

LAKESHORE STATE PARK MASTER PLAN

Lakeshore State Park



Dedicated October 7, 1998 by Governor Tommy G. Thompson



Submitted to:

Wisconsin
Department of Natural Resources
Southeast Region Land Services Section
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***Water is a source of life,
power, comfort, and delight,
a universal symbol of
purification and renewal.
Like a primordial magnet,
water pulls at a primitive and
deeply rooted part of human
nature. More than any other
single element besides trees
and gardens, water has the
greatest potential to forge an
emotional link between
humans and nature in the
city.***

***Anne Watson Spirn
The Granite Garden; Urban
Nature and Human Design
1984***

**Approved by the
Natural Resources Board on
October 24, 2000**

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Section I Property Description

Governor Tommy G. Thompson announced the planning for Lakeshore State Park on October 7, 1998. At that time, Governor Thompson expressed that the park's unique location in the heart of Milwaukee's downtown will offer year-round public access to the Lake Michigan shore, along with state park resources, aesthetics and amenities geared to an urban population.

The Lakeshore State Park planning boundary encompasses approximately 22 acres of open space along the Lake Michigan shoreline in downtown Milwaukee (Figure 1.) The park includes the 17-acre Harbor Island, a lakewalk paralleling the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds shoreline, and a riverwalk along the Harbor Entrance to Erie Street. The project will connect to the Hank Aaron State Trail and other local, regional and state recreational facilities.

Concurrently, a development plan for the North Harbor Tract (NHT), which encompasses the proposed Lakeshore State Park, as well as the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds, Urban Park South, Municipal Pier and the south area of the Milwaukee Art Museum site is being prepared for the City of Milwaukee Board of Harbor Commissioners. The planning processes for both Lakeshore State Park and the NHT have been highly interactive and coordinated, resulting in the Master Plan Concept presented in this report.

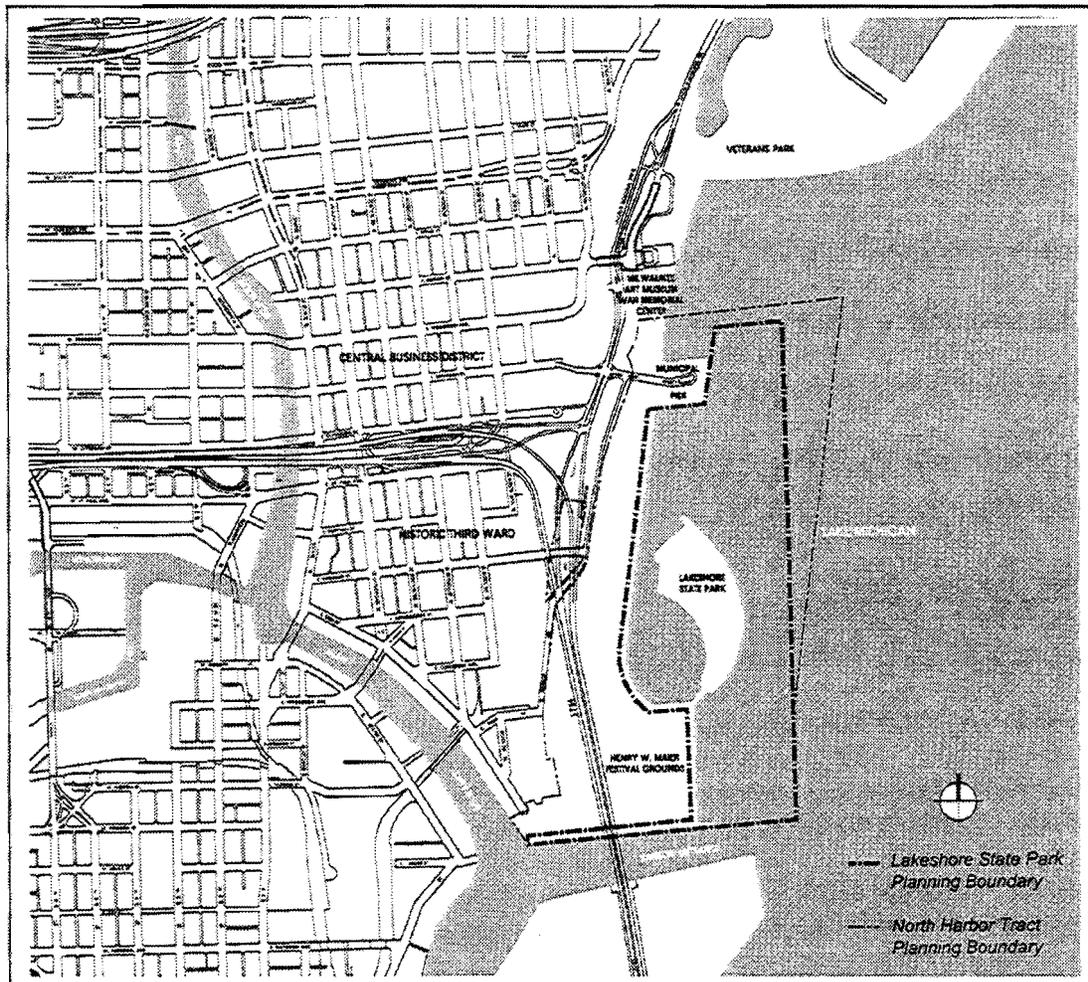


Figure 1: State Park Planning Boundary

Section II Vision Statement and Goals & Objectives

A. Vision Statement

Lakeshore State Park provides a unique urban state park experience, showcases the state park system, and focuses on Lake Michigan and connections to other recreational and educational opportunities.

B. Goals

1. Manage Lakeshore State Park in a manner consistent with our state park system.
2. Provide year-round lakefront shoreline access.
3. Provide Lake Michigan fishing opportunities.
4. Link Lakeshore State Park to the Hank Aaron State Trail and to other Milwaukee and Menomonee river trails.
5. Showcase the State Park, Forest and Trail system, and other State properties.
6. Implement creative partnering with local government agencies and private interests.
7. Provide compatible outdoor recreational activities.
8. Provide educational, natural and cultural interpretive opportunities.
9. Provide educational opportunities and information on Lake Michigan fisheries management.
10. Create linkages with adjacent recreational, educational and cultural facilities.
11. Enhance aquatic and terrestrial habitat.
12. Provide year-round visitor programs and services.

C. Objectives

Aquatic Resources and Recreation

1. Maintain shore-fishing opportunities to accommodate approximately 40,000 anglers annually, and increase year-round shore fishing opportunities on lakewalk and island.
2. Enhance fishability from the island through shoreline improvements.
3. Re-establish cool-water Lake Michigan fishery through continued annual stocking of 10,000 to 30,000 walleye fingerlings to 2004, while managing for other cool-water species.
4. Maintain coldwater trout and salmon fishery through continued annual stocking and management of approximately 500,000 fingerlings and yearlings.
5. Control excessive aquatic nuisance species.

Terrestrial Resources and Recreation

1. Develop a Lakeshore State Park visitor's center building.
2. Establish approximately five acres of native shortgrass prairie and one acre of upland trees and shrubs.
3. Develop an observation platform and picnic areas on island.
4. Provide 10 acres of multi-use urban outdoor recreational area to accommodate kite flying, dog walking and other passive uses.
5. Provide trailhead for Hank Aaron State Trail and links to other state and municipal trails.
6. Provide a 1- to 2-mile recreational trail.

Lake Access and Recreation

1. Develop a 200-foot small boat beach area on island.
2. Construct a 17-foot wide (15-foot clear) multi-use lakewalk.
3. Provide recreational boating and boat camping facilities for approximately 20 boats.

Education and Interpretation

1. Provide program links with other recreational, educational and cultural facilities and programs.
2. Develop informational and educational resources to promote Wisconsin's state park and trail system.
3. Provide on- and off-property year-round programs on natural, historical and cultural resources.

Partnerships

1. Partner with government and private interests to meet operations and maintenance, marketing, educational and special event needs, and cooperatively fund development of Lakeshore State Park facilities and programs.
2. Explore the opportunity for shared building use within the Great Lakes Interpretive Education & Tourism Center to accommodate Lakeshore State Park Welcome Center activities and facilities.

Section III Land Management and Recreational Use Classification

A. Acquisition

The acquisition of land is required to develop the recommended recreational facilities outlined in this master plan. The City of Milwaukee (City) is the recipient of a lakebed grant from the State of Wisconsin (State) within the project area. Negotiations between the City and State will take place in order to determine the transfer of land rights in the project area. The Department of Natural Resources (Department) further recommends that the City of Milwaukee operate and maintain Urban Park South as open space in perpetuity to protect vistas and precious lakefront open space in this area.

B. Management

Lakeshore State Park is classified under State Administrative Code NR44 as a Recreation Management Area with a Type 4 Recreational Use setting. The management objective for this classification is to provide and maintain land and water areas and facilities for public recreation or education. All facilities will be built in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

C. Description of Proposed Development

The development of the Lakeshore State Park Master Plan involved citizen participation from the general public as well as a vast cross-section of public and private organizations. Phase One (Figure 3, page 6) was developed to reflect the current level of funding. The Master Plan (Figure 4, page 9) is a graphic design that shows all of the desired Lakeshore State Park facilities and amenities. Phase One will be developed if non-state funding is not available. It is the State of Wisconsin's intent to construct the outer breakwater only if non-state funding becomes available before construction begins on Phase One.

The five alternatives that were developed as part of the master planning process are described in Section V Item G on page 20.

The proposed development would encourage the following types of recreational activities:

- fishing
- walking
- jogging
- biking
- kayaking, canoeing and other small boat activities
- kite flying and other open space activities
- rollerblading
- organized events – groups such as boy scouts/girl scouts, school children, senior citizens
- outdoor experience/educational opportunities
- dog walking
- carriage rides
- picnicking
- bird watching
- sightseeing

The Lakeshore State Park Master Plan provides two basins for logical and efficient separation between active and quiet maritime activities. The two-basin configuration organizes the park in a manner that provides a front door entrance to the island adjacent to the highest concentration of recreational/cultural uses, and proximate to the City of Milwaukee's Central Business District.

Funding Sources and Allocation

The 1999-2001 state budget provided \$9 million in funding for the development of Lakeshore State Park. This funding will be used to develop water-based infrastructure facilities related to Lakeshore State Park and a safe harbor of refuge. The breakwater extending from Municipal Pier will be built with State funds, but managed by the City or another entity. Funding for the development of additional infrastructure and park amenities will be requested in upcoming state budgets. The additional funding needed to develop the Master Plan may include federal and local grants, private partnerships and other revenue sources.

Phase One

Following are descriptions of facilities included in Phase One of the Lakeshore State Park Master Plan. The \$9 million in state funding may be sufficient to complete the following infrastructure components:

Lakewalk. The lakewalk will be located along the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds shoreline. The pile-supported concrete surface, located between the Marcus Amphitheater and the existing Festival Grounds boat dock (just north of Chicago Street extended), will be 17 feet wide, with 15 feet clear for recreational use. There will be 42-inch high railings on both sides with intermittent 33-inch sections to accommodate accessible fishing opportunities, along with low-impact lighting and benches. The remainder of the lakewalk will be land-based. The lakewalk will accommodate a variety of users including walkers, joggers, bikers, rollerbladers and anglers.

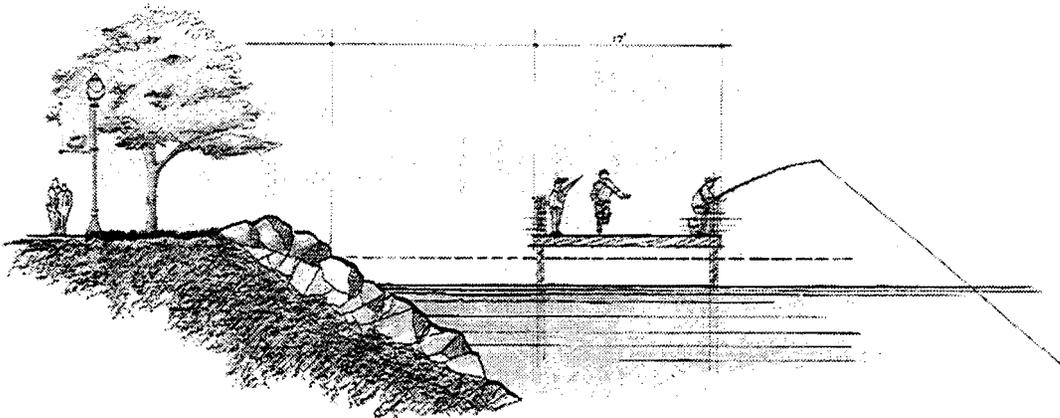


Figure 2: Shore-Parallel Lakewalk

Maritime Basin. The pedestrian walkway linking the mainland at Chicago Street extended to the island, and breakwaters extending from Municipal Pier and the north end of Harbor Island will create the maritime basin.

Quiet Water Basin. The quiet water basin located south of the proposed mainland-island connection will be designated a slow-no-wake zone to promote primarily non-motorized small boat activities including canoeing, kayaking and sailing. Shore fishing will also be a major activity along the entire basin. Occasionally, permitted special events such as ski shows will be held in the basin in conjunction with festival activities.

State Park Visitor Center. A state park building with a small lobby, display space, office, restroom, and maintenance equipment storage areas will be located at the point of entry on the island. Utilities will be extended to this building from the mainland.

Island. Island material removed to reconfigure the island will be used as fill material for the shore protection and breakwater structures. Basic park improvements to the island will include a perimeter trail, lighting, and landscaping.

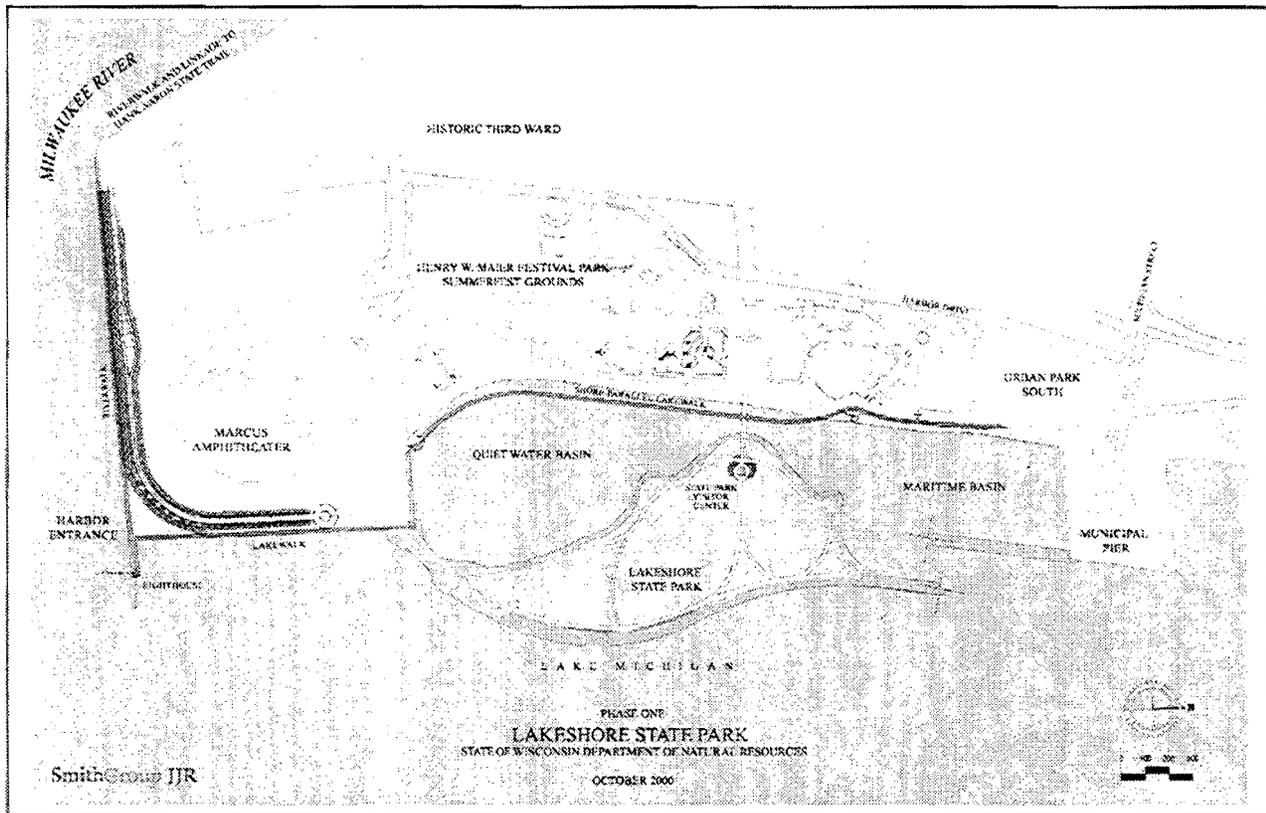


Figure 3: Phase One

Master Plan

Upon securing additional state funding, the following facilities are planned for Lakeshore State Park.

Island Amenities. The approximately 17-acre island is the park's major land-based activity area, providing shoreline fishing access along its perimeter, a small boat pebble beach, picnic areas, one to two miles of recreational trails, an interpretive feature and signage. Low-impact lighting will be provided along the trails. The vegetation on the island will consist of approximately five acres of native short grass prairie and approximately one acre of upland trees and shrubs. The remainder of the vegetation will be managed in a mowed and manicured manner.

The potential exists for the Department to work with partnership and arts groups to develop artwork on the island. This would be an excellent opportunity to continue the ribbon of artwork and sculpture along the Milwaukee and Menomonee rivers, and the Hank Aaron State Trail, to Lakeshore State Park.

Asphalt recreational trails will follow the perimeter of the island, as well as traverse it to connect various features and provide a variety of experiences through the native short grass prairie and upland trees and shrubs. The trails will be lighted to accommodate night use. An open-air interpretive facility will feature the history and importance of the Lake Michigan fishery to this immediate area and the regional river system.

As the waters of Lake Michigan provide a major source of enjoyment for fishing activity, various provisions have been made to celebrate this recreational resource. In addition to providing effective and economical shore protection, the stone revetment along the perimeter establishes extensive fish and aquatic life habitat; however, this treatment limits direct access to the water. To improve upon this condition, a pier system along the west shore of the island will bring users to the water's edge.

The addition of trees and the open green space will allow for picnicking and other recreational activities. A picnic shelter will be located at the northeast end of the island, offering magnificent views of the lake, maritime activities and Milwaukee's skyline. Its location will also be convenient to the shuttle drop-off and pedestrian access from the mainland. An overlook platform located on the south end of the island will offer prominent views of Lake Michigan and the entrance to the Port of Milwaukee at the confluence of Milwaukee's river system. The platform/tower structure could be combined with a restroom facility that demonstrates leading edge, ecologically friendly concepts such as composting toilets and photovoltaic lighting systems.

Secure small boat storage is located adjacent to the small boat beach along the quiet water basin. This location will complement the nearby boat put-in/take-out area planned along the riverwalk within the Historic Third Ward, serving as a day-trip destination point. Recreational dockage and boat camping accommodations associated with Lakeshore State Park would be located adjacent to the island on the north side of the mainland-island connection. Showers to meet the needs of overnight recreational boaters would be included in either the park building on the island or in the proposed building on Municipal Pier.

State Park Visitor Center. A state park building will be developed as part of Lakeshore State Park. A small building will be constructed on the island during Phase One park development. Additional proposed facilities, which will provide a positive experience to the Lakeshore State Park visitor, include display areas showcasing the Wisconsin State Park, Forest and Trails System and other State properties; classrooms for natural and cultural interpretation and education; and restrooms. The opportunity exists to explore locating the additional facilities on

the island or within the proposed Great Lakes Interpretive Education and Tourism Center on Municipal Pier.

Riverwalk. The riverwalk will extend along the north bank of the Milwaukee River at the harbor entrance to Erie Street. Adjacent to the walk, a parkway, or fully developed road, will provide vehicular access and parallel parking to accommodate fishing and recreational users. A circular turnaround at the end of the parkway currently serves as a drop-off area at the south end of the riverwalk. This area will also include fish cleaning and restroom facilities. The greenspace between the riverwalk and parkway will be landscaped and include light fixtures and benches. The riverwalk area will include a combination of mowed and manicured vegetation, along with upland trees and shrubs.

Maritime Basin. The Master Plan (Figure 4, page 9) depicts two alternatives for breakwater construction that would form the maritime basin. The smaller basin, defined by the inner breakwater and island breakwater would have a north facing entrance. Under the larger basin alternative, the outer breakwater would be constructed in a sweeping arc that originates just offshore of the north end of Municipal Pier, providing wave protection to the Maritime Basin and to the east face of the Municipal Pier. This breakwater would overlap the breakwater that originates from the island to form a south facing entrance to the 400-foot diameter turning basin. The breakwaters would be of rubblemound quarry stone construction and have navigation aids located at each end. The final breakwater design is dependent upon available funding and the outcome of the bidding process.

Island. The existing causeway to the island would be removed, and a breakwater would extend from the south end of the island creating the south entrance to the Quiet Water Basin.

North Harbor Tract Plan

The following paragraphs describe facilities that will not be maintained by the State, but are within the North Harbor Tract planning area. They are described within this plan because they adjoin the Park, and will thus influence Park facilities:

Access. Access to the island would be provided by a fully developed trail that intersects East Michigan Avenue at Municipal Pier and continues south along the lakeshore. Its 20-foot width would allow pedestrian and bicycle circulation, along with restricted trolley, emergency and vehicular access for people with disabilities to the island.

Maritime Basin. The maritime basin, adjacent to Municipal Pier and Urban Park South, will be maintained by the City of Milwaukee or another entity. The south edge of Municipal Pier would accommodate docking space for the Wisconsin Lake Schooner Education Association.



Figure 4: Lakeshore State Park Master Plan

D. Proposed Management and Operations

The Department should take the lead in all aspects of this project, including the development and operations of facilities, by utilizing public/private partnerships. The potential exists with this project to implement parts of the study recommendations in partnership with local units of government, private businesses and nonprofit organizations. Outlined below are potential implementation strategies and management options that should be considered – in the spirit of cooperation – in all aspects of completing this project.

Implementation strategies and operations options, which should be considered, but not mandated, include:

- Development of Facilities
Department (primary), Board of Harbor Commissioners, other City of Milwaukee agencies, Milwaukee County, Businesses, Private Landowners, Wisconsin Conservation Corp, Milwaukee Community Service Corp, Volunteers, Service Groups, Friends of Wisconsin State Parks
- Operations
Department (primary), Board of Harbor Commissioners, other City of Milwaukee agencies, Milwaukee County, Friends of Wisconsin State Parks, Service Groups
- Security
Department Rangers (primary), County Sheriff, City of Milwaukee Police, Private Security Firm, Bike Patrols

Operations

The park will operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, unless posted closed due to a public safety issue. Fireworks are currently discharged from the island during Summerfest and five summer festivals. The Department of Natural Resources intends to continue to accommodate this traditional use of approximately three acres of the southeast corner for at least the first two years of park operations. The department will work with stakeholders to explore a wide array of alternatives to insure these traditional fireworks shows can continue, while minimizing the need to exclude the public from the park during set up, discharge and clean up of fireworks.

Personnel – Six permanent civil service positions, and 9.3 full-time equivalents (i.e. limited-term employees, volunteers, etc.) are recommended to provide adequate management, maintenance and programming at the park. The permanent civil service positions include a park manager, assistant park manager, naturalist and three rangers. A park manager position was included in a special appropriation to the fiscal year 2000 state budget.

Supplies and Services – Continuing supplies and services necessary to manage a property of this size in an urban area with the types of proposed development will include such items as utilities, motor fuel, vehicle charges, refuse hauling, equipment repairs, building repairs and site preventative maintenance.

Capital Equipment – One-time capital equipment necessary to manage the Park will include such items as a patrol/administrative vehicle, truck with a plow and dump box, patrol boat, maintenance equipment, radios, and base station and law enforcement equipment.

Section IV Property Resources and Regional Analysis

A. Resource Capabilities and Inventories

Cultural and Historical. Native American occupation of southeastern Wisconsin in the vicinity of Lake Michigan began approximately 10,000 years ago and continued through the mid-nineteenth century. The Lake Michigan shoreline area provided an excellent home for Native Americans for several thousand years. The combination of extensive wetlands, rivers, lake and lake estuary, upland bluffs and woodlands allowed for fishing, hunting a diversity of mammals and birds, and agricultural practice. There are a significant number of recorded mounds, prehistoric burial sites and village and garden areas resulting from various Indian occupations located near the study area. In the 1830s, the Menomonee and Potawatomi were forced to cede their lands to the United States government and were removed to lands west of the Mississippi River.

The nearest known archaeological site on dry land is known as the Michigan Street Site and is near the corner of Michigan Street and Lincoln Memorial Drive. It is an unnamed historic Native American cemetery with burials said to date as late as 1840.

By the 1840s, European settlers were farming in southeastern Wisconsin, and by 1850 Milwaukee's population had grown to 31,077. Population growth continued until 1970, when the U.S. Bureau of the Census counted over one million people living in Milwaukee County. Milwaukee County remains the most populated county in the state.

There are four shipwreck sites recorded within the park boundary – the Kearsage, the Liberty, the Ida H. Lee, and the Hurrah Boys. The locations are reported within the park boundary on the basis of historical research and have not been subjected to underwater investigation. The Kearsage was a wooden schooner weighing 153 gross tons, the Liberty was a two-masted wooden schooner that sank in 1898, the Ida H. Lee was a wooden tug that sank in 1874, and the Hurrah Boys was a wooden scow that became stranded and sank in 1874.

Parks and Open Space. There are a number of Milwaukee County Parks along the Lake Michigan shoreline. The parks north of downtown Milwaukee and their respective acreage include Doctors (49.5 acres), Big Bay (7.5 acres), Lake (140.3 acres), Bradford Beach (19.3 acres), Back Bay (6.3 acres), McKinley (119.2 acres), Veterans (92.8 acres), Juneau (15.0 acres) and O'Donnell (9 acres.) The parks south of the downtown include South Shore (48 acres), Bay View (35.9), Sheridan (84.1), Warnimont (291.6 acres), Grant (381.4 acres), and Bender (308.4 acres.)

The recreational facilities at these parks range from hiking and biking trails, swimming beaches and picnic areas to boat launches, golf courses, and a variety of playing fields.

Water Resources. The water quality of the outer harbor has generally improved over recent years as a result of water pollution abatement projects, which include upgrades to the Jones Island wastewater treatment plant, the completion of the deep tunnel project, and urban and rural nonpoint source pollution reduction programs.

Since the creation of Harbor Island and the lagoon in 1991, the flow of water from the outer harbor into and out of the lagoon is through a channel along the shoreline of the festival grounds at the north end of the lagoon and through culverts at the south end of Harbor Island. There are also several storm sewer discharge outfalls into the lagoon, which drain runoff water from North Harbor Tract (NHT) lands.

Fisheries. Since the completion of Harbor Island in August 1991, the nearshore fishery in the surrounding Lake Michigan waters has undergone dramatic changes. The populations of smallmouth bass, northern pike and other species have increased in the Milwaukee Harbor and estuary, most dramatically in the lagoon created by Harbor Island. This area provides multiple benefits to these species including habitat for spawning, nursery and feeding. The population increases have been well documented through creel surveys and ongoing monitoring of the fishery resources in this area. These increases have helped to offset the recent losses in fishing opportunities for yellow perch for nearshore anglers. In addition, the Department's Lake Michigan Work Unit has recently begun restoration of the walleye fishery in the Milwaukee estuary, which to date is showing very positive results. The population increases and successful restoration will depend on maintaining and improving the quality and integrity of aquatic habitat and water quality in the Milwaukee River estuary. In recent years the area has increasingly become a favorite fishing location. The lagoon has unique habitat conditions and supports a year-round fishery. There are some winter fishing opportunities, when ice conditions are favorable, for northern pike, brown trout and walleye; in the spring, bass, sunfishes and steelhead are popular; in the summer and fall, northern pike, walleye, trout and salmon provide a good fishery.

Vegetation. Historically, the Milwaukee area was predominantly covered by mixed hardwood forests with a large estuary and wetland area in the lower Menomonee River Valley, extending to what is now the Historic Third Ward. The river valley and lake/wetland interface consisted of wild rice, tamarack swamps, black ash and other wetland plant species. The lowland areas consisted of sugar maple, black oak, red oak, ash, ironwood (basswood) and American elm. North of the project area was a forest of predominantly sugar maple and beech. To the south of the project area the forest consisted of maple and basswood.

The existing vegetative cover on the island is an open landscape dominated by short to moderately tall grasses. The height of the grasses has varied from year to year and as a result of mowing frequency.

Wildlife. The Milwaukee County Lake Michigan shoreline, with its abundant wooded landscapes, is generally very attractive to migratory birds. Most open habitats preferred by grassland birds are absent from the shoreline. However, the 17-acre island that is part of Lakeshore State Park -- an open landscape dominated by short to moderately tall grasses -- provides important habitat for migrating Henslow's sparrows (a state threatened species), Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows (very rare), LeConte's sparrows (rare) and Harris' sparrows (a western visitor.) Henslow's, Nelson's sharp-tailed and LeConte's sparrows are also species of special concern, as are the Northern harrier and Savannah sparrow -- meaning a species for which a problem with abundance or distribution is suspected. The classification or category is intended to focus attention on certain species before they become threatened or endangered. The island is one of only two reliable sites in southeastern Wisconsin to find Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows during migration.

The island is also used by several additional migratory species such as the snowy owl, short-eared owl (special concern), northern harrier (special concern), snow bunting and Lapland longspur. Several shorebird species use the island, including killdeer (also nesting), spotted sandpiper (nesting nearby), whimbrel (rare), buff-breasted sandpiper (rare), common snipe, black-bellied plover, and golden plover (uncommon.) These shorebirds often roost in small groups on or near the rocks on the lakeside of the island. Concentrations of uncommon species like the sora (a rail species) use the island occasionally for short-term stopovers. Other birds breeding on the island include savannah sparrow (special concern), song sparrow, and two gull species.

B. Regional Analysis

The NHT, of which Lakeshore State Park is a part, is within a five-to-ten minute walk from the Central Business District and the Historic Third Ward. The NHT is the site of recent and ongoing exciting developments; citizens and visitors will greatly benefit from such attractions as the Milwaukee Art Museum expansion designed by internationally renowned architect Santiago Calatrava; the Wisconsin Lake Schooner Education Association's proposed Great Lakes Interpretive Education & Tourism Center at Municipal Pier; the opening of the public access lakewalk along Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds; and the opportunity to be the destination for both international- and regional-operated cruise vessels. As the NHT has been primarily used for festival activities, recreation and open space since the mid-1970s, these new developments, along with successful retail and residential development along the riverfront and within the Historic Third Ward, contribute to its popularity as a destination point for both residents and visitors.

Lakeshore State Park will be the easternmost focal point of a recreational trail system that will eventually connect the Lake Michigan shoreline and downtown Milwaukee with the Hank Aaron State Trail and the western suburbs; with state and county trails between Milwaukee, Madison and Dodgeville; and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. As part of the regional open space system, this corridor would also provide an important linkage among many cultural, historic and natural sites in the county.

The Historic Third Ward, a developing mixed-use community located immediately west of the park site, is enjoying its own renaissance as condo conversions and other commercial developments have dramatically increased assessed values. An innovative RiverWalk extension from downtown into the Third Ward is in the process of being planned. The proposed Lakeshore State Park riverwalk along the Harbor Entrance and the lakewalk along the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds will complete the linkage.

The Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds, home of Summerfest and various ethnic and cultural festivals, is a vital element of the cultural and economic life of Milwaukee. Its development on a lakebed grant and its leasing arrangement with the City has brought public access issues to the forefront. Summerfest and United World Festivals are working with the City and State to arrive at solutions to provide access and satisfy the operational needs of festival management.

C. Property History

Development of the Island. Harbor Island, the approximately 17-acre island/peninsula, was created in 1991 by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) in collaboration with the City of Milwaukee Board of Harbor Commissioners to provide shore protection for the festival grounds, a protected harbor of refuge for small craft and a low-cost disposal site for rock generated by MMSD deep tunnel operations. The island core was created with dolomite limestone and granular fill from the deep tunnel project. The Lake Michigan shoreline of the island is lined with dolomite limestone rubblemound revetment and the lagoon side of the island is lined with dolomite limestone riprap. Topsoil, Kentucky bluegrass and a crushed stone perimeter path are the only improvements to date. The dedication monument on the Island reads "This Island named Harbor Island was dedicated for the public use and enjoyment by Mayor John O. Norquist on 10-9-91."

Access to the Island. The island is located offshore from the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds along Lake Michigan with access via an asphalt-paved causeway. There is vehicular access to the island from the southeastern side of the Festival Grounds. The approach to the island has

sidewalks along the lake with safety railings at different heights to accommodate people in wheelchairs. The sidewalks are separated from the road and parking spaces with green space. There is non-vehicular access to Harbor Island and a limestone path approximately 10-15 feet wide follows the perimeter of the Island.

Management of the Island. The island is managed by the City of Milwaukee Board of Harbor Commissioners, which has approved a use and hours of operation policy. The island is open from 4:00 a.m. to sunset except during festivals, during which time it is open from 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The Board of Harbor Commissioners is the managing agency, but many other agencies and organizations have an interest in how the island and festival grounds are managed. The interested parties and their main area of interest include the City, holder of the lakebed grant; the Port of Milwaukee/Board of Harbor Commissioners, manager; World Festivals, Inc., lessee of festival grounds; the Lake Shore Fisherman's Sports Club, Ltd., public access; fireworks operators, access and safety; and the Department of Natural Resources, public access and administrator of the Public Trust Doctrine.

Issues Regarding Use. The need for more year-round prominent public access to Harbor Island and the lakefront adjacent to the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds has been recognized and explored in recent years. The Lake Shore Fisherman's Sports Club, Ltd. is the main organization that has contacted the City, Department, local legislators and others about providing access to these areas.

The entrance to the island is currently fenced and gated. It is used by fireworks operators and others with a permit by the Port of Milwaukee. The anglers have advocated for public access and the development of parking and other facilities. The City and Harbor Commission have stated that they believe access should be provided, but they do not have funds available to do so. World Festivals, Inc. has expressed concern that public access would have an impact on their economic well being because festival-goers would have free access to music if the island were open during the summer festivals. The Department has stated numerous times, in correspondence and at meetings, that to uphold the Public Trust Doctrine, the public should have access to the island. In 1992, the City received a \$150,000 grant from the Department to develop a lakewalk and vehicle turn-a-round on the south end of the festival grounds.

Studies Completed for the Area. In 1992, the City published a report entitled "A Plan for Milwaukee's Lakefront" in which the City recommended policies, actions and responsible parties for the management of the lakefront lands in the City. The report outlined some responsibilities of the Department including (a) aggressively pursue implementation of the Milwaukee Riverlink Guidelines, (b) continue development of estuary RAP Phase II, (c) cosponsor Public Trust conference, and (d) collaborate with the City and County on a pamphlet-type fishing guide. The report did not recommend that the Department manage any of the lakefront lands. The Department has followed through on recommendations a and b, and has also developed a videotape on the Public Trust Doctrine.

The report also stated that Harbor Island has the potential to be a major recreational amenity and that the island should continue to be a place for quiet respite from festival activities, that utilities on the island be minimized, that moderate development of recreational facilities is acceptable and that accessibility of the island be improved. Issues related to its development on a lakebed grant has led the City to suggest that the island would best be managed by the Department.

D. Department Contact

The Department Contact for Lakeshore State Park is:

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Regional Landscape Architect
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212

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Section V Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Plan

Environmental Analysis and Decision on the Need for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Southeast Region, Land Services Type List Designation - NR 150.03(6)(a)6.a.

This environmental analysis evaluates probable environmental effects of the recommendations in the Lakeshore State Park Master Plan and evaluates the need for an EIS. This assessment includes a description of the proposal and the affected environment.

A. Overview

The proposed Lakeshore State Park would encompass an approximately 22-acre park along the Lake Michigan shoreline in downtown Milwaukee. The park includes the 17-acre Harbor Island, a lakewalk, and a riverwalk along the Harbor Entrance to Erie Street. The project will connect to the Hank Aaron State Trail and other local, regional and state recreational facilities.

Title to the lakebed within the state park boundary is granted to the City and managed by the City's Board of Harbor Commissioners. Land transfers will be negotiated between the City and the State of Wisconsin.

B. Environmental Effects and Their Significance

This project will enhance the quality of the environment. It is anticipated that there will be a change in the wildlife habitat, benefiting some species that currently use the island and having a negative impact on others. The habitat that is currently provided is valuable to a variety of species. Adding buildings, paved walkways that bisect the island, a significant area of manicured lawn and trees will have an impact on the wildlife species that currently use the island. Recreational facilities on the island will be expanded and improved upon to allow for greater access to the island and to improve the habitat of the island and shoreline. Over time, we should see an improvement to the water resources in the proposed quiet water and maritime basins.

Wildlife. The Milwaukee County Lake Michigan shoreline, with its abundant wooded landscapes, is generally very attractive to migratory birds. Most open habitats preferred by grassland birds are absent from the shoreline. However, the 17-acre island that is part of Lakeshore State Park -- an open landscape dominated by short to moderately tall grasses -- provides important habitat for Henslow's sparrows (a state threatened species), Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows (very rare), LeConte's sparrows (rare) and Harris' sparrows (a western visitor.) Henslow's, Nelson's sharp-tailed and LeConte's sparrows are also species of special concern, as are the Northern harrier and Savannah sparrow -- meaning a species for which a problem with abundance or distribution is suspected. The classification or category is intended to focus attention on certain species before they become threatened or endangered. The island is one of only two reliable sites in southeastern Wisconsin to find Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows during migration.

The island is also used by several migratory bird species such as snowy owls, short-eared owls, snow buntings and Lapland longspurs. Use by migrating shorebirds, which prefer drier habitats, includes killdeer, spotted sandpipers, whimbrels (rare), buff-breasted sandpipers (rare), common snipe, black-bellied plovers and American golden plovers (uncommon.) Most of these

species roost in small groups on or near the rocks on the lakeside of the island. Concentrations of uncommon species like sora rails use the island occasionally for short-term stopovers.

The anticipated increased use of the island during the spring and fall, and habitat modification could have a negative impact on migratory birds, detracting certain species from using the island during those times. The nesting success of some bird species that currently use the island could be negatively affected. There could also be a short-term impact on use of the park by migratory species during the construction of facilities. Potential positive impacts include increased viewing opportunities which could serve to enhance public knowledge about wildlife resources and conservation, provision of feeding, loafing and roosting habitat that will attract birds during migration, and additional nesting, breeding, perching and roosting habitat for bird species that benefit from and adapt to an urban landscape.

Recreation. Increased recreational facilities will include an improved riverwalk along the Harbor Entrance, a lakewalk along the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds, increased and improved fishing access and associated amenities such as restrooms and fish cleaning stations, educational interpretive signage, an observation tower and group picnic facilities. The interpretive signage will focus on awareness of the Lake Michigan fishery as a significant natural resource.

Endangered Species. The Natural Heritage Inventory record of occurrence for threatened and endangered species includes the bloater, a species of special concern – meaning one that is not protected by state law. The bloater is currently commercially harvested. Minimal disturbance of bloater habitat is expected during the construction of Lakeshore State Park. Long-term impacts are not expected to be significant and can be further minimized with the posting of a slow-no-wake zone in the quiet water basin.

With terrestrial and avian species, Peregrine falcons are not anticipated to be negatively affected; however, wildlife species of threatened status, and those of special management concern do use the island in the current vegetative condition to meet some of their life requirements. Though the use of the island by some of these species may be rare, the change in the habitat structure may negatively impact them.

Fisheries. Since the completion of Harbor Island in August 1991, the nearshore fishery in the surrounding Lake Michigan waters has undergone dramatic changes. The populations of smallmouth bass, northern pike and other species have increased in the Milwaukee Harbor and estuary, most dramatically in the lagoon created by Harbor Island. This area provides multiple benefits to these species, including habitat for spawning, a nursery and feeding area. The population increases have been well-documented through creel surveys and ongoing monitoring of the fishery resources. These increases have helped to offset the recent losses in yellow perch fishing opportunities for nearshore anglers. In addition, the Department's Lake Michigan Work Unit has begun restoration of the walleye fishery in the Milwaukee estuary, which to date is showing very positive results. The population increases and successful restoration will depend on maintaining and improving the quality and integrity of aquatic habitat and water quality in the Milwaukee River estuary. In recent years this area has increasingly become the favorite location of Lake Michigan anglers. The lagoon has unique habitat conditions and supports a year-round fishery. When the lagoon freezes, it provides ice fishing opportunities for northern pike, brown trout and walleye. In the spring, fishing for bass, sunfishes and steelhead is popular. In the summer and fall, northern pike, walleye, trout and salmon provide a good fishery.

Department fisheries management staff in the Lake Michigan Work Unit expect that the proposed project may adversely impact the recently developed fisheries and aquatic resources

in the harbor area. The removal of some of the large limestone riprap from the perimeter of the lagoon will cause a short-term loss of cover for fish and other aquatic organisms and may also impact forage production.

Establishing an open entrance on the southern end of the island may change the flow patterns and temperature regimes in the quiet water basin. Rooted macrophytes and existing substrate habitat may also be affected. These changes may adversely affect the spawning conditions for fish, especially centrarchids, which are successfully spawning now. A change in the flow pattern and wind effect due to the opening of the southern end of the island may inhibit freezing and thus impact future ice fishing opportunities.

Construction activities on the lakebed in the area, such as beach formation or removal of rocks may severely disturb the substrate and rooted vegetation. These activities may also displace fish during spawning periods or lead to the loss of valuable spawning habitat. Increased boating activity may disturb the fishery and habitat within these basins.

It can take several years for an aquatic community to develop and mature. The coolwater fish population in this area is now providing sustainable quality fishing opportunities. The restoration efforts directed toward the walleye fishery is providing encouraging results. The smallmouth bass and northern pike are providing a quality fishery and are showing good natural reproduction, with multiple year classes present. The proposed changes to this area may have an impact on some of the coolwater fishery and habitat. These impacts are likely to be short term in nature and site specific. Some areas, especially along the new breakwater extensions, should result in an increase in fishery habitat. Overall, the long-term impacts are not expected to be significant.

Steps that can be taken to minimize the damage to the fish and aquatic resources include minimizing the disturbance to the habitat during the removal of rocks from the existing lakeshore; avoiding, if possible, the fish spawning periods during digging activities; and posting the quiet water basin as a slow-no-wake zone.

Water Resources. The water quality of the outer harbor has generally improved over recent years as a result of water pollution abatement projects, which include upgrades to the Jones Island wastewater treatment plant, the completion of the deep tunnel project and urban and rural nonpoint source pollution reduction programs.

Since the creation of Harbor Island and the lagoon in 1991, the flow of water from the outer harbor into and out of the lagoon is through a channel along the shoreline of the festival grounds at the north end of the lagoon and through culverts at the south end of Harbor Island. There are also several storm sewer discharge outfalls into the lagoon, which drain runoff water from NHT lands.

There is the potential for short-term impacts during the construction of park facilities. Sediment from exposed land surfaces can be carried away with runoff water and discharged into the lagoon. Installing and maintaining proper erosion control measures throughout the construction process can significantly reduce sedimentation impacts. There are no anticipated long-term stormwater runoff impacts because the recommended changes to the island landscape are minimal. The restructuring of the island may have an impact on the circulation of water into and out of the lagoon from the outer harbor, depending on the design measures taken to maintain or improve the existing circulation. Aquatic plant management and debris removal activities will likely need to continue to maintain the aesthetics of the lagoon areas.

Environmental Contamination. Although most of the project area encompasses Harbor Island and a proposed connecting walk, there is one area that is likely to contain contamination -- the portion of the project area that runs along the sheetpile bulkhead on the southern and southeastern area of the grounds near the Marcus Amphitheatre. Historical records show that the entire project area was once lakebed that has been subsequently filled.

We have no actual geotechnical data specific to the project area, but we are fairly confident that it consists of the same type of fill material that was found on one area of the festival grounds and the Milwaukee Art Museum parcel immediately north of the proposed park. Information from two separate reports shows that fill materials exist on both the Henry W. Maier Festival Grounds as well as the Milwaukee Art Museum property. These areas commonly contain ash, glass fragments, cinders, foundry sand and building demolition materials (wood, brick, concrete, etc.) Contaminants such as heavy metals, volatile organic compounds and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons can be found at both locations in both soil and groundwater -- in some cases exceeding state standards. It is likely that these same fill materials as well as similar soil and groundwater contamination would be found in the areas of the project mentioned above.

Due to the presence of these materials, any work performed at these locations would need to comply with Wisconsin Administrative Code NR 506.085. Soil and groundwater remediation may also be necessary and would have to follow the NR 700 series of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

Increased motor boat activity within both the quiet water and maritime basins may increase the emissions of petroleum-based material to the air and water resources.

C. Significance of Cumulative Effects

The project is expected to have minimal impact on local land values, as the adjacent lands and much of the surrounding lands are already in public ownership. The cumulative effect of protecting resources and providing additional recreational facilities will contribute to the commitment of the Department in protecting and managing urban natural resources.

The project may serve as a model of private and public sector cooperation. It could be a catalyst for the further greening of the urban Lake Michigan coastline, thus focusing attention on Lake Michigan as a natural and recreational resource and community asset.

It is possible that use conflicts may occur within the water basins due to an increase in access and recreational activities.

D. Significance of Risk

Without the development of Lakeshore State Park, there is the risk of not knowing when or if quality recreational amenities would be available.

There is also a risk of finding environmental contamination that is referred to in the Master Plan report. Environmental investigations that may include soil and groundwater testing will be conducted prior to the development of project facilities on any potentially contaminated sites.

The fishery may be adversely impacted, as noted under the Environmental Effects and Their Significance section. Positive impacts, such as an improved fishery, are also anticipated to occur. With the development of the proposed facilities, additional fish habitat areas will be formed. Access to the recreational fishery will be improved with additional and enhanced facilities.

The anticipated increased use of the island during the spring and fall, and habitat modification could have a negative impact on migratory birds, detracting certain species from using the island during those times. The nesting success of some bird species that currently use the island could be negatively affected. There could also be a short-term impact on use of the park by migratory species during the construction of facilities. Potential positive impacts include increased viewing opportunities which could serve to enhance public knowledge about wildlife resources and conservation, provision of feeding, loafing and roosting habitat that will attract birds during migration, and additional nesting, breeding, perching and roosting habitat for bird species that benefit from and adapt to an urban landscape. Wildlife species of threatened status, and those of special management concern use the island in the current vegetative condition. Though the use of the island by some of these species may be rare, the change in the habitat structure may negatively impact them.

E. Significance of Precedent

The development of a lakewalk, fishing access sites, and other recreational facilities is not precedent setting.

This project is being planned consistent and in partnership with the City of Milwaukee Board of Harbor Commissioners. It is also consistent with the City's 1992 "Plan for Milwaukee's Lakefront", with the Department of Natural Resources' 1994 "Milwaukee Estuary Remedial Action Plan" and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's 1992 "A Regional Land Use Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin-2010."

F. Significance of Controversy over Environmental Effects

Citizen Participation. There has been considerable emphasis on gathering citizen and stakeholder input during the master planning process. The Department held three open houses (one in partnership with the City of Milwaukee Board of Harbor Commissioners) between October and December 1998. Other meetings were held with various stakeholder groups such as World Festivals, Inc., United Festivals, the Historic Third Ward Association, the Wisconsin Lake Schooner Education Association and the Economic Development Committee of the City of Milwaukee Board of Harbor Commissioners. The meetings were held to provide information and to receive comments from the public on various conceptual plans.

Changes in Land Ownership and Land Use. It is the policy of the Natural Resources Board to acquire land within a project boundary from willing sellers or through donations. The land proposed for Lakeshore State Park is part of an area of lakebed granted by the State to the City. Ownership of land will be negotiated between the City and the State.

G. Alternatives to the Proposed Project and Their Impacts

The following concepts were developed with the assistance of stakeholder and public input.

Alternative 1 - No Action. With this alternative, the Department would not own or develop recreational facilities associated with Lakeshore State Park. Year-round access to the lakefront may not be continued, the State would not have the opportunity to showcase the state park system at this location and an educational/interpretive focus on the Lake Michigan fishery may not occur.

This alternative would result in a missed opportunity for the state park system to have a strong presence in the most highly populated city in the state, and to enhance recreational facilities and

natural resource habitats in an urban setting. Also, the Department would lose the opportunity to partner with the private and public sectors on a well-supported project along Milwaukee's lakefront.

Alternative 2. This alternative (Figure 5) provides a single basin with the entrance and exit located at the south entrance to the basin. Access to Harbor Island is from the southeast corner of Municipal Pier. The northern end of the basin is designed to accommodate charter boats, the Schooner and dinner cruises. Recreational dockage is located on the western side of Harbor Island. A small boat beach is incorporated into the southwest inside of Harbor Island. The State Park building is located on Harbor Island. A public lakewalk extends from Municipal Pier to the Marcus Amphitheater. A cruise ship terminal is located at the end of Erie Street.

The primary impacts of this concept include use conflicts, congestion and potential boating safety issues. In addition, the location of a building on the island poses construction challenges and significantly higher building costs.

Alternative 3. This alternative (Figure 6) provides two separate basins. The northern basin, adjacent to the southern side of Municipal Pier, provides an area for the mooring of the Schooner and charter and dinner cruise boats. The southern basin accommodates recreational boat dockage and includes a small boat beach. Harbor Island is accessed from a causeway built off of Urban Park South that separates the two basins. The State Park building is located on Harbor Island. A public lakewalk extends from Municipal Pier to the Marcus Amphitheater. A cruise ship terminal is located at the end of Erie Street.

Potential impacts of this concept include boating safety issues in the maritime basin because of its relatively small size, construction challenges and higher costs related to locating a building on the island, and a decrease in angling opportunities due to the location of recreational boat dockage on the west edge of the island.

Alternative 4. This alternative (Figure 7) also provides for two separate basins, and is a refinement of Alternative 3. The State Park building is located on fill just off of the causeway. Recreational facilities on the island include recreational dockage extending from the southwest corner of Municipal Pier, a 200-foot small boat beach, an observation tower, a picnic shelter, two overlook areas off of the north and south ends of the island, hiking trails and interpretive signage. The south water basin is designated a "quiet water basin", and a slow-no-wake ordinance is recommended.

Impacts associated with this concept include boating safety issues in the maritime basin because of its relatively small size, and the lost opportunity of sharing space for Welcome Center activities and facilities within the proposed Great Lakes Interpretive Education & Tourism Center on Municipal Pier.

Alternative 5. This alternative (Figure 8) provides for two separate basins, but the northern basin is larger because of the reconfiguration of the Municipal Pier breakwater. The new breakwater would start at the same location (southeast corner of the Municipal Pier) and would be constructed in an arc that wraps around the outside of the breakwater that extends from the north side of Harbor Island. This new configuration would accommodate a 400-foot turning radius inside the north basin. In the event the Schooner would have a malfunctioning engine, the increased basin size would allow safe maneuvering and docking with only one operational engine.

The impact associated with this basin is the amount of potential short-term disturbance to the existing fishery and habitat surrounding the island.

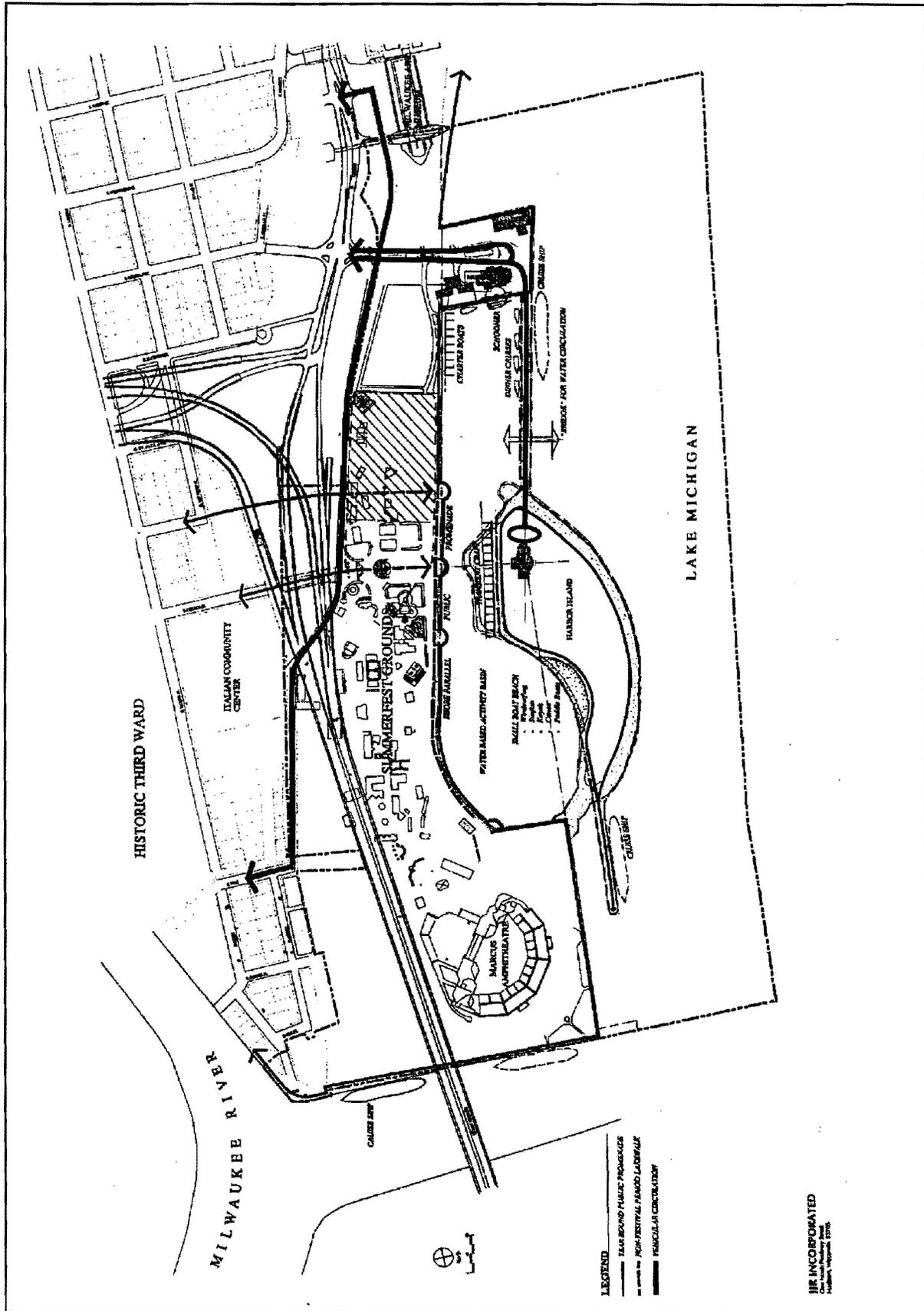


Figure 5: Alternative 2

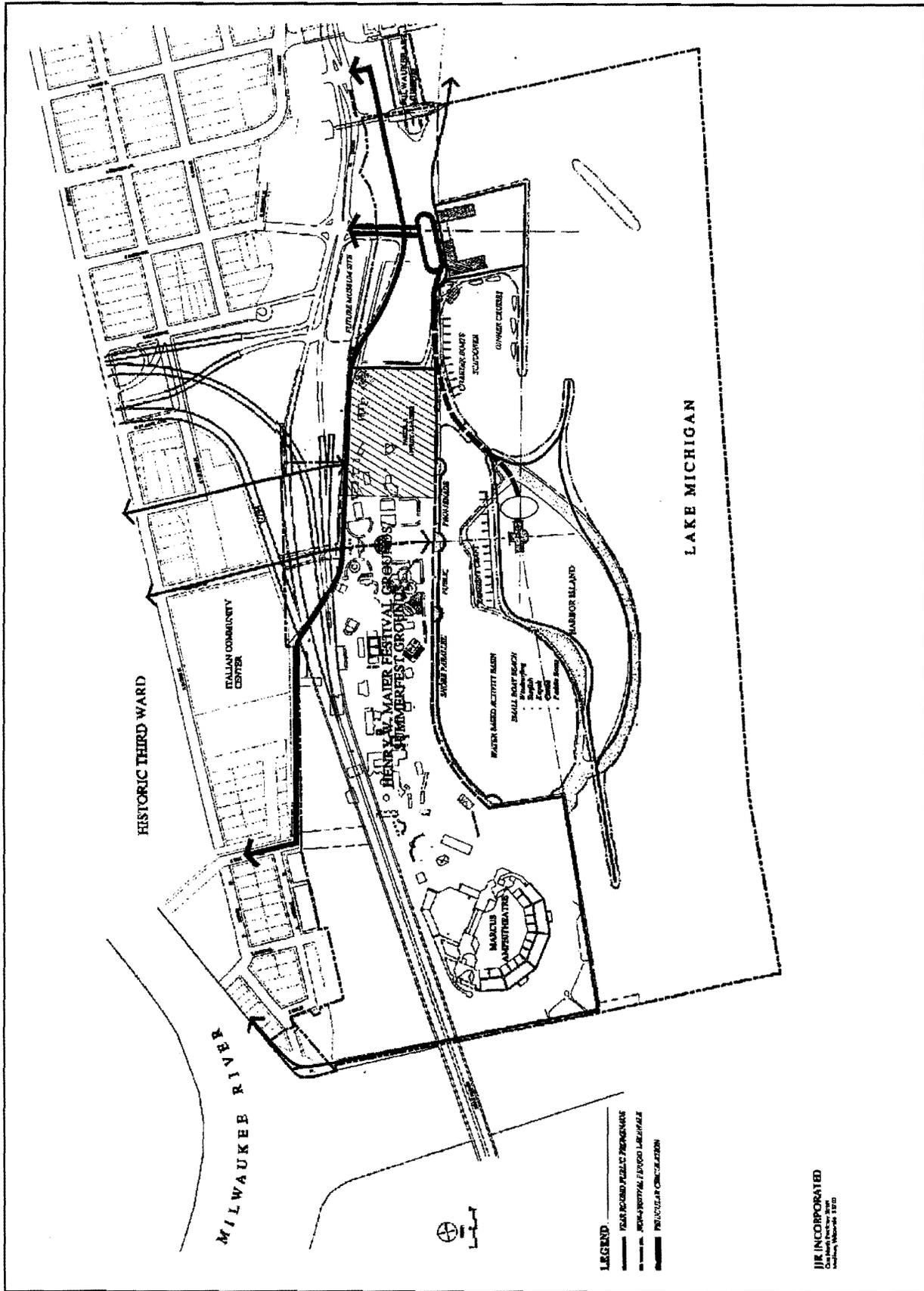


Figure 6: Alternative 3

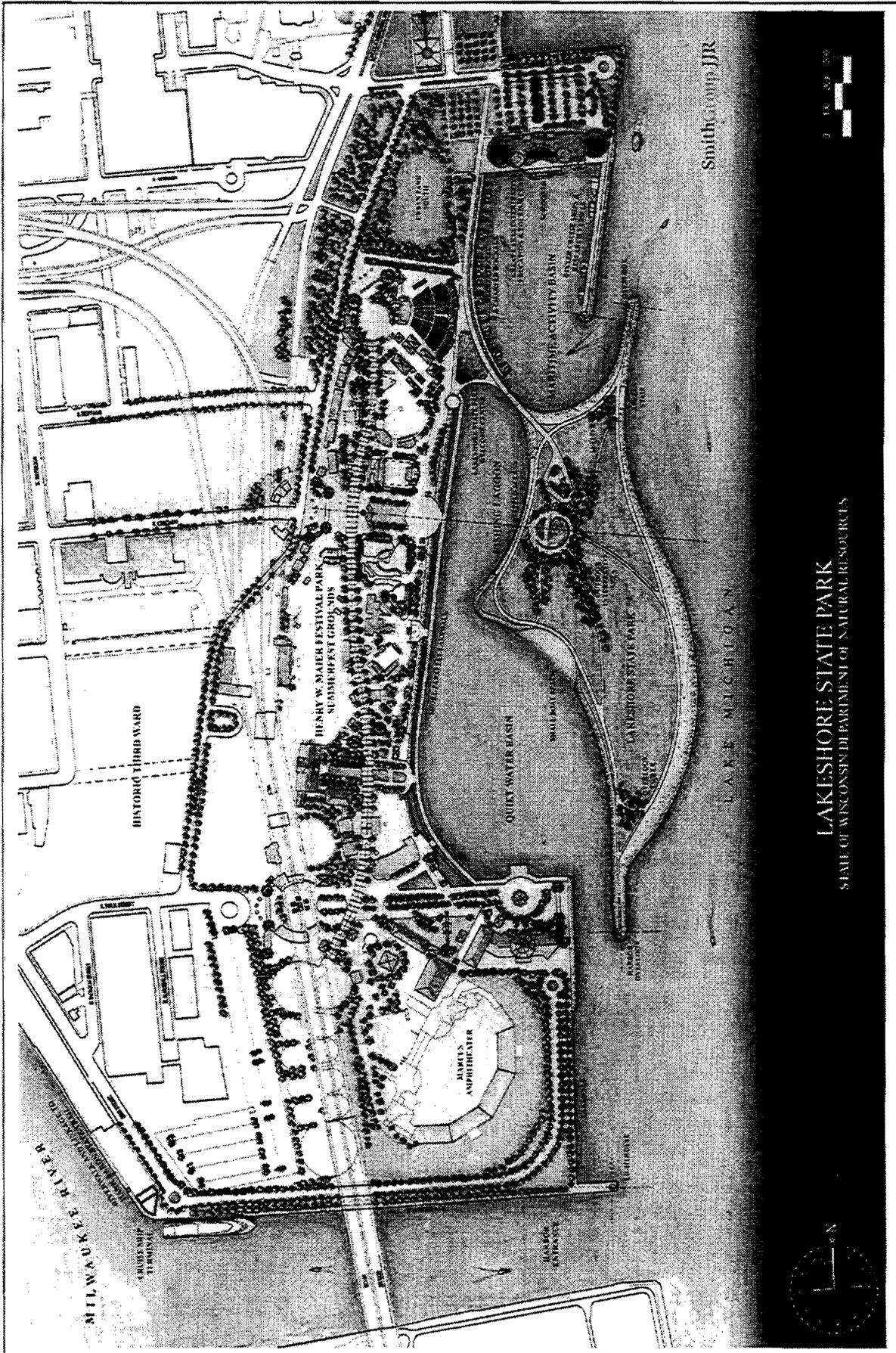


Figure 7: Alternative 4

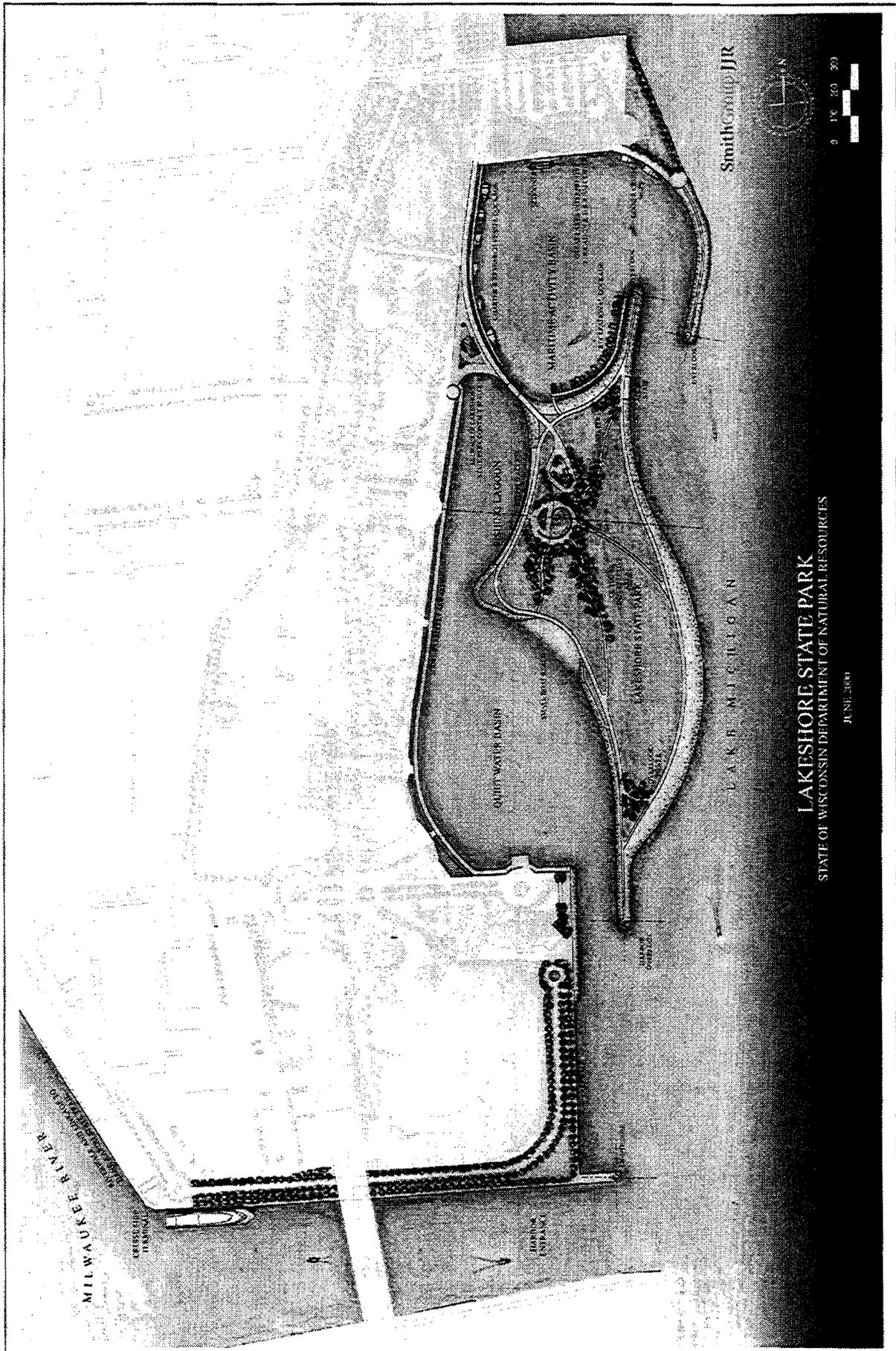


Figure 8: Alternative 5

H. Compliance with the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act

Decision

In accordance with s.1.11, Stats., and Ch. NR 150 Adm. Code, the Department is authorized and required to determine whether it has complied with s.1.11, Stats., and Chapter NR 150, Wis. Admin. Code.

EIS Process Not Required

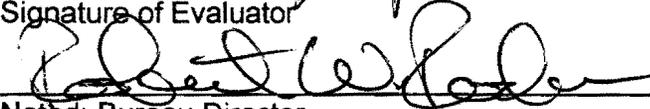
The attached analysis of the expected impacts of this proposal is of sufficient scope and detail to conclude that this is not a major action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. In my opinion, therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required prior to final action by the Department on this project.



Signature of Evaluator

10/10/00

Date Signed



Noted: Bureau Director

10/10/00

Date Signed

Number of responses to news releases or other notice: 18

Certified to be in Compliance with WEPA



Regional Director or
Director of Bureau of Integrated Science Services
(or designee)

10/10/00

Date Signed

Notice of Appeal Rights

This notice is provided pursuant to Section 227.48 (2), Stats. If you believe that you have a right to challenge this decision, you should know that Wisconsin statutes and administrative rules establish time periods within which requests to review Department decisions must be filed. For judicial review of a decision pursuant to Sections 227.52 and 227.53, Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department, to file your petition with the appropriate circuit court and serve the petition on the Department. Such a petition for judicial review shall name the Department of Natural Resources as the respondent.

To request a contested case hearing pursuant to Section 227.42, Stats., you have 30 days after the decision is mailed, or otherwise served by the Department of Natural Resources. The filing of a request for a contested case hearing is not a prerequisite for judicial review and does not extend the 30-day period for filing a petition for judicial review.

Note: Not all Department decisions respecting environmental impact, such as those involving solid waste or hazardous waste facilities under Sections 144.43 to 144.47 and 144.60 to 144.74, Stats., are subject to the contested case hearing provisions of Section 227.42, Stats.

This notice is provided pursuant to Section 227.48(2), Stats.

Section VI Appendices

A. Citizen Participation

The creation of the Lakeshore State Park Master Plan has been a highly interactive process involving a complex combination of stakeholders and user groups. Coupled with the planning process for Milwaukee's North Harbor Tract, the project has been responsive to diverse interests and needs.

An open house was held on November 11, 1998 by the Department and the Port of Milwaukee to gather information from stakeholders. A draft vision statement, goals and objectives, along with three concepts, were displayed for review and comment, of which the input was used to prepare two alternative concepts for public review.

On November 24, 1998, these two alternatives were displayed and discussed at a public open house. Approximately 100 people attended to comment and provide input for the preliminary final concept.

A second public open house was held on December 16, 1998, at which the preliminary final concept was presented. Comments from this open house, along with those gained through a series of meetings with related organizations, were incorporated into a final concept plan.

B. Public Comments

11 November 1998

Port of Milwaukee, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Public Comments from WDNR and Port of Milwaukee Open House

I. Location Specific Comments

1. Explore improved entry design from HTW to Urban Park South/State Park.
2. Incorporate children's play equipment into South Urban Park.
3. Provide multipurpose/year round use of Parcel A.
4. Provide tall ship exhibit opportunities.
5. Enhance landscape treatment along the water adjacent to the Marcus Amphitheater.
6. Explore the possibility of organized permit events on island to include picnicking, camping for youth groups, etc.
7. Reduce the size of the gravel beach.
8. Incorporate interpretive signage program about history of Wisconsin – Wall of honor around perimeter of island.
9. Necessary control point for access onto the island – could also locate restrooms, showers and other services (fish cleaning station) for boaters, fishers, etc. at this location.
10. Restrooms on the island are desirable.
11. No boat tie-up along this section of the parallel pier.
12. Opportunity for access to the festival grounds and boat tie-up.
13. No parking on the island, but a drop-off for programs which bring the aged, and perhaps children, to the island would be desirable.

14. Prefer less rock at entrance to enhance fishing.
15. Request for railings with pole holder attachment on outboard side of walk along entire length.
16. Opportunity to incorporate barrier-free step/ramp system to provide access to the water (additional cost of \$250,000 for 600'.)
17. Incorporate public restrooms near the Marcus Amphitheater for fishers.
18. Opportunity to incorporate access walk and fishing cell at north breakwater extension of island (additional cost of \$250,000)
19. Opportunity to incorporate access walk and fishing cell at south breakwater extension of island (additional cost of \$200,000)

II. General Comments

1. Prefer two basins; less conflicts between users, including boaters/yachts and small craft.
2. Will there be a fee to access the island?
3. Allow for the continuation of fishing programs for kids – 60,000 have been trained over the past 10 years.
4. There is a concern that the City or State will discontinue shore fishing on the lakewalk/promenade.
5. There is a desire to allow free parking for the fishers from 3am to 7am and 6pm to 10pm.
6. Will there be a need for fueling facilities?
7. Five or more slips – need for garbage collection.
8. Concern about bilge discharge.
9. How will water circulation in the basins be addressed?
10. Clean up of trash in harbor is a concern.
11. Traffic scheme for tour boats, larger craft (65' plus.)
12. Iroquois operator and Schooner operator are happy with draft and maneuverability.
13. Avoid direct lighting out into the water as it causes light blindness for boaters.
14. Explore impact of closure of Lincoln Memorial Drive – special events, etc. What is the impact on the number of people who cannot access NHT, the State Park, etc?
15. Third Ward Association, DMI, Summerfest are interested in understanding the effect of the master plan by addressing the following components:
16. Economic Impact Analysis
17. Study to determine compatible land and business uses.
18. Study to address transportation issues – non-festival to high attendance festival times.

24 November 1998

Italian Community Center, 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Public Comments from WDNR Open House Number One

I. Responses to Posted Questions

Question:

What should be the hours of operation for Lakeshore State Park?

Responses:

- Dawn to Dusk (Urban safety issues)
- 24 hour fishing access
- Dawn till 10:00 p.m.
- Dawn – 10:00 PM
- “First” lite to “last” lite
- ½ hour before dawn – ½ hour after dusk
- 24 hour access to transient boat slips and security
- 24 hours
- 24 hours like now
- Being open to transients makes it a 24-hour enforcement problem. Probably it should not be a transient dockage. Put that somewhere separate so the park can be closed.
- 24 hours
- 24 hours
- Dawn to dusk – security?
- Similar to other state park hours

Question:

Where would you like to see connections between the Third Ward and the lakefront?
Should the connection(s) be for pedestrians, or cars and pedestrians?

Responses:

- Pedestrians and cars should be able to access the shore via Chicago Street. Chicago should remain open to the Lake during all festivals.
- North of festival grounds to the island – pedestrians and cars!
- Need much stronger pedestrian access from downtown to park and Summerfest (the Calatrava bridge is more “art” than access and more access to Art Museum than to lakefront) intersection at Lincoln Memorial Drive and Michigan is not pedestrian friendly.
- Already exists – enter along planned riverwalk or Chicago to harbor and walk ½ block north to north entrance lakewalk.
- To Harbor Drive from Chicago and possibly Buffalo to Harbor Drive. There is access to the Lake both North of Henry Maier Fest. Park and south. Do not intersect on the Festival Park. Could cause security problems, would not be conducive to holding/setting up a festival.
- Must have access at some point midway between north and south ends of grounds. Third Ward currently receives no benefits from its proximity to the lake. Just the inconvenience of the festival crowds and traffic.
- Connect Third Ward to Lakefront along new Riverwalk and north of Summerfest (South Urban Park.) Chicago Street connection should end at Harbor Drive (physical) but a visual access can be developed to the Island with a vista to the new building. Encourage a development at the intersection of Chicago and Harbor such as parking structure with corner elements and a new Summerfest gate. This will give a sense of arrival and gateway to the grounds of Summerfest.
- More access for cars and people, with emphasis put on people access.

- Chicago Street and Riverwalk.
- No connections to Third Ward
- Bikes?

Question:

What do you think about closing Harbor Drive north of Buffalo Street?

Responses:

- It would be a major problem for all festivals – over 1.7 million people visit the festivals and need many entry and exit routes.
- This would cause problems for all festivals gaining access to the grounds during setup and during tear down.
- Major problems - congestion/safety/access
- Harbor Drive becomes pedestrian and mass transit route during festivals. Also provides easy access to third ward.
- Problems with Third Ward traffic flows
- No. Problem with traffic. If Buffalo is extended, it should go no further east than Harbor Drive.
- Harbor Drive could be changed but it must hook up with Lincoln Memorial.
- Keep open
- Parking needs to be close enough to beach area to facilitate launching of kayaks from beach.

Question:

What recreational uses would you like to see at Lakeshore State Park?

Responses:

- Keep Urban Park South and open space for all types of athletic events, including those provided by the ethnic festivals (e.g. Indian Summer Fest uses Urban Park for a lacrosse tournament that is open to the public during the fest.)
- Accommodations for small boats – rowing and sailing – and building.
- Fishing charter boats
- More summer water activities (outdoor) – right now need a boat to use lakefront
- More public access to water
- The ability to use the lagoon during festivals and having a docking area possibly on the island
- Fishing – the lagoon could be developed/designed underwater with structure for fishing. This could be a good learning tool for fishermen to be able to fish different types of underground contour, weeds, rocks, drop-offs, etc.
- Walking dogs
- Kite flying
- Space for rental facility to operate paddleboats, rowboats for fishing and leisure, and kayaks.
- Flexible space that might allow for educational programs in cooperation with the ethnic festivals
- Boat rentals/water taxi/x-lake ferry
- Perhaps a sculpture garden representing Milwaukee's rich ethnic heritage

- Experiential education “hands-on learning” via educational programs on Municipal Pier.
- Intrinsic values i.e. enjoy views, Schooner as a back drop to City skyline
- Camping facilities for boy scouts and girl scouts and public (youth hostel)
- Large craft navigation
- Camping for sea kayakers traveling the lake

Question:

The closest existing parking is at O’Donnell Park or in lots under the freeway. Is this close enough for people visiting the state park?

Responses:

- Probably not but better pedestrian access anyway!
- Seems to work – people do not like park into crowds anyway they would rather walk and be able to get out!
- No! If I have 3 rods, a bait bucket, my tackle box, etc...
- Yes
- Yes!!! Please allow some physical effort, by the couch potatoes, to view a different venue!!!
- Yes
- The current island has parking even closer than that and it is not used much. Parking should not be planned on the island but should be planned closer than O’Donnell parking if that is solution?
- “Ditto”
- Open more parking in Museum lots for use and the plan to open the Municipal Pier up for parking is great!
- Hope they are not going to take away the handicapped and elderly parking for fishermen that we do have?
- Yes, keep the cars away from the lake!
- Yes, make it handicapped accessible, but no cars.
- Yes. NO parking at the lake, please!
- Yes. O’Donnell Park already offers more than necessary.
- Yes, but you could also have a street from Urban Park South to the island with some parking at the island.
- Yes. Keep it a space to get away from cars.
- No, you can’t car top a kayak into a parking structure and it’s too far to carry a kayak to the put-in

Question:

The lakewalk may be 15’ wide. Is this wide enough to accommodate a variety of uses? Should bicyclists be separated form other lakewalk users?

Responses:

- Don’t forget rollerbladers, the rental (pedal-powered) surreys etc.
- Bicycle/rollerblade lane would be a good idea!
- What about fencing/rails?
- Allow bicyclists

- Bikes and rollerbladers not necessarily a problem but it is “speed differential.” If too fast and not warning pedestrians of coming by...danger. Suggest “slow wake” on lakewalk – for harbor.
- Secure walk sides with rails. Several access points back to shore for safety a must.
- If fishermen cast from the same 15’ width it may be dangerous.
- Bicycles – yes.
- No, leave lakewalk open to all uses. The only alternative would seem to be creating “lanes” with some sort of median to separate the flow of pedestrians, bikes.
- Allow bikes - the trails we ride now are 15’.
- 15’ isn’t wide enough!
- Connect walkway with Hoan Bridge trail.
- Bike use on Hoan Bridge...YES!!!
- Separate bikes from runners.
- How about a raised boardwalk for pedestrian, paved lower track for bikes and skates?
- Allow bicyclists!
- Adequate bathroom facilities
- We need a bike path over the Hoan Bridge!

Question:

What facilities would you like to see at the state park?

Responses:

- Boater destination uses (restaurants, museums...) Ability to sail in and out of lagoon (w/ favorable wind) (access to all craft)
- None. Keep the green there – maybe add a tree or two.
- Keep Urban Park South as is
- None. Keep green space and add a mini-forest.
- Transient Boat Parking (overnight)
- Lots of trees, walks, green space.
- Accommodations for all types of fishermen.
- Quiet lagoon with posted speed limit (fishing basin)
- Fish cleaning station at commercial basin
- Design the fishing basin underwater. Incorporate structure (rocks, weed beds, holes, sand/gravel bottom)
- Make it a fishing educational experience
- Plant more and continued species of fish
- Include a paddleboat, rowboat, kayak etc. rental facility
- Charter fishing/fish cleaning station
- Bait store
- Bike racks
- Don’t ruin the habitat that we have in the lagoon by opening the south end.
- Glad to see transient boat slips. Think about security and creating “destinations” and services for waterborne activities.

- Creation of a community sponsored and constructed current day effigy mound to mark the change of the millennium
- Kayak launch site with parking close by (within carrying distance)
- Need bathrooms with changing area for kayakers
- Renovate Main Gap Lighthouse for a campsite for kayakers, small boaters

II. General Comments

- Fireworks should not be set off from island but from a barge
- No- island works best
- Free/no charge to state park
- Passive green space (all natural WI landscape/plants)
- Connection from Third Ward should be along north end of Parcel A
- Want better view of lake from Summerfest
- Better ped. access to State Park from Summerfest and from downtown
- Summerfest grounds are used in whole – bisecting with roads will cause problems with security. Will eliminate grass, detract from landscape
- Grass is used as bocce courts
- Governor said ensure future of festivals – state as objective
- Opening island at south end will render basin susceptible to pollution/stagnant water from river
- Re-structure will negatively impact spawning area
- Maintain accessible fishing along river edge - from Erie Street to red light house – currently being used by disabled and elderly
- Will fireworks be permitted in a State Park?
- Develop sustainable concepts
- Will there be a curfew
- Will World Festivals still have the right to close the lakewalk
- Will fishing be straight down or on the tapered rocks that a person would need an 80-foot pole to fish?
- Will off leash dog walking be allowed? (should be included)
- Harbor Island should be an uncluttered open space – no trees or other structures to block view.
- Arrow lines serve no purpose unless the intent is to cut the festival park up and create traffic issues for the festivals —lets be sensible – why cut up a proven entity/investment!
- Concept 2 idea of parking on Island good idea – to accommodate vendors and customers for paddleboat rentals, rowboat/kayak rentals, etc.
- No – small electric cart access for disabled – pick up/drop off ok
- Where is the fish cleaning station?
- No transient boats in Marine Activity Basin. SAFETY ISSUE for Schooner maneuvering and docking
- Parking a problem for charter boaters – need to be closer
- Concept 2 – we'd love the access to the lakewalk to be from the north side (out of the festival grounds.) We like the idea that the island is connected to vehicular access, bikeway and walkway. This allows everyone to get to the beautiful lakefront. I also suggest that the access to the island to be available by City shuttle.

- Loss of fish habitat is a concern!!!
- Island should be a bird sanctuary – wildlife refuge (owls have been seen there)
- Open south end of island – temperature changes will negatively effect fish habitat
- Leave south end (Save \$) Preserve existing habitat, access is already there, boats can come in from north
- Do not want to pay to access the island
- Can charge a fee to enter a lakebed area?
- Kayak area on north end, closer to parking
- Access on south would be open year-round even during special events; north could not
- Charter fishing – move to McKinley Marina
- Can't wait under 15 years to get the fish habitat we've got around the island
- Use composting toilets
- Litter with increased use is a big concern
- Why is the promenade necessary? \$\$
- Request Maier Park to coordinate landscaping with Harbor Park
- Parking/drop off needed for kayakers
- Lagoon basins should be designed with different habitat structures for different/various fishing experiences (rock, contours, sand, gravel, structures, etc.)
- Control speed limit in lagoons (basins)
- Provide for /maintain views of the lake
- Keep the island "green" – keep buildings and structures off the island.
- Buffalo to Harbor Drive.
- Chicago to Harbor Drive by strengthen as a corner with buildings/cross access.
- Diversify experience along boardwalk. (Change of materials, connections to land, incorporating Summerfest grounds)
- Work with Summerfest on boardwalk design around nobs
- Kayak and canoe user indicated she would not use this area - no reason to come here.
- Kayak and canoes – could use area north of Municipal Pier
- Concern about parking distance from island
- Want to use lakefront year-round
- Ice skating?
- Schooner needs less/more space. Enlarge basin.
- Place old Coast Guard Station on the island
- Can off leash dog walking be included?
- Keep further entertainment development off lake and continue to push riverwalk and downtown
- Additional access to boardwalk needed to promote safety, emergency vehicle (what if someone breaks a leg???)
- Keep it simple – towards concept 1
- Bridge across south end of island to mainland. Cost not prohibitive compared to 30 million.
- Maintain sports field on Urban Park South. Screening from Summerfest is good.

- Improve vision of island from Summerfest grounds/freeway, etc.
- Mooring for EPA “guardian” (bigger than Schooner) Where???
- Host Maritime Day activities?
- Route boardwalk/promenade through Summerfest grounds/zigzag land/water
- Steel fence (similar to existing fishing by Amphitheater) – along east side of island
- Leave connection to land at south end of island
- Construct effigy mound on island
- Space for more transient boating access through Summerfest for Third Ward.
- Widest range of activities, small boats, kayak, etc.
- Don't forget wide path for bikers/bladers/strollers.
- Ferry service to Michigan would assist in getting people to festivals and Arabian Festival (500,000 people in Michigan)
- Commercial basin must be much bigger to meet growth needs of community
- Island grade should be lowered to make Lake Michigan visible
- Perhaps – quiet fishing bays for our fishermen to control speed – safety
- Walker connection should be at end of Buffalo Street to allow more room for large ship dockage – allowing basin to be bigger and more linear footage for docking and calm water.
- Limited access boat ramp 5,000 lb. crane
- Tourism crucial to success of Pier development – very much needed a historic boat building center – to date Wisconsin Lake Schooner has attracted over 100,000 visitors to watch the building of Wisconsin's flagship and over 15,000 students have participated in current education programs using the Great Lakes as a theme and a resource.
- Walkways over roads from O'Donnell Park
- Exchange parking from Municipal Pier to Urban Park South
- Dinner cruises will not be successful as located. They need access to parking and building on shore.
- Put dinner cruises adjacent to Interpretive Center
- Trolley from parking lots to island
- Consider a ferry connection to Island rather than road.
- Must provide space for large craft navigation
- Design should encourage users to come out to Lake Michigan frontage, turn to Summerfest and ask, “What is that doing there?”
- Island – passive uses need a place for contemplation
- No cars on island
- No buildings on island
- Take some risks and be a national showplace
- No cars – No buildings. I like concept 1 but would like a larger beach area. I love the spiral info center and forest.
- Dinner cruises and other commercial ventures should not be in a State Park.
- I agree
- Enforce dog leash laws
- Area around needs no wake laws strictly enforced
- Quiet water basin should be slow no wake throughout.

- Fishing access should not be confined to “cells”. No other activity on the island is restricted to particular areas.
- Large rock should not be removed from an existing area. Bring in outside rock source to construct breakwater
- Will there be provisions for persons in wheelchairs to be dropped off by car on the island rather than from parking areas (ADA accessibility issues.)
- Some practical things to consider... a. Rat control (they will come and in large numbers!) b. Managing expectations re: aquatic plants. They will make a home in the lagoon and fall die off will cause bad smells (e.g. like the current cladophora problem. We should not consider chemical treatment if plants “grow out of control.”
- Doesn't the cost of the project seem exorbitant when compared with purchases such as the Willow Flowage, Turtle Flambeau, etc?
- Charter fishing – McKinley. Advantage – clean, nice docks. Disadvantage – customer base not there, limited access by public. Pier – big advantage is increased visibility; increased customer base
- Kayakers need year round facilities – Bradford closed in winter
- Bradford – parking may be lost with reconstruction (new road configuration)
- Ditto – charter, dinner cruises at McKinley

16 December 1998

Italian Community Center, 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Public Comments from WDNR Open House Number Two

I. General Comments

- For Charter Boat Area:
- need gas dock (– NO!!)
- Need nearby parking
- Need fish cleaning station and restroom facilities
- Fireworks from southeast side of island – fireworks staff on island from set-up to clean-up time
- Outside dining facilities on island and/or pier (Yes, follow some ideas of Navy Pier in Chicago – very successful outdoor attraction)
- Need shops/other attractions to attract people/tourists
- I support the Hank Aaron Trail. Great idea!
- Need secure temporary storage for sea kayaks and canoes so paddlers can leave to take in the area's attractions and return to paddle on up (or down) the lake and river.
- I esp. support #7, 9 and 20 on your objectives list
- Area between lakewalk and Summerfest Grounds (15') will collect debris and be difficult to clean up
- Provide adequate directional signs from Third Ward, etc
- Need passage for small craft under bridge – at least 6-8' (yes, I agree) (yes also)
- Provide adequate wave and surge protection for all moored boats – esp. look at southwest corner docks
- Provide floating pier system
- Provide rest spots and benches along Summerfest grounds

- Charter boats – fuel dock nice but not needed
- State needs to make it economical to operate fishing charter and other watercraft related businesses
- No user fees!
- Make the island bridge exclude everything larger than a canoe.
- Ban jet skis from the quiet water basin. (AMEN!!) (I agree)
- As little improvement on the island as possible. Harbor Island a meadow for meditation and to slow down.
- Larger single use basin – safe access – more use.
- Make plenty of room for kite flyers
- Possible open space for athletic fields...
- The cruise vessel facility is a natural gateway to the Third Ward. Encourage responsible development to make that natural link work.
- Like larger basin for passive boat (non-wake) use
- Keep retail to a minimum!!
- Interpretive displays on history of area: landfill, missile base, Maitland Field, origin of island, etc.
- To allow watercraft access, build an underwater tunnel to connect the island to the mainland.
- Keep buildings to a minimum.
- Use gravel for paths – not cement or asphalt
- Access from Bay View by bike! (Over Hoan Bridge)
- Need restrooms on island – year round
- Need drinking water available – year round
- Need trolley to transport people from parking areas to island.
- Same as 3!!
- Make trail/island/river shore area (by Marcus) bicycle accessible
- Make Island shoreline seawall/piling accessible for fishing.
- Keep river area adjacent to Marcus Amphitheater open to fishing.
- Design basins with varying habitats (depths, structures) and make it a learning experience.
- Keep soccer field in Urban Park
- Location of outlook tower is important as focal point
- Road spur (mass transit ramp) to Harbor Drive isn't necessary, unless it's "on ramp" traffic only
- DNR building/office should be connected to/in Municipal Pier Building
- Bus stop or turn around at Municipal Pier to get people to the project.
- Location of DNR building blocks view of the Lake from existing lakewalk and needs review.
- Go back to single basin, with island connecting off of Municipal Pier, and the DNR building in the Municipal Pier building.
- Provide sufficient restrooms and bubblers – and OPEN TO PUBLIC AND YEAR ROUND.
- Develop island with native shore/prairie grasses
- No breakwall in front of art center

- Provide sufficient parking (in particular, for the charter boat slip area and transient and cruise boats)
- Fish cleaning station needed.
- No horses on bike path
- Entire island should be short grass prairie and no dogs allowed
- Eliminate the promenade but allow access/promenade on existing ground (Yes) (Yes)
- Space between Marcus Amphitheater "square" and island should be large enough to provide for fishing
- Handicap parking needed on island
- Park hours should be set to allow fishing access at best fishing times
- Fishing access to transient boater piers should be allowed.
- Extend pier off of Municipal Pier to the east curving back to island. – Would increase size of basin for bigger ships.
- Urban Park should stay as soccer fields. Aztec Warriors Soccer Club
- Expand project to southwest bank of Milwaukee River
- Restore northwestern (CNW) rail line to bring people in on regional rail system – similar to Chicago Metra.
- Provide for ingress/egress – turn around area for school/charter buses on Municipal Pier
- Explore trolley route into park area
- Large single use basin – safer access
- Provide for vendor/concessions along walkway
- Maritime activity basin needs to be larger based upon the type of vessels that will utilize it and the related activity/movement in and out suggests one entrance of the size presented might be inadequate.
- Single basin – yes!
- Locate dinner cruise boats to charter boat area – which would also allow more room for visiting schooners
- Eliminate promenade natural lakeshore better. Go back to drawing board (why look like Racine, Sheboygan etc.)
- Present Summerfest grounds entrances and fences are ugly (honky tonk) Do ??? a section for year round.
- Third Ward access – Polk Street since there are gates separate from Marcus Amph.
- Enlarge maritime basin eastward
- Navy Pier – year round spot!!
- Deep six idea of observation tower on island. It would add more clutter for dubious goal of "seeing further." Forget it. Toilet facilities probably would be needed near entrance bridge. With "high" hill now in place, suggested curly cue interpretive area, discreetly built into hill could disguise toilets. Vietnam War Memorial in Washington D.C. might offer some inspiration.
- Single access to island helps to insure better security and minimize obnoxious drunken cretins staggering over from "land-side" activities...less beer/wine/booze containers, e.g.
- Kayakers
- Put in (need parking)

- Need building/toilets on island
- Need secure storage on island so kayakers can visit downtown

II. Comments on Scope of Environmental Assessment

- I am worried about garbage collecting between lakewalk and rocks. This will be a hard area to clean but if it's dirty it will really detract from the overall effect.
- Please mail me a detailed copy of the preliminary plan.
- Public Access - The only access the Hispanic youth has had for the last eight years has been the soccer field at Urban Park. We hope the Hispanic community's "Aztec Warriors" in particular, do not get kicked out of the "new development." Perhaps two soccer fields for Aztec Warriors may be possible. Dagoberto Ibarra 414 647 2471
- Recreational Uses and Public Access – Please keep Urban Park open to the Aztec Warriors youth soccer club. With a membership of 200 children and yearly membership. Cipriano Sanchez; 1530 South 9th Street; Milwaukee, WI 53204
- Water Quality – improving water quality is critical!
- Fisheries – too much emphasis on fishing. There are other places to fish.
- Wildlife – encourage wildlife preserve.
- Historical/Archeological – should have historical activities and lake education.
- Recreational Uses and Public Access – would prefer non-motorized access only.
- Boating – don't need "visitor slips" – that caters only to those rich enough to have a cruising boat. They can tie up at McKinley.
- Draft objective #s 7 and 8 claim to incorporate native short grass and upland tree plantings, and to control aquatic invasive species...it would be great if these objectives would be truly implemented! Such solutions are often "shortened" or not implemented at all, due to the initial, intense labor and maintenance needed to establish such plantings. Please someone oversee this to fruition! Don't let this become an over-mowed golf course, like that at the south end of the Hoan Bridge! (promises, promises...)
- Fisheries – concerns related to natural breeding ground destruction
- Please make enough room for kite flyers and other sports that require an open area – are there plans for food or other vendors? Thank you, Scott Fisher; Gift of Wings; 425-8002
- Make the yacht/boat basin a single basin and not a double one. Benefits: 1. Less costly. 2. Will allow more use of the basin. 3. Will allow dramatic display of Schooner and other boats. Jon Richards; State Rep-Elect; 19th District
- Fisheries – keep as much fishing space as possible
- Keep the quiet basin quiet, no motorboats or jet skis
- Assure kayak and canoe access to quiet basin
- Consider larger basin for the Schooner and charter boats
- Move dinner ships to Charter Boat area – use inside of breakwall for Schooner
- Provide for bus drop off and loading for Schooner and GLF.
- Lots of outdoor seating areas including a café.
- Guard green space and trees first
- North Summerfest – more like Navy Pier in Chicago – "domed"
- Knock off promenade and rework. During fests lakewalkers can use island as access – then use lakewalk.

- Bicycle access to the island is important. Safe “lanes” over bridge, paths on island and parking are very important. This takes pressure off parking.
- Keep double basin because of the entrance. This makes for a more open access and flow. Consider trees vs. prairie.
- State and local tourism office on Municipal Pier. This site has good access and visibility.
- Boating - The “quiet water” area is ideal for sailing and rowing small craft (+/- 20' and under.) Ideal facilities would be a building to house a boat – building educational program – already in existence in – in concert with Wisconsin Lake Schooner project. Also approx. 150' of dock space for launching and tying up. This program would include boat livery in which the public could row and sail boats provided by the building program. This would include creating a chapter of the Traditional Small Craft Association, a national organization. By Chief ?; Director of Construction; Wisconsin Lake Schooner.
- Opening the south end of the island is a bad plan it severely limits access from the Marcus Amphitheater lot causing older people to have to walk quite some distance to use the State Park. This defeats the idea of having reasonable access to this proposed park.