospheric influences than any hitherto grown under the conditions which naturally prevail near Chicago, and there are many of the most desirable species and varieties which could probably be brought to exhibit their peculiar beauties in the highest degree.

The light mould at present found in some parts of your ground is of that character, the fertility of which is quickly exhausted, and while it should be carefully husbanded is of little permanent value. It will be necessary therefore to bring upon the ground a large amount of surface material to form a moderately rich, wholesome loam, and this operation however tedious and costly, should go before every other but drainage and grading. The turning in of a series of green crops, forced to rankness by stimulating manures, after a dressing of clay, will probably be the most economical way of improving the character of the soil on a large scale.

We have spoken of the advantage which is to be gained by reducing the level of the ground water in the Upper Division. In the Lower Division one-third of all the surface is below the high-water level of the Lake, the greater part of the remainder is much too low, too wet and cold for upland trees to flourish upon it, and adequate drainage is out of the question.

If it should be undertaken to form a large market garden in such a district as this, the first thing to be done would be, if possible, to secure a free outlet through the beach, so that water flowing in from the west would, under no circumstances, be so checked in its outflow as to rise appreciably higher than the Lake. This would be accomplished, if at all, by building out a crib upon the beach, and then opening a channel, the mouth of which would be on its south side. A series of cross channels would then be laid out mainly parallel with and equidistant from one another, the breadth, depth, and distances between them being so adjusted that the material excavated, when thrown out, should be sufficient to raise the surface of all the intermediate ground just so far above the level of the Lake as should be thought necessary for the thrifty growth of the crops proposed to be cultivated.

The same process may be adopted for your purpose, with such modifications as the difference between a park and a vegetable garden requires, the difference being, that in the park the divisions of land and water should have a natural appearance and be interesting in landscape effect, and that they should be adapted to the convenient movement of a large number of persons pursuing recreation in a variety of ways.

Searching for a natural type of what is thus desirable, we look first for local suggestions. The present formation is the result of an encroachment of the shore upon the Lake, and this appears to have occurred first by the formation of a large outer bar, and of minor bars within it, the outer bar rising gradually more and more above the surface, and finally completely separating the water behind it, except perhaps at one or two inlets, from the main Lake. In subsequent storms the outer bar has been more or less broken down, and sand, driven by wave and wind, mixed with some wash from the land side, has gradually filled up the inner basins.

Had the situation been less bleak, had the outer bar been firmer and composed of different material, had the streams flowing in been more rapid and the country swept by them richer in vegetation, and had the climate been hot and moist certain

plants would have taken root upon the shallows, silt would have been caught by them and drift stuff lodged upon them; fish, birds, insects would have made contributions and soil would accumulate, other plants would in time overgrow the first, and, the process continuing, scenery would finally result of a most interesting and fascinating character, that, namely, of the wooded lagoons of the tropics.

You certainly cannot set the madreporæ or the mangrove at work on the banks of Lake Michigan, you cannot naturalize bamboo or papyrus, aspiring palm or waving parasites, but you *can* set firm barriers to the violence of winds and waves, and make shores as intricate, as arborescent and as densely overhung with foliage as any. You can have placid and limpid water within these shores that will mirror and double all above it as truly as any, and thus, if you cannot reproduce the tropical forest in all its mysterious depths of shade and visionary reflections of light, you can secure a combination of the fresh and healthy nature of the North with the restful, dreamy nature of the South, that would in our judgment be admirably fitted to the general purposes of any park, and which certainly could nowhere be more grateful than in the borders of your city, not only on account of the present intensely wide-awake character of its people, but because of the special quality of the scenery about Chicago in which flat and treeless prairie and limitless expanse of lake are such prominent characteristics.

Taste and convenience would require that some portions of the lagoon waters should be broader than the economy of a mere market garden would prescribe, but to avoid great length of haul in filling over the marshy ground, the water spaces would need to be distributed from end to end and from the beach to the rear of the Lower Division.

This course of thought leads towards two important conclusions, viz.: 1st. By any feasible and moderately economical plan of making a public pleasure resort on your Lower Division, water must be so distributed through it that the land will be broken up into comparatively small areas and no great breadth

of green landscape will be available. 2d. Command of the Lake upon a shore line of more than a mile and a half in length; accessibility from the heart of the city by water-passage, and the great extent and necessary ramifications of its interior waters would give such marked distinctions to this part of the Park, that, so long as they were in view, a comparison of it with parks elsewhere, more fortunate in other respects, would be out of the question. For beauty of hill and dale your ground certainly will never be distinguished; it may never be for the grandeur of its trees, but it may have a beauty and an interest of its own such as we have partly indicated, in which the citizens of Chicago for generations to come, shall take a just pride, and all the more so that it has been the result of their fathers' work upon a sand-bar.

In every distinct field of design, however multitudinous the intentions to be served in its details, some one source of interest should dominate, and either by contrast or harmony, all details should be auxiliary to this central interest. In a work of the kind before us there may be—almost necessarily must be—several more or less distinct fields of design, but it is desirable that there should be a studied artistic relation of support by harmony, and of emphasis by contrast of character between the different fields. The element of interest which undoubtedly should be placed first, if possible, in the park of any great city, is that of an antithesis to its bustling, paved, rectangular, walled-in streets; this requirement would best be met by a large meadowy ground, of an open, free, tranquil character. The necessity of sub-dividing the ground by the ramifications of the water system, and of generally planting the shores, if you would gain the beauty or reflections, half-lights, and shaded coves of foliage over water, as we have proposed, will prevent your realizing any considerable breadth of open landscape within your Lower Division. It will be equally impossible within your Middle Division, on account of its narrowness. Fortunately, there is no similar objection to the realization of this desideratum in the Upper Division, the proper general landscape character of which, as well as that of the Lower Division, may thus be considered as determined.

We proceed to consider what is required more specifically in the Lower Division. It naturally divides into two fields of landscape, the exterior Lake expanse with its necessarily simple, raw, storm-lashed foreground, and the interior Lagoon scenery, intricate, sequestered, sylvan and rich in variety of color and play of light and shade, both having the common and continuous element of water. Still, considering this park as the principal recreation ground of the city and one in which more than any other a general attendance from all parts of the city should be expected, invited, and prepared for, the fact remains that the distance to it from the centre and more northern quarters is so long that the access to it by land will be often uninteresting and tedious. Were it to be very much more so, mere approach by land to the Park wholly impracticable, as from Venice to the Lido, the means of access by water and the connection of the Park by water with the heart of the commercial part of the city would be so admirable that under ordinarily favorable conditions of weather, there would be thousands of the very class of citizens whose convenience most needs to be considered, to whom the Park would practically begin at the mouth of the Chicago river. Where great numbers are to be carried short distances, there is no transportation so cheap or so agreeable as that by water, and the time should be expected when the toiling population of Chicago, relieved from work at an early hour on the last of the week, will be carried to the South Park by many tens of thousands at the cost of a few cents. Its advantages in this respect will correspond to those of the Haga Park of Stockholm, one of the most popular and delightful public grounds in the world.

Aside from the actual advantages of access which it thus offers, it is most desirable that whatever sources of interest there may be in the Lake should be as closely as possible associated with those of the Park and be made to appear, as much as possible, part and parcel of the Park. The introduction of artificial water with natural outlines and no perceptible current, so near the great Lake, is, as a matter of Art, not a little hazardous, and to fully insure it against a paltry and childish aspect it is indispensable that the character of the Lagoon as an arm of the

Lake should be distinctly manifest. For this reason the channel between the water of the Lake and the water within the Park should be given importance in the design, so that at all times, even when few or no boats are passing, this privilege of the Park will be felt by land visitors as an important distinction.

The channel must be cut through the beach, the break in it being guarded against the drift of sand from the northward by a pier, which should be fully two hundred feet in length, in order to create a strong eddy at the mouth of the inlet. It must be presumed that in any case the channel will need occasional dredging.

Such a pier would be the most prominent object connecting the Park with the Lake, and experience shows that where an offset into the water from a tame coast has been thus formed people are strongly drawn to gather upon and near it. So well established is this attraction that at many of the places of resort on the English and French coasts, long piers have been built simply for the gratification of visitors.

For these reasons the pier and inlet must be treated as most important member of the design; they should not be thrust into a corner, but located as near to the heart of the Park as possible, and as visitors will inevitably be drawn to the pier special provision should be planned for the comfortable coming together of a large number in connection with it. From the view of the Lake which these would command, the transition should be made easy and natural to some other point, also adapted to the coming together of large numbers, which will have a like central position with reference to the Lagoon.

We wish to present one other class of preliminary considerations before referring to our plans. Among the purposes for which public grounds are used is that of an arena for athletic sports, such as base ball, foot ball, cricket, and running games, such as prisoner's base, and others which are liable to come again much more in fashion than they have been of late. Another is that of a ground for parades, reviews, drills, processions and public meetings and ceremonies in which large spaces are re-

quired. Experience shows that neither upon fields used for these purposes nor on ground where large numbers of people are liable to come together strongly interested in them, is it practicable to guard shrubs and low branching trees from injury. For all these purposes turf is much more favorable to the skill and comfort of those engaged in the exercises and more agreeable to the eye of spectators than gravel; it is also generally much less costly. If at any particular point, however, it is much used it wears out and leaves unsightly and slippery ground in its stead. Consequently it is impossible to keep grounds used for these purposes in decent order unless the open fields of turf are very large and the plantations about them are of an open character, and composed almost wholly of strong, clean trunked trees.

It is also impossible to keep grounds in good order in which the breadths of turf are smaller and decorated with shrubbery and low foliage, if the same freedom of movement and action is permitted in them which it is desirable to allow upon the larger open grounds. Consequently an entirely different scheme of regulations needs to be applied to them. To enable these to be enforced the line between one class of grounds and the other must be sharply defined so that it cannot be passed unconsciously even under excitement.

The distinction between grounds to be used by day only, and grounds to be open night and day, needs also to be considered. It is impossible to make grounds in the midst of large towns which offer numerous places of complete obscurity, safe places of general resort after nightfall. Wherever it has been attempted in Europe or America, decent people have soon been driven from them, and they have become nurseries of crime and immorality.

The tarry vapor which escapes from gas-pipes is poisonous to trees, and grounds which are closely planted, or which abound in shrubs and underwood, cannot be so lighted artificially that their landscape beauty may be enjoyed, or so that those wishing concealment in them can be clearly recognized, and their movements surely followed. For this reason, when such grounds are

not closed at dusk, they require a much larger police force by night than by day, and it is always questionable whether, at best, their advantages for evil purposes do not outweigh those for good.

Disregarding here very small places we thus show a necessity for two classes of grounds, one characterized by broad, nearly level spaces of turf suitable for reviews and athletic exercises, and open plantations offering no coverts, and which may be artificially lighted and safely resorted to after nightfall; the other, not designed to be artificially lighted nor to be used at night, adapted only to quiet and moderate exercises; in which shrubbery, underwood and brooding trees may be common elements of scenery, and if circumstances admit of it, what is technically styled the picturesque in distinction from the simply beautiful in nature may be cultivated.

The scenery of the first class of grounds is distinctively "park scenery," because the private parks of Europe are generally pastured by deer or cattle, and consequently, up to a distinct browsing line, are clear of foliage. The scenery of the second class is that of what is usually distinguished from the park as the "pleasure ground" or "kept ground," being managed in a more garden-like way. We shall term the first "OPEN," and shall apply the old word "PLAISANCE" to such as is intended to be enclosed with a high fence and used only by day.

Your territory is so extensive and so large a population may be expected eventually to resort exclusively to it for out-door recreation that it is clear that provision of both classes should be found in it, and its extreme points being three miles apart (exclusive of the Parkways), it should not even be necessary for a boy who has reached one end to go half around it to find himself free to run upon the turf, or that a man living near it and going out after dusk with his wife and daughters, should find no better place in which to stroll than an ordinary street side-walk. For these reasons there should be enough "open" ground at least for local use, night and day, near each of the extreme parts of your plan.

It is impracticable to close any ground at night through which important thoroughfares are carried unless by the expedient of carrying one line of transit under another as in the New York Park. This is a costly arrangement and can rarely be used so that landscape opportunities shall not be marred by it; it should only be adopted therefore under considerations of special necessity.

We are instructed that your Upper Division must be crossed by a thoroughfare near its middle from east to west. It is not to be hoped and there is no reason to believe that there ever will be a business quarter on the east side of this ground, nor at least very near it on the west. As the space in the east is quite limited and is likely to be occupied almost exclusively with dwellings of people of wealth, and therefore not densely, there is not likely to be much need for driving through the Park except with pleasure carriages. Coal, building materials, hay, and most market supplies will be brought in from the north, and the principal occasion for crossing with business wagons will be early in the morning, as of milkmen and bakers. Under these circumstances the movement of pleasure carriages is not likely to be so unpleasantly interfered with as at all to justify the construction of a sunken traffic road across the Park. The only important question involved is as to the night use, with which we shall deal presently.

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We shall now refer to our plans, which are upon three sheets: No. 1 representing the Upper Division; No. 2, the space six hundred feet wide connecting it with the Lower Division, which is shown on No. 3.

The Upper and Lower Divisions are each subdivided into an open and an enclosed ground, and the whole of the Middle Division is enclosed. The open ground of the Upper Division is designated the *SOUTHOPEN GROUND*; the other looking upon the Lake, the *LAKEOPEN GROUND*; different parts of the enclosed ground are designated respectively the *UPPER PLAISANCE*, the *MIDWAY PLAISANCE*, and the *LAGOON PLAISANCE*.

The various subdivisions are connected by a common system of drives and walks, as well as by the arrangement of water. The drives are generally forty feet wide. In the Midway Division, where there are two parallel stretches so near together as almost to form one, the width of each part is thirty-five feet, and on the Lake shore, where carriages are likely to be driven back and forth repeatedly, and the number wishing to occupy the road is likely to be larger than elsewhere, the width is increased to fifty feet.

Five open places are also introduced in the system, each two or more acres in extent, in order to allow carriages to stand together, so that their occupants may engage in conversation, listen to music or look upon some prospect of special interest, without interrupting the circulation upon the drives.

We have presumed that the same principle of construction which has been applied in the Lincoln Park drives would be adopted in yours, the conditions of the ground and the materials at your command being similar, while it is probable that with the use of a heavy steam roller, more efficient arrangements for drainage and more care in details, a road may thus be formed more agreeable than the best stone or concrete roads, and at much less cost. Two stretches of bridle road are introduced on a part of the ground where there will be no occasion for any one to be walking. Equestrians may thus have an opportunity to gallop at speed, but, as, with the unusual extent of ordinary roads provided for, their length being about fourteen miles, they are seldom likely to be much crowded with carriages, and as, with the construction suggested, they will be satisfactory under the saddle as well as in carriages, we have not thought it necessary to indicate any great extent of roads designed especially for riding. Should it be desired, a pad may be introduced by the side of the ordinary road anywhere in the Upper or Lower Division, or a bridle road thrown off on the west and south sides of the Lower Division in the same manner as in the upper. Thirty miles of walks are indicated with similar arrangements for occasional congregation, the more important of which will be referred to in the description of the several subdivisions of the plan which follows.

The Southopen ground, which will be found on the left of plan No. 1, consists simply of a nearly level meadow with a grove of large trees surrounding it on all sides but one, where the character of the plantation, as it is extended into the adjoining closed district, changes to that of a denser and more picturesque wood, with glades of turf reaching far into it from the meadow. Entering the park from either of the two principal approaches from the city, the visitor, as he passes through the outer grove, will thus find a view opening before him over a greensward without a perceptible break, considerably beyond the limits of the Open Ground itself, and ending in one direction in a glimmer of water reflecting tall trees nearly a mile away. Advancing further, if late in the day, the shadows of the trees falling across the meadow, will be a quarter of a mile in length, sheep and cows will be grazing upon it and boys and men playing here and there, as on a village green. A carriage road passes around it, on each side of which, at a short distance, there are walks with numerous branches and connections, one series under the shade of the grove and the other upon the open green. The space of turf inclosed by the circuit drive contains a hundred acres, and the space available for reviews is about the same as that of the Champ de Mars at Paris, and much larger than any parade or play ground thus far provided for anywhere in this country.

Of the two approaches which have been referred to, one is planned more especially with reference to the rapid movement of a great number of persons driving, riding or walking, being planted openly with the straight rows of clean trunked trees. This, having in mind its terminus as well its plan, we have designated the Southopen Parkway. The other is designed with a view to more quiet and leisurely movement, and its principal feature is a walk or series of walks passing somewhat indirectly through a grove with frequent interludes of shrubbery, fountains and arbors to invite rest and contemplation. This we have accordingly designated the Southgrove Parkway. In a town where local nomenclature can so rarely be based on topographical circumstances, any tolerable names of this class should be welcomed. Even if they seem outlandish at first, if at

all euphonious, a very little usage makes them familiar and much more agreeable than arbitrary names.

The third grand approach to the Park will enter the South-open Ground from the west near its southern end, and from this point, which in the afternoon would be chosen as the best for looking across the Green, we have planned arrangements for the principal place of assemblage of the upper park. At the junction of roads from four directions there is a Concourse for carriages; in its rear a stand for music; back of this again an extensive area covered by trellises and surrounded by galleries, one of which, overlooking the Concourse and the Green, is intended to serve the purpose of a grand stand on occasion of parades, match games and exhibitions. To this series of structures is added a large Refectory building, and the whole, on account of its open-sided character, is termed the Pavilion. Promenade concerts are designed to be held here, the audience, not in carriages, walking on or under the galleries or in alleys under the vine-covered trellises, at the sides of which will be seats and tables for ices and coffee.

Being on the Open Ground the Refectory need not be closed at night.

The Pavilion may be brilliantly illuminated and fireworks may be safely exhibited on the Green opposite, where they will be seen to great advantage from the front gallery. The public road here crossing the park, being also entirely within the Open Ground, may be open at night.

The grand approach from the west entering the park in front of the Pavilion, we have designated the Pavilion Parkway.

It has been shown that in the view from the north end of the Green no line of demarcation is designed to be seen at its south boundary. To accomplish this a broad artificial depression in the southern part of the Green will be required, the needed depth at the middle not being more than two feet. South of the transverse road a deeper excavation is to be made for a small pool, at each end of which will be an island which will receive the fence, the pool serving as a fence across the intermediate

space. The water of this pool will not be seen in the view from the north end of the Green but the eye will range over it and through a continuation of the depression, southerly, to the more distant water.

The Southopen Ground will need no enclosure except a low guard rail; (of course, in saying this we presume that cattle will not be allowed to range through the adjoining streets.) The grass should be kept short by a sufficient number of sheep and a few cows, the milk of which may be sold by the glass to visitors as is done in St. James' Park in London.

We have before indicated the advantages of an open ground thus detached for certain purposes, though artistically united to the enclosed portion of the park. As the practical application of our views will now, however, be better understood, we recapitulate them:

1st, The arrangement avoids the temptation which has elsewhere been found irresistible to trespass upon the enclosed park for purposes which within it are illegal, destructive and demoralizing, such as military and semi-military parades and political demonstrations.

2d, It reduces and strictly defines the area within which it is necessary to require visitors to conform themselves to regulations of a special character, and desirable that they should be under special police observation.

3rd, It enables the park authority to exclude visitors from the enclosed grounds without forcing them to leave the park altogether, the outer ground offering all necessary advantage for air, exercise and recreation from a short time after sunset till after sunrise. It thus brings much of the necessary attendance upon visitors within the limits of a day's service, so that within the enclosed ground one set of men will answer for it instead of two.

4th, It makes a much greater freedom from restraint practicable on greensward play grounds than could be permitted with safety if they were surrounded by closely planted or finely decorated grounds.

5th, It simplifies and reduces the expense of keeping the ground in order.

Against the advantages there is to be placed the necessity of keeping the Open Ground very well lighted and patrolled at night, and the artistic disadvantage of dispensing with under-wood within its borders. The latter objection is of less weight in this case than it would be if the distance from the Green to any exterior and incongruous objects were not so great.

South of this Open Ground lies the enclosed district, which we have designated the Upper Plaisance.

Adjoining the entrance to it on the side of the Pavilion, a mall will be observed having the form of a hall nearly a quarter of a mile in length, out of which, near its centre, four square apartments open. The outlines are marked by rows of trees and the floor is of gravel. The object is to provide a convenient open air rendezvous and assembly ground for large pic-nic parties and for societies, fraternities, Sunday school and other organizations, and also to supply a suitable ground for such plays as would be destructive to turf. The four square apartments are also designed with reference to entertainments and exhibitions in which the use of stagings or platforms may be desirable, as in the festivals of the Turners.

Formal lines are here introduced in the plan because the same clear space of shaded ground thus bounded will be more commodious and will admit of a greater degree of freedom of movement when occupied by a large number of persons than any other. Outside of the lines of trees other trees are disposed irregularly, so that the formality of the arrangement, although so conspicuous on the paper plan, will not destroy the general naturalness of the landscape design of this division of the park.

At the east central entrance of the Mall there is a descent to a landing on the Mere, which is the head of the boating water of the Park.

On the opposite side of the Mere there is a Paddock, seven acres in extent, for deer. These will appear from the Mall to be free, but are to be confined by an under-water fence, as it is not safe for deer to range where there are children.

The walks opening southward from the Mall lead into a flower garden attached to which are shrubbery walks, sheltered seats, and balconies over the water.

The northern part of the Mall looks eastwardly upon a lawn, the edges planted with shrubbery and divided by a knoll, closely planted with trees and underwood, from the Deer Paddock.

Still further to the east the lawn merges into a large glade of turf terminating at the lower part on the Mere near the south-east corner of the Division.

The walks leading eastward from the glade pass into a region of broken ground, designated as the Ramble on the plan, to be formed by excavating deeply for the walks and mounding the material thus obtained between them. It is to be planted thickly; mostly with large shrubs, and to be made as shady, sequestered and picturesque in the character of its details as practicable. It will be desirable that a few small ledges of rock should be transferred to it, and ferns, mosses and alpine plants used in connection with them but only in a very simple and delicately natural manner. It is also to be finished with substantial seats and arbors.

The outer parts of the Upper Plaisance on each side, through which the drives are carried, are to have the character of rather dense natural woods, affording an agreeable change from the Open Ground.

A stable and sheds for the deer, and the sheep and cows to be kept in the Open, for the birds that will require winter protection and for such horses, carts, etc., as may be required, and a house for the stock keeper, are provided in the enclosure, (named the Farmstead Close on the plan), east of the Deer Paddock.

The plan of the Midway Plaisance is shown on drawing No. 2. The earth excavated in making the Basin and the drives and walks, which are to be at an elevation of four feet only above the water, is to be mounded as naturally as possible on each side, the more elevated parts being generally planted centrally with trees and in front with shrubbery; the recesses,

which will be glades of turf with a few detached groups of shrubs, will reach with slightly undulating slope nearly or quite to the side walks of the adjoining streets.

These streets are proposed to be widened to eighty-six feet, ten feet of which would be taken off the park ground; the side-walk being planted with a double row of trees, the opposite houses would not be unpleasantly conspicuous from the water and land ways of the Park.

Three streets are proposed to be carried across the Midway besides those at its end; the water-way, carriage-way and walks of the park system passing under viaducts. As the track of the Illinois Central Railway is too low to pass under with carriages, and as we are informed by the Engineer of the Company that it can not be sufficiently raised, it is designed to be arched over, the trains upon it being kept out of view by a parapet of earth and shrubbery.

An open area, designated Midway Place, in two symmetrical parts, connected by a bridge over the Basin, terminates the Midway Plaisance on the east. As will be seen on drawing No. 3, to which we now turn, it opens to the right upon that division of the closed ground which we have designated the Lagoon Plaisance; on the left, upon the Lake Open Ground, and looking east, commands a view over the head of the Lagoon through a gradually narrowing perspective of points and islands, with the Lake seen through a depression of the dunes which are here to be clothed with prostrate shrubs.

In studying the general arrangement of parts in the Lower Division we have already shown that the feature of most controlling importance is the Pier, and have stated the considerations which approximately fix its position. A natural ridge, partly wooded, the longitudinal axis of which is nearly at right angles with the coast line, indicates the most desirable course for the outlet and entrance channel and consequently establishes more precisely the proper place for the Pier.

We suppose that a public road will be formed along the beach beyond the park limits, each way, and have considered that

when the region south of the east half of the Lagoon Division of the Park shall have become populous, a route or routes of communication between it and the north side of the Park more direct than is afforded by Hyde Park Avenue, will be of considerable importance, and also that access from it to the boats running between the Park and Chicago river, will be very desirable. At the same time it is of even more importance that small steamers and sail boats should be able at all times to make a harbor at the Park, and a drawbridge at the harbor's mouth is not only to be deprecated on account of its inconvenience, but because by establishing a harsh and conspicuous line across the channel, it would be most unfavorable to an impression of unity between the Park and the Lake.

These conflicting objects of a continuous shore road and of a harbor opening by an unbridged channel upon the Lake, are as far as possible harmonized by a detour of the shore road, which following closely the bank of the channel and the Park Haven, is returned upon an island with two bridges towards the Lake shore, and passes out of the Park at its south east corner. A branch road leads westerly out of the Park from the point of the detour furthest from the Lake, offering a short-cut to the middle parts of the region south of the Park. The Park gates and fence are then placed west of this branch and of the shore road from end to end, so that they may always be left open, together with the harbour, for use at night. A large Green is also thrown out at the north end, indicated as the Lakeopen Green, and a smaller Green outside of the harbour at the south end, the latter designated the Park Haven Green. These are intended more especially for ball playing and other athletic exercises, and each is provided with a lodge for dressing rooms and the shelter of lookers-on at the games. The whole is adapted like the Southopen Ground, to be lighted and left open at night.

The Lakeopen Green is at the nearest point of this division of the park to the town and is entered directly from a station of the Illinois Central and Michigan Central railways. Visitors taking this way out may be engaged in ball playing or floating

on the Lagoon within half an hour after they have left a school house, an office or a shop in the midst of the city. In London excursion trains frequently take over fifty thousand people an hour to or from the Crystal Palace Park at Sydenham, at a charge of a penny a mile.

As the water of the Lagoon will probably be much warmer than that of the Lake, it is suggested that arrangements for bathing and swimming in the north bay should be made at the house indicated in the plan opposite the Lakeopen Green.

Within the Lakeopen Ground there are two places especially adapted to large assemblies, one at the Pier, the other on the lake shore in front of the Park Haven Green. The latter is in the form of a terrace and gives the outer position to carriages. On the Pier a broad walking space is arranged outside of the carriage Concourse, and from the solid pier which extends 250 feet outward from the present shore line, a narrower open work pier is proposed, to eventually extend to a block about a thousand feet further out.

Immediately behind the Concourse on the Pier a large building will be observed, designated the Belvedere, which would be the principal refectory of this Division of the Park. It fronts on one side upon the Lake, on the other upon a lawn which slopes to a bay opening upon the middle of the Lagoon, opposite which is a cluster of islands in a wooded cove. An elevated outlook is intended to be here provided for, and this suggests the name of the building.

The Belvedere lawn, which is within the Lagoon Plaisance, and would be entered from the Belvedere by doors closed at night, extends on the south to the central feature of this division of the plan, a Promenade Concert Ground upon a Terrace formally planted. The Park gate being open at the head of the harbour, carriages pass readily south of the lawn to the Concourse south of the Terrace platform, the trees upon which are arranged with reference to the view northward, which extends through a long vista formed by narrows of the Lagoon; the vista point being a Kiosk, seen beyond a bridge, at the

head of the South Bay. The Orchestra is to be stationed upon a small island, and the music, floating over the water, will reach the Pic-nic woods on the west and the walks upon the Belvedere lawn on the east, as well as the terrace, where the principal part of the audience, both on foot and in carriages, is expected to assemble. The correspondence of the principal features of the plan from the Pier to the Lagoon Terrace with the requirements developed in the earlier part of this Report, will be evident.

The Pic-nic district above referred to includes the best of the woods now growing upon the grounds. It is to be further planted in groups and open groves and near the water with underwood, and fitted with swings and other means of amusement. A cottage with separate accommodations and attendance for men and women and several shelters or summer houses looking upon the Lagoon will also be observed. There are open glades for croquet parties and children's dances. Further to the southward there are shaded drives and walks through deeper woods.

There is a Quay on the Park Haven for steamboats and masted boats that cannot pass the bridges, and at different points on the Lagoon nine boat landings, to each of which a sheltered seat is attached. A number of other sites are indicated for shelters and bowers, and balconies over the water.

It will be observed that there are numerous islands without boat landings; some of these are intended to be specially protected against the approach of boats by flat, rushy shores, the object being to provide entirely isolated and sequestered coverts as breeding places for birds. The Lagoon is intended to be abundantly stocked with all water fowl that will endure the climate, and your Commission is recommended to take early measures to procure and domesticate the American swan and other fine birds of the upper lakes and of the far West.

The increase of such birds will be in request for the Zoological Gardens and private parks of Europe, and black swans or other rare and beautiful birds of Asia, Australia, and the Antarctic regions would be gladly exchanged for them. The bleak and

humid situation of Chicago is most unfavorable for general Zoological or Botanical gardens, but in Ornithology a better living collection could very soon be established in your ground than now exists in the world. The complete success of the recent attempt to naturalize the English sparrow, of which thousands are now propagated every year in the New York and Brooklyn parks, and which has completely relieved those cities and their suburbs of a serious nuisance, indicates that a little enterprise in this direction might be expected to accomplish results of great interest. The naturalization of some of the common song birds of the north of Europe, which would be a delightful acquisition, is probably quite feasible and the process would not be expensive if undertaken in connection with a general aviary establishment.

If a voluntary organization should be formed for this purpose of sufficient strength, the exclusive use might be given it of all desirable ground for breeding purposes, together with the privilege of establishing a museum and convenient offices in the park, proper guarantees of public benefit being agreed upon. The Ornithological Society of London is thus accommodated in St. James's Park. If desired, inconspicuous arrangements may also be studied out on the Lower Division of the Park for special classes of animals to which the circumstances would be congenial, as Bisons, Elks, Bears; or amphibians, as Seals and Sea Lions; the general rule being observed, to admit nothing in the management of which a distinguished success, without sacrifice of matters of more primary interest, cannot be confidently expected. No bird or animal should be allowed in the Park which will not surely be healthy and happy in it.

The manner in which the water is disposed in all of the Lower Division is such that except at a few narrow points of connection, it occupies only a part of the ground which is now flooded or liable to be so when the Lake is highest. The water surface of the Lagoon will be 165 acres in extent at ordinary summer level. An excavation sufficient to give a general depth of 6 feet, with slopes of 6 to 1, will yield about 1,300,000 yards of material. This will be sufficient to add about 2 feet to the general elevation of the rest of the Division.

We suppose that 2 to 4 inches of clay, brought from without will be mixed with this to give trees a better support. The surface of most of the land will then lie from 4 to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet above the highest ordinary, and 2 to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  above the occasional extraordinary summer level of the Lake. A less general elevation than this could not, in our judgment, be made agreeable to the eye, nor would it be wholesome for any but a few aquatic trees.

The outlines of the shores of the Lagoon may at first sight seem to be unduly complicated, but the introduction of numerous points and narrow islands is here demanded by considerations of cost as much as by fidelity to the type of natural scenery which is had in view.

The same water level is designed to be carried through the Midway Basins to the Mere, and economy will probably require that the excavation of the Lagoon shall precede that of the Midway Basin, the Basin that of the Mere, and the Mere the shaping of the surface generally of the Upper Plaisance. The depth of water in the Midway, should also be at least 6 feet, in summer, or there will be trouble with water plants. It will then fall everywhere to 4 during the skating season.

If it were not for the experience of other cities where the cost of forming parks has been more than met by the increased taxable valuation of real estate benefited by them, and for the rise in the value of certain property which has already accrued on account of the South Park undertaking, the excavation for water required by the plan would probably be thought too costly to be soon entered upon. Even as it is, it may be questioned whether the delay which will be involved by it in meeting the expectations upon which the present value of property depends, will not, after a time, be so disappointing as to render advisable some different plan of dealing with the Middle and Upper Divisions, dispensing with the water connection, and giving the public the use of the ground sooner in a finished condition.

We shall give some reasons for thinking that nothing would really be gained by such a course.

The expectations upon which the rise in the value of real estate has depended and will depend, are partly of a definite and partly of a very indefinite character. A few years ago the district more especially affected by the undertaking of the South Park was commonly regarded as waste land and as hardly susceptible of much improvement. Whatever change has occurred in the public judgment in this respect is due, in the first place, to the results of private enterprise by which it has been proved that it can generally be relieved of surface water, be clothed with fine greensward, and that trees can, up to a certain point at least, be made to flourish upon it. These experiments give definite and tangible ground of expectation as to its future. But beyond this, secondly, there is a blind faith that your Commission, having larger proportionate means at command, and being able to direct a business-like study to the question of the possibilities of improvement, will find a way to do more on a large scale than private enterprise has yet done even on a small scale. Suppose, then, that after several years work, a finish shall have been given to the whole of the Upper and Middle Divisions, but that the character of this finish does not vary materially from that of the adjoining door yards as they are now seen, the improvements by drainage, manuring, greensward and tree planting having been essentially the same. The result would be that nothing more would be found in the Park than the realization of the defined and experimentally grounded expectations of the present, and it may be doubted whether this would not really be somewhat disappointing.

But suppose, on the other hand that, with less extent of superficial finish, it should be evident that the operations in progress were to result in much more substantial far-reaching improvements than had been definitely imagined—improvements of a really organic character, directly affecting the whole region—it is clear that it would not only satisfy, but induce a strong advance upon, present expectations.

The great increase in the value of real estate produced by the construction of the New York park did not begin until sometime after it was commenced, nor until the public began to see that the ground had much greater capabilities

than had at first been imagined. The President of the Brooklyn Park Commission, in a public address two years ago, quoting a statement that the opening of a small part of the park the previous year had caused an advance of real estate in that city to the amount of ten millions of dollars, observed that it was not because the public then first realized that the city was to have a park, but because the character of the first improvements which had been made for the purpose really advanced the rank of the city in the public estimation and suddenly caused a new class of expectations to be formed of its future.

Looking again at the Baltimore and Philadelphia parks, the natural advantages of the sites of which are much greater than those possessed in New York and Brooklyn, and where the improvements thus far made though quite extensive, have been of a more superficial and commonplace class, we find that they have produced no very extraordinary increase of value in neighboring real estate.

Among the advantages of the plan we propose, which would be permanently barred by the substitution for it of any plan which could be executed very much more cheaply and quickly, are the following:

*First.* It secures a deep thorough drainage of the Upper and Middle Divisions, and thus adds greatly to the chances of making trees flourish upon them.

*Second.* It locks the three divisions of the Park into one obvious system, so that their really disjointed character will be much less impressed upon the minds of observers passing through them than would be the case if the connecting element of a common body of water were lacking.

*Third.* It practically places the Upper or Inland Division of the Park upon a navigable arm of Lake Michigan and thus makes it accessible by boats from the heart of the commercial part of the city. The aquatic character of the Park will thus be more remarkable. It will also be an advantage that the water fowl and fish may swim freely between the Upper Plaisance and the Lake. The skating advantage is also obvious.

*Fourth.* It offers to those coming by rail, in public carriages, or on foot, a means of traveling through nearly all parts of the Park quietly, agreeably and without fatigue, and by a method much less expensive than that of wheeled carriages. This will be of great value to invalids, convalescents, and mothers with children in arms. There is a very limited extent of water in the New York Park, yet it is found that from four to six thousand persons use the small boats daily, in fine weather, and at a charge of ten cents they yield a satisfactory profit.

*Fifth.* The material excavated from the Basins and Mere will, if skillfully used upon the banks, overcome, to a certain extent, the chief landscape defect of all the Chicago pleasure grounds, namely, their nearly level surface. Presuming that the work will be done by steam dredges, in no other way can so considerable an improvement in this respect be made as cheaply. Here, therefore, if anywhere, the city can afford a little luxury in undulation.

*Sixth.* By offering upon the Midway and Upper Plaisances to the view of those who come to the Park in boats a shore with, generally, much higher banks than it will be practicable to form upon the Lagoon, the value of the boating privileges of the Park, and consequently of its Lake approach, will be greatly increased.

*Seventh.* The incidental effect of this operation upon all the country surrounding the Park as well as that within it will be most valuable. It will gradually bring about a change in its character equivalent to that which would be gained by lifting its surface several feet above its present level. It will make gardens practicable where otherwise nothing but swamp plants will grow. It will at once make a considerable district suitable for residences which will otherwise remain not only unwholesome for that purpose within itself, but a source of ill health to others until a costly system of sewers has been constructed. In connection with the better growth of trees which will result, the climate of the whole south part of the city will be essentially improved by it, so much so, for instance,

that there will be appreciably less liability to rheumatic and pulmonary complaints and the epidemics of children.

In view of the advantages thus promised, it would, in our judgment, be prudent and politic to enter at once upon the necessary works, even though, to carry them on, all other improvements had to be postponed until they were completed. We judge, however, that this would not be at all necessary. The process of excavation and embankment should be mainly by steam apparatus, and when once begun should go steadily on at a nearly regular per diem rate, otherwise idle capital would be charged upon the Park. The total amount of the outlay which would thus be required per annum, would not, we suppose, exhaust your resources. The construction of the South-open Ground being an undertaking by itself, need wait for nothing. It nowhere involves very heavy work, and the chief need for discretion will be in regard to the means and methods to be used for improving the soil. We should recommend that the outer parts be dressed heavily with soil, clay, and well-rotted manure, and trees planted of much larger size than we should advise to be used under other circumstances, but that for the sake of economy the Green should be improved more slowly by the process already suggested. Before it was ready to be seeded for turf the Pavilion might be built, and the grove to the north of it being fitted up as a temporary pic-nic ground, it would probably be found at once a source of income equivalent to the interest on its cost.

At the same time the Park Haven pier should be built and there would be nothing in the way of the construction of the shore road, the Concourse on the Pier, and the Belvedere. By the time these had been completed, the dredging would be so far advanced that boats could run from the city into the harbor and finishing operations could be begun on the Belvedere lawn and other parts of the interior Park.

We make these suggestions as to the course of operations simply to show that if the construction of the Lagoon and Midway Basin should be immediately undertaken, it would not necessarily involve a delay in making the Park fully available in certain important particulars for public use.

In speaking of the depth of the Lagoon, and generally in referring to the depth of excavations, we have had in view the minimum requirements of the plan. It is to be expected that roads and walks throughout the Park will generally be graded as low as shall be consistent with efficient drainage, and a graceful continuity of parts, and by this means material will be obtained for a slight modulation of adjoining surfaces. By the occasional introduction in the shores of a surface but a few inches above high water level, and in which only rushes and water plants will grow, the average elevation of the filled ground may be made higher at other points, and a variety attained altogether desirable. Adjoining the basin and the Mere, occasional elevations of at least twenty feet can be easily managed with long flowing contours and without any appearance of being artificially mounded. The excavation of two feet, which we have before said is required in the Southopen Ground, and which should be extended from the central point in long shallow depressions to the north-east and north-west, and to the south-west beyond the Pool, together with the deeper excavation required for the Pool itself, will yield sufficient material to give a perceptible play of surface upon the lower part of the Southopen Green, and in grading the drives and walks something may be cheaply added.

By slight and inexpensive changes of the surface, such as we have thus advised, provided always that trees of a satisfactory character can be insured, the scenery of this part of the Park may be rendered appropriate and pleasing. We do not say that it would under no circumstances be desirable to vary the surface much more, but only that it is not indispensable to do so, and as any considerably increased modulation beyond what we have indicated, would be expensive, the question of undertaking it may be regarded as one of detail, to be determined when necessary with fair consideration of resources which shall then be available.

If it could be afforded, for instance, it would be desirable to form an irregular depression extending from the vicinity of the Pool through the Glade to the Mere on the east side of the Upper Plaisance, its depth being sufficient to disclose the

Mere at this point to view from the north-western part of the Green. The material obtained would be used chiefly to elevate the Ramble district. The drive east of this may have considerable depression and the material thus obtained should be chiefly used to elevate the surface still further to the eastward.

The shores of the Mere, the swells of the Midway slopes and the points and islands of the Lagoon could generally be increased several feet in height beyond what will be convenient with the material provided for, by increasing the proposed depth of the excavation for water. There will be a decided advantage in all such increase and no disadvantage, except that of cost, which within desirable limits will not at all advance with the depth the dredging machine is required to work.

The consideration hereafter of what can be afforded in this way will perhaps be affected favorably to larger operations than we have spoken of as absolutely necessary by the adoption of a temporizing policy wherever it can be applied without entailing permanent defects upon the Park. You have for instance a great extent of woods and walks upon your plan. It is very important that all of these should be laid out, and in the management of the plantations should be constantly regarded as if in existence, but it is entirely unnecessary for this purpose that finely constructed wheel and foot ways, of full width and adapted to use in all weathers, should be formed within their outlines. The way being left open, this part of the work can be postponed until required by the immediate convenience of the public. The character of your ground is very favorable to such a course. Again, you have a cheap lumber market, and if such buildings, bridges and fences as are at once required for the public accommodation should be built of wood, no opportunity would have been lost and little expenditure would have been wasted, if, when they were found decaying or inadequate, it should be decided to supplant them with structures of greater dignity and permanence.

On the other hand, if, before making your plantations, you should neglect to take every practicable precaution to secure the constant, vigorous growth and health of the trees, the

defect which you will have fastened upon the Park, is one which, by no subsequent liberality, can be made good. A temporizing policy in this direction, therefore, would be most disloyal to the Future, which you are bound first of all to be faithful to.

As grading operations must be essentially complete before the preparation of surfaces for planting can be begun, we would again, therefore, most earnestly press the consideration upon you that a comparatively small body of vigorous, well developed trees, will in a few years, produce more elevated sky lines, more apparent variety of surface, and give greater satisfaction than can be obtained by the expenditure of millions in heaping up earth. Consequently, however desirable a little more play of surface may be, it is of much less consequence than that all available means should be used for developing the highest horticultural capabilities of your ground.

It only remains for us to refer to some suggestions which we have offered in the plan, in regard to approaches and exterior streets.

The important line of communication which we call the Southopen Parkway, does not, at present, connect properly with the Southopen Ground, but it may be made to do so by the acquisition on the part of your Commission, of a comparatively small piece of land, and we have therefore thought it desirable to show on our design how a satisfactory adjustment may thus be arrived at.

The difficulty in regard to the Southgrove Parkway, as at present laid down on the maps, is of a more serious character. It turns abruptly at right angles, a few hundred feet away from the Park; and the actual provision for entrance when it reaches its extreme corner, is so wholly inadequate that some considerable improvement will inevitably be required.

A close study of all the circumstances of this case, has led us to avoid any attempt to solve the difficulty by direct addition to the Park territory, and we have been led to think on the other hand that the necessary improvement should be made in the

form of an extension of the Parkway on a scale commensurate with the importance of its position and having a marked artistic character of its own.

About fifty years ago the Quadrant leading from Pall Mall to Regent Street was made one of the finest thoroughfares in London. No such connection had been originally contemplated, but the demand for some adequate means of communication in this direction having become imperative, the new street was at length cut through a quarter of the city that had been solidly built up with expensive structures. We suggest the adoption of a somewhat similar expedient in your case, before any houses are erected in the neighborhood, and if the Parkway Quadrant can be carried out as shown on our Plan, the curved line of approach will, we think, have a sufficiently bold sweep to be easy and agreeable in connection with the long, straight line of the Southgrove Parkway, and the main Park entrance to which it leads will be relieved of any appearance of awkwardness.

An unusual volume of traffic will naturally be accumulated on the boundary streets of the Park, and we propose, for this reason, and also to improve their promenade character, that they should be somewhat widened on each side of the present centre line. The suggestion to increase the width of two of these streets to eighty-six feet, has been already referred to, and the others should, we think, be at least a hundred feet wide, and their walks on the Park side continuously shaded. Improvements of this character are almost invariably called for sooner or later in the vicinity of urban parks, and their costliness increases with every year they are postponed. We have seen many hundred thousand dollars saved in a few years by prompt action on similar advices in other cases, and many more lost by inattention to it.

In the progress of a public improvement like that of the Chicago South Park, undertaken with so much reference to the distant future as its justification necessarily predicates, and the completion of which, in all its parts, must be so far off, the introduction of subsidiary elements of design of greater or less importance will undoubtedly from time to time be proposed.

It is not to be expected that a plan will be made at the outset so complete, that no additions to it or modifications of it in detail will be admissable, but it is of the utmost consequence that the essential ends should be clearly seen before the work is organized, and that from the moment it begins to the end, be that five or fifty years hence, and under whatever changes of administration and changes of fashion, these great ruling ends should be pursued with absolute consistency. Work of the character designed constantly requires ability of high order in its supervision, and it is undesirable that the exercise of this ability should be hampered by unnecessarily specific instructions.

Under the influence of these considerations our object has been simply to develop a series of the most desirable features practicable of realization under the very peculiar conditions of your site and circumstances, and we have endeavored to carry the design of these only so far as to establish the characteristic end of each, whether it be an artistic effect on the imagination or simply an accommodation for convenience and comfort.

The plan having, after due deliberation, been adopted as the constitutional law of the park construction, no proposition involving change or addition in any locality, should be entertained, however attractive in itself, which is not harmonious with the purpose intended to rule in that locality. All propositions on the other hand, intelligently designed to strengthen and emphasize its main purposes, may be heartily welcomed, and their adoption be simply a question of practical business expediency.

Trusting that the plan which we have now presented may meet with your approval and that time will justify the confidence with which you have honored us.

We remain, gentlemen,

Yours respectfully,

OLMSTED, VAUX & CO.,

March, 1871.

*Landscape Architects.*

## CHICAGO SOUTH PARK

### AREAS AND DISTANCES

The Park with its outer Promenades contains.....	1,055	acres.
The Upper Division .....	372	"
The Midway Division .....	90	"
The Lower or Lagoon Division .....	593	"
The Southopen Ground .....	191	"
The Southopen Green, within the circuit drive....	100	"
The Pavilion Ground .....	7	"
The Pavilion, (Refectory, Courts, Garden and Gal- leries,) .....	2	"
The Pavilion Concourse .....	3	"
The Upper Plaisance .....	137	"
The Deer Paddock .....	7	"
The Farmstead Close .....	4	"
The Mere .....	11	"
The Midway Basin .....	14	"
The Midway Place .....	4	"
The Lakeopen Ground .....	270	"
The Lakeopen Green .....	26	"
The Park Haven Green .....	9	"
The Belvedere Concourse .....	3	"
The Lake Terrace .....	3	"
The Lagoon Plaisance .....	320	"
The Lagoon .....	165	"
The Lagoon Terrace .....	2	"
The Lagoon Concourse .....	2	"
The length of the Interior Drives is.....	14	miles.
The length of the Walks .....	30	"
The length of the Mall .....	1-5	"
The length of the Midway .....	1	"
Length of front on Lake Michigan .....	1 6-10	"

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