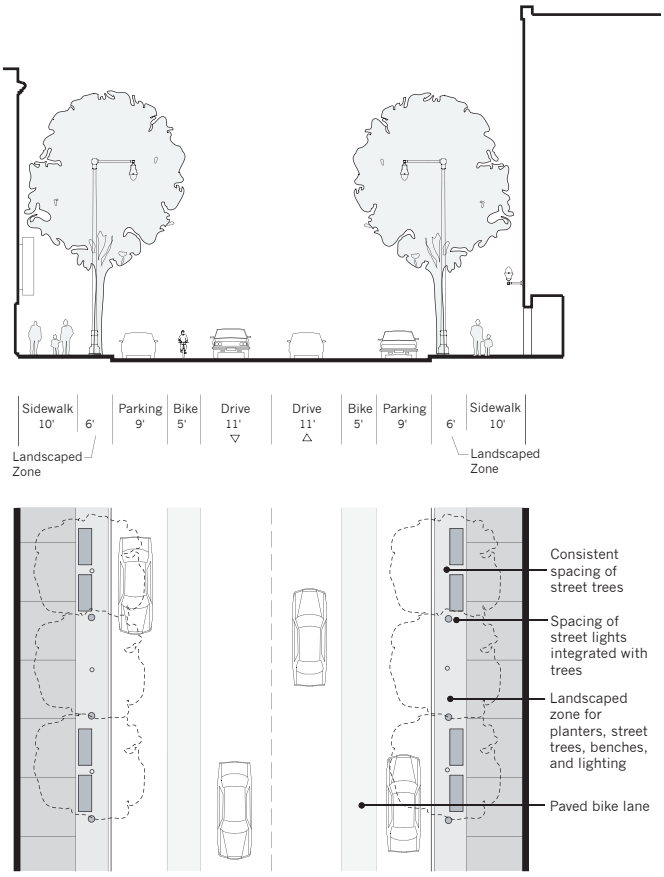
V. Guidelines for Streets and Open Spaces

STREET PROTOTYPES



A major street enriches the public realm with common street lighting, street trees, bike lanes, and active-use buildings.

MAJOR STREET

Major streets serve as primary routes for vehicles between and through districts. They preserve and strengthen existing routes to civic spaces. In most cases, high-density residential and major commercial and civic funtions line these streets. The ground level of buildings along major roads should incorporate these active uses, with a special emphasis on providing these uses at intersections.

In the Downtown and Lakefront, these roads should be no more than three traffic lanes at any point, and should utilize the minimum lane width allowable within the applicable regulations. Where possible, bike lanes should be incorporated.

The character of major streets will be enhanced by the use of planted street medians, frequent paved pedestrian crossings, controlled intersections, and on-street parallel parking. On-street parking buffers the sidewalk from the street, and should be allowed wherever possible. These elements will also serve to calm traffic.

All streetscape and furniture elements, such as lighting fixtures, refuse containers, benches, and signage should maintain a consistent language. Where these elements are consistent along the length of the street, the character of the road is enhanced and unified.

All utilities should be placed underground. Above ground utilitiy poles and wires are not permitted on any alleys or streets in the Downtown and Lakefront districts.

DISTRICT STREET

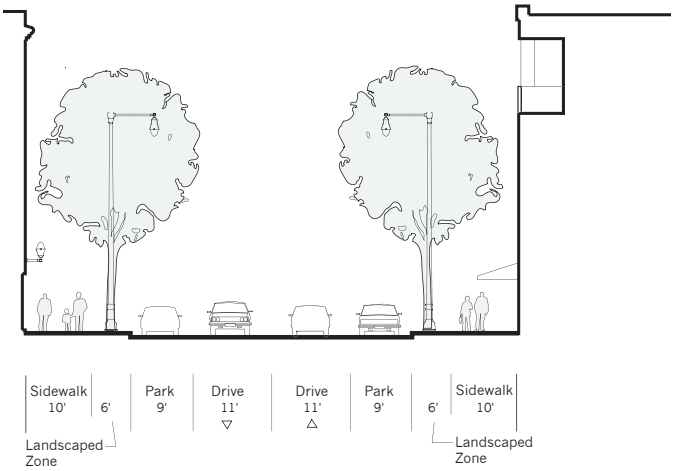
A district street serves as a secondary route for vehicles, and is generally lined with medium-density residential and commercial functions.

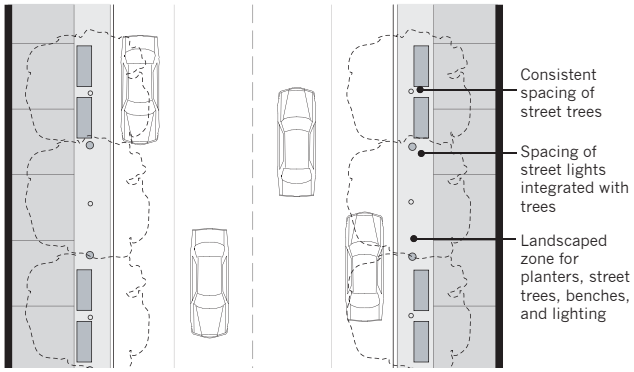
These streets should have no more than three traffic lanes at any point and should maintain narrow lane widths. On-street parking buffers the sidewalk from the street, and should be allowed wherever possible.

District streets will carry pedestrian traffic, and should be designed to provide a pleasant pedestrian environment by using trees, plantings, and furniture. As with major streets, the street furniture along a district street should also use a consistent palette along its length. Where possible, bike lanes should be incorporated.

Street trees play an important role along district streets. They distinguish the pedestrian realm from that of the vehicular, create pedestrian buffers, provide canopies, and define street edges.

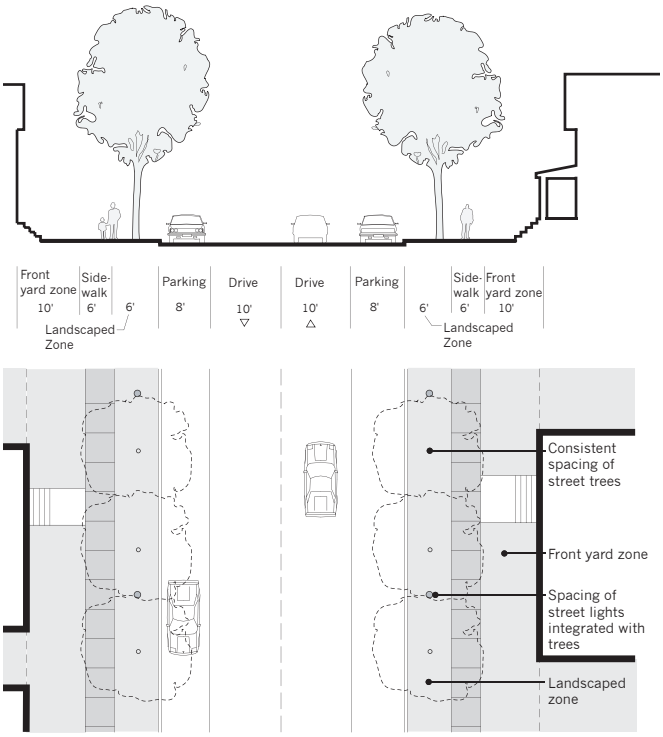
Additionally, traffic-calming elements will be used to create a pedestrian friendly environment. Traffic-calming elements may include sidewalk extension at intersections, paved crosswalks, and the use of speed bumps where necessary. Other measures include the utilization of minimum lane widths, controlled intersections, and low traffic speeds.





Traffic calming elements may include sidewalk extensions at intersections.

STREET PROTOTYPES



A neighborhood street incorporates narrow traffic lanes and on-street parallel parking for a pleasant residential environment.

NEIGHBORHOOD STREET

A neighborhood street serves local neighborhood traffic, and is lined with medium and low-density residential and retail functions. Occasionally, streets can service higher density buildings and commercial functions at sides or rear.

These streets should contain no more than two traffic lanes at any point and should incorporate the narrowest appropriate lane width. On-street parallel parking is provided along these streets, and sidewalks will incorporate trees, plantings, and lighting.

In general, single family homes along these streets are setback with front yards and porches that define the sidewalk.

STREET PROTOTYPES

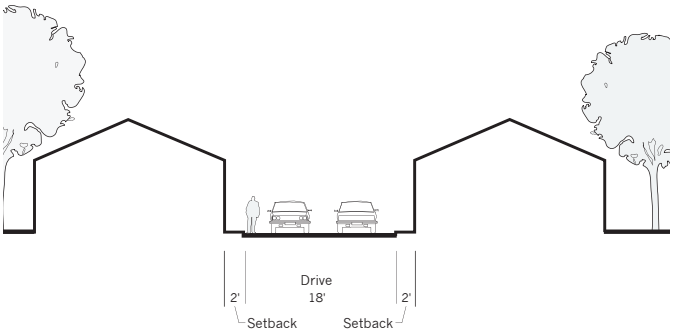
ALLEY

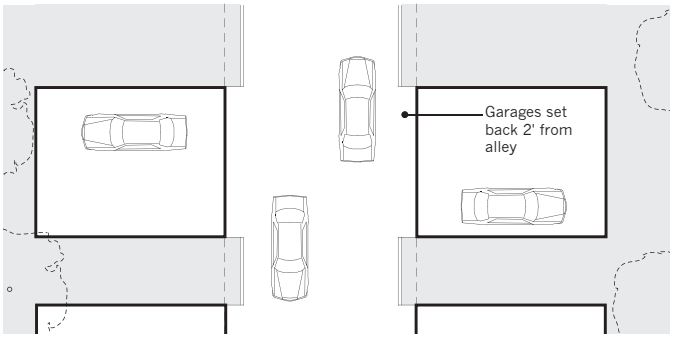
Alleys serve parking and service needs and are internal to the blocks.

These are tertiary streets with one or two narrow lanes. In general, garages, loading docks, and other service functions face directly onto the alleys.

All alleys should be paved.

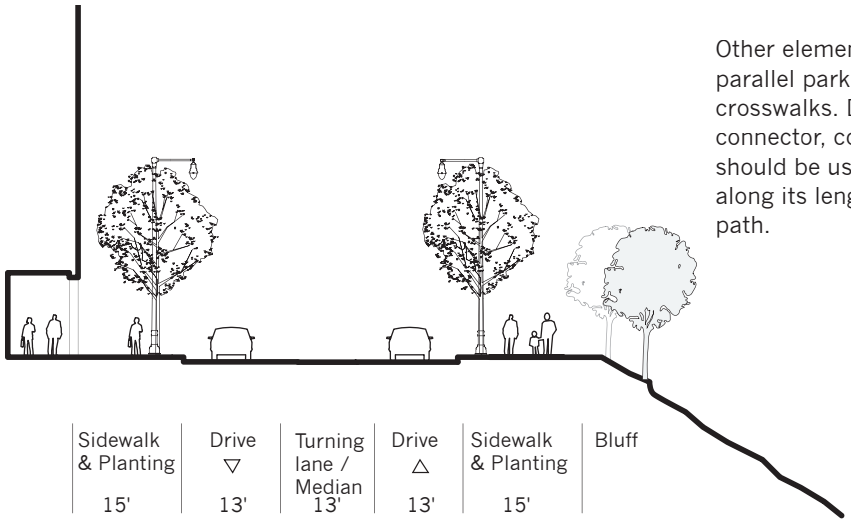
All utilities should be placed underground. Above ground utility poles and wires are not permitted on any alleys or streets in the Downtown and Lakefront districts.





Garages will have a uniform setback along alleys.

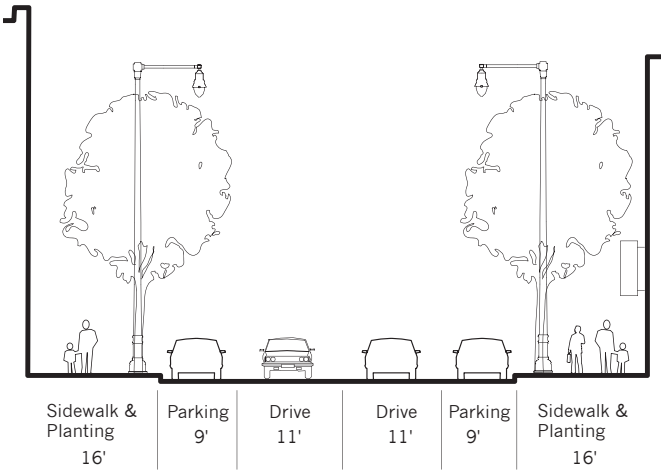
SPECIAL STREETS



SHERIDAN ROAD

This street will create a continuous edge and become the face of the downtown. It will include a tree-canopied pedestrian promenade, linking the bluff to the new harborfront development.

Other elements required on Sheridan Road include on-street parallel parking and traffic-calming elements, such as paved crosswalks. Due to its role as a major north-south downtown connector, consistent street furniture and planted medians should be used to create a pleasant and unified environment along its length. Sheridan Road may also incorporate a bike path.



PERSHING ROAD

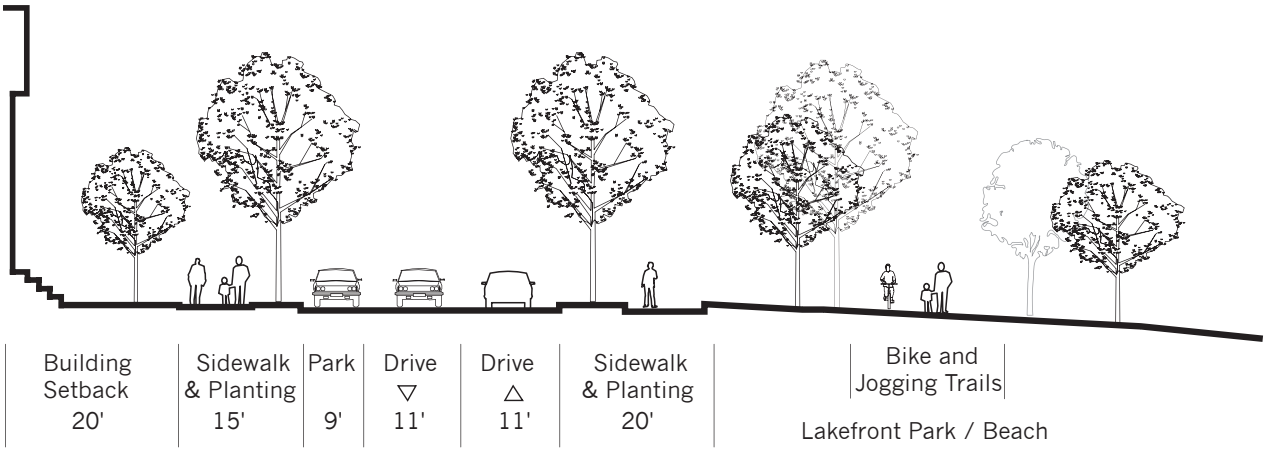
This road will become the main route through the Harborfront and will provide a pedestrian-friendly street environment for shopping and residential use.

The street will unify the new district by using common planters, street lamps, trees, and street furniture. Pedestrian crossings and other traffic calming elements, such as sidewalk extensions at intersections, will contribute to the pleasant character of this road. Minimum lane widths and low traffic speeds further help to enhance the pedestrian environment. Additionally, on-street parallel parking is encouraged along Pershing Road.

THE LAKESHORE DRIVE

This lakefront street will become a park edge for the district, providing access to public paths and lake views. It will unify the neighborhood by linking the private and public realms. Its gracious tree-lined character will enhance the neighborhoods it passes through.

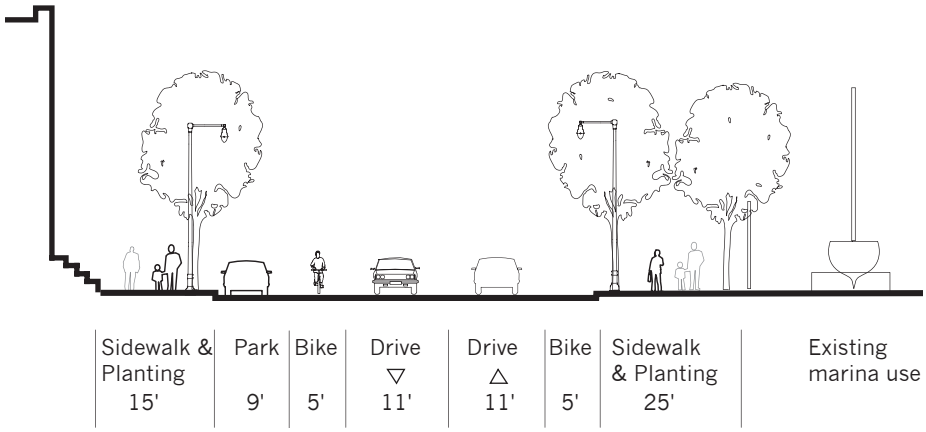
The Lakeshore drive should incoporate bicycle and pedestrian paths along its length, as well as on-street parallel parking and consistent street furniture. It will provide access to the lakefront and lakefront neighborhoods, and is not intended as a high speed through-street. As such it will be designed and landscaped to emphasize its pedestrain quality, incoporating traffic-calming measures, such as paved crosswalks and minimum lane widths.



SEAHORSE DRIVE

This street will be the central route through the North Harbor. It will utilize unifying elements, such as signs and street lamps to define the main commercial realm of the district. The marina-related commmercial uses that line the street will define this unique waterfront district.

On-street parallel parking is encouraged along Seahorse Drive. Consistent street furniture should be used to develop a lakefront identity.



STREET DETAILS

Context-sensitive design should be considered to create streets that enhance the public realm.

On-street parking provides simple access to buildings and creates a safe pedestrian environment.

Sidewalks paved with quality materials encourage pedestrian activity.

CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DESIGN

Context-sensitive design is a general approach toward street design that respects and improves environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of a place. This design approach is not law, but rather, comprises a suggested set of points developed by an interdisciplinary team who considers a project's unique character and place. The parameters should be created by architects, planners, citizens, city engineers, and Departments of Transportation, which provides consideration of issues from a variety of perspectives. This type of process should be implemented in the design and refinement of new and existing roads in Waukegan.

"Context sensitive design asks questions first about the need and purpose of the transportation project, and then equally addresses safety, mobility, and the preservation of scenic, aesthetic, historic, environmental, and other community values. Context sensitive design involves a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach in which citizens are part of the design team." - Highway Admin. Workshop, 1998 - USDOT Federal Highway Administration

PARKING

Parking on the street creates a buffer between vehicles and pedestrians and improves safety on the street. As such, on-street parallel parking is recommended wherever possible. These lanes will have a consistent width of eight to ten feet.

SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks will occur along every street except for alleys. Quality materials and detail will be utilized to distinguish the sidewalk and vary the pedestrian experience. Crosswalks will use similar materials as sidewalks to create unity within the pedestrian realm. Planters, refuse containers, benches, lighting, and trees will all contribute to the character of the sidewalk. The entire sidewalk width with plantings will vary from ten to twenty feet, depending on the street type. These types may include, brick, colored concrete or cement, artistic patterns, mosaics, or a combination of these materials. Wooden boardwalks at the lakefront will support the character of the marina district.

STREET DETAILS

PLANTINGS

Plantings are an effective way, combined with urban street elements, to give character to the streetscape. Street trees provide canopies for pedestrians and visually unify streets and sidewalks. Median plantings vary the scale of wider streets.

Types of plantings include street trees, planters along sidewalks and in medians, public and private flower planters and gardens, and the like.

LIGHTING

Street lights bring character to the streetscape, provide adequate lighting for vehicles and pedestrians, and create safe urban and neighborhood environments. Additionally, they visually unify streets and sidewalks.

Types of lighting may include lamps with signs or plantings. Lighting also includes building lighting and median lamps.

FURNITURE

Street furniture will be used to enhance the pedestrian sidewalk realm and to provide pedestrian amenities near commercial areas and within neighborhoods. The design of street furniture should relate to the street lighting and planters.

Street furniture elements may include benches, refuse containers, mail boxes, parking meters, drinking fountains, and newspaper containers.

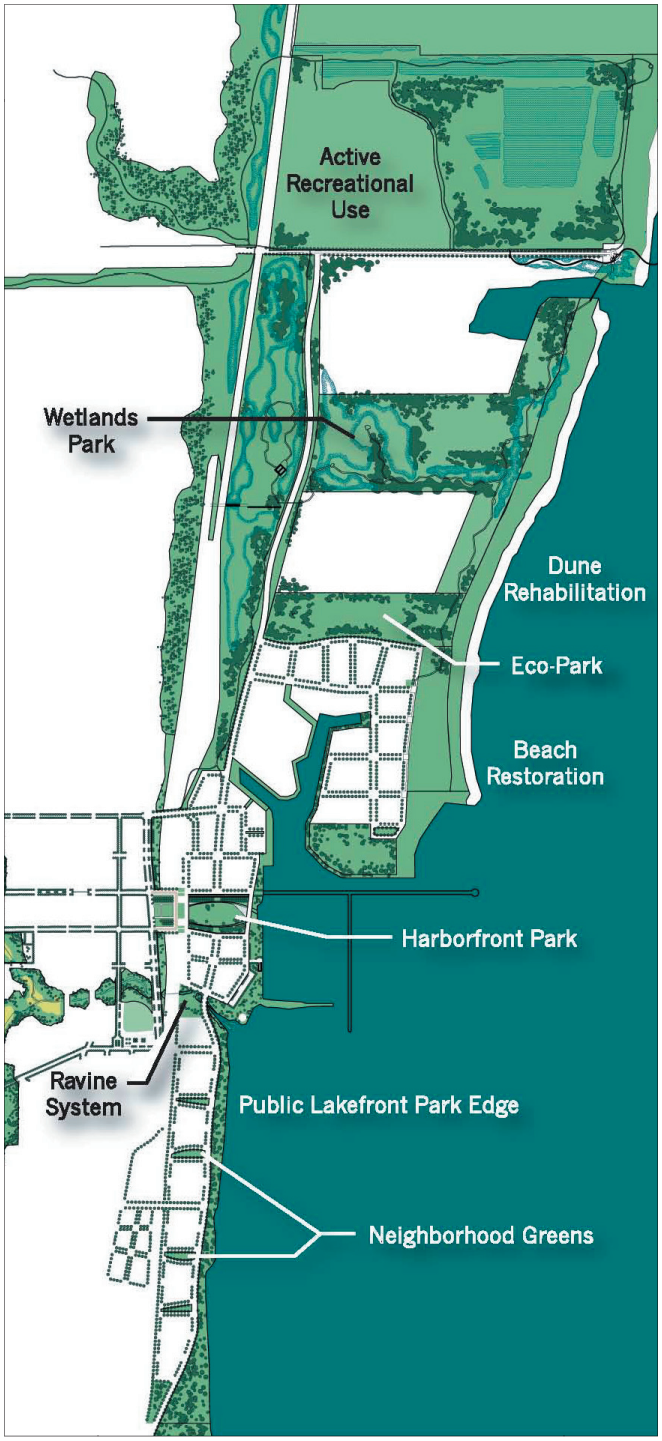
Street furniture should remain consistent throughout a district. Additionally, the lakefront districts should all display a similar family of street furniture.

Trees and plantings improve the street aesthetic, provide shade for pedestrians, and help define urban spaces.

Street lights unify the streetscape, give character to districts and neighborhoods, and create a safe environment for pedestrians and vehicles.

Elements of street furniture create pedestrian amenities and unify streetscapes.

OPEN SPACE



The open space network within Waukegan will enhance natural systems, link the districts to the lakefront, and provice public recreational amenities.

INTENT AND CHARACTER

The intent of the Open Space components of the Master Plan is to create significant new parks and enhanced natural systems for the citizens of Waukegan. The Master Plan is comprised of three open space components: (1) Parks, Greens, and Plazas, (2) Lakefront and Harborfront, and (3) Wetlands and Ravines. Each of these components may be governed by differing administrative structures, but all will contribute to the development of a public open space system for Waukegan's Downtown and Lakefront.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL OPEN SPACE

1. Public access to open spaces will not be restricted, except in designated conservation areas.
2. Perimeter fencing around open spaces is not allowed, and views into and out of open spaces from public ways will be open and clear.
3. Open spaces will be administered by the City of Waukegan, or other governmental entities, though some neighborhood Greens may be controlled by homeowners associations or other private entities.
4. Pedestrian-scaled (not exceeding 15' in overall height) lighting will be provided in these spaces. Light standards above 15' are prohibited.
5. All light fixtures will be designed to project light downward, with minimal light directed up or horizontally from the fixture.
6. Plants will be native to the Waukegan region, and consistent with Lake Michigan shoreline ecosystems.

PARKS, GREENS, AND PLAZAS

Parks are larger open areas, two to 20 acres in size. Their primary function will be recreational, though they will also provide large spaces for City events. They will be highly accessible, and may contain parking or other built structures. Examples of this will be new city parks in the Harborfront and the North Harbor. Greens are smaller open spaces, three quarters of an acre to two acres in size. They are designed to provide smaller recreational opportunities for specific neighborhoods and development parcels. Examples of greens will be found in the South Lakefront.

Plazas are primarily paved surfaces functioning as public gathering spaces within districts and neighborhoods. They may be both formal and informal, and will contain benches, lighting, and landscaping.

GUIDELINES FOR PARKS, GREENS, AND PLAZAS

1. Trees will be of a type that provides an overhead canopy, with the primary branching structure at least 10' above ground at maturity. Lower-branching or ornamental trees are allowed at focal points.
2. Paved surfaces shall not exceed 25% of the total Park or Green area. Paved surfaces shall not exceed 75% of total Plaza areas.

LAKEFRONT AND HARBORFRONT

Lakefront areas will be designated as either preservation or recreational areas. Preservation areas will be primarily for the enhancement of native ecosystems and species. An example will be the new ecological preservation zone in the North Lakefront.

Recreational areas will contain such uses as public swimming beaches, fishing areas, and public parkland. Examples of these areas are the new linear park in the South Lakefront and the existing Waukegan public swimming beach in the North Harbor.

Harborfront areas will typically have parking for boaters and visitors, a bulkhead edge, and a waterfront pedestrian promenade.

GUIDELINES FOR LAKEFRONT AND HARBORFRONT

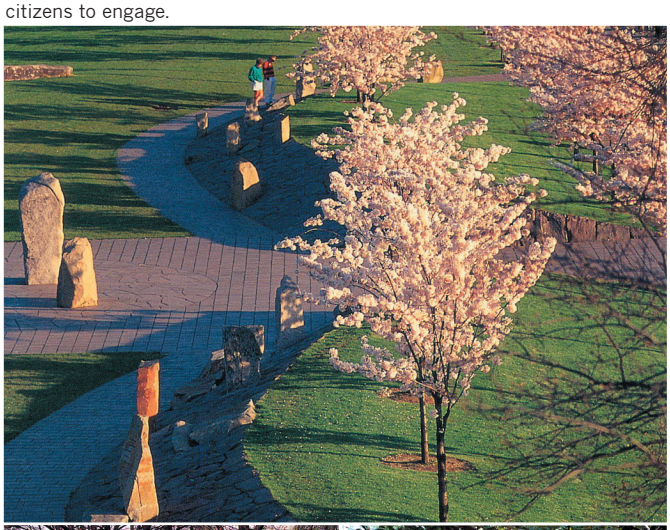
1. Public access to the Harborfront promenade shall not be restricted.
2. All new construction shall provide a 30' public easement along the Harborfront, for the creation of a Harborfront promenade. Public access to adjacent properties is required along the promenade.
3. Fencing may be allowed to limit access to conservation areas. Such fencing will be designed not to impede the passage of small wildlife.
4. Where trees are provided, trees will be of a type that provides an overhead canopy, with the primary branching structure at least 10' above ground at maturity. Lower-branching or ornamental trees are allowed at focal points.
5. Pedestrian-scaled (not exceeding 15' in overall height) lighting shall be provided along the Harborfront promenade.

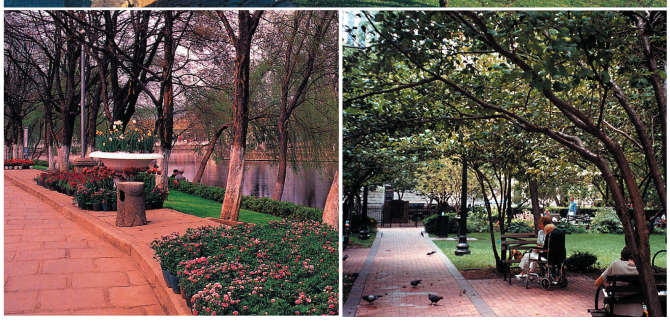
WETLANDS AND RAVINES

Wetlands and ravines will re-establish and preserve non-lakefront ecosystems, manage stormwater runoff, and establish habitat for native flora and fauna. Public access to these areas will be limited to pedestrian trails, with the exception of service vehicles. Parking will be on the periphery of these areas, with access to the open space from adjacent public streets. Future development on parcels adjacent to wetlands or ravines will not diminish or compromise the ecological integrity of these areas.

1. Development adjacent to ravines and wetlands will not direct untreated stormwater runoff from streets or parking lots into adjacent watercourses. Such runoff will be filtered through a biofiltration area.
2. Fencing may be allowed to limit access to conservation areas. Such fencing will be designed so as not to impede the passage of small wildlife.

Waterfront landscaping and amenities create an inviting civic place for citizens to engage.





Landscaped paths and trails enliven and expand park spaces and encourage pedestrian movement throughout the districts.

A city park provides a place for large civic events and is highly accessible by pedestrians.