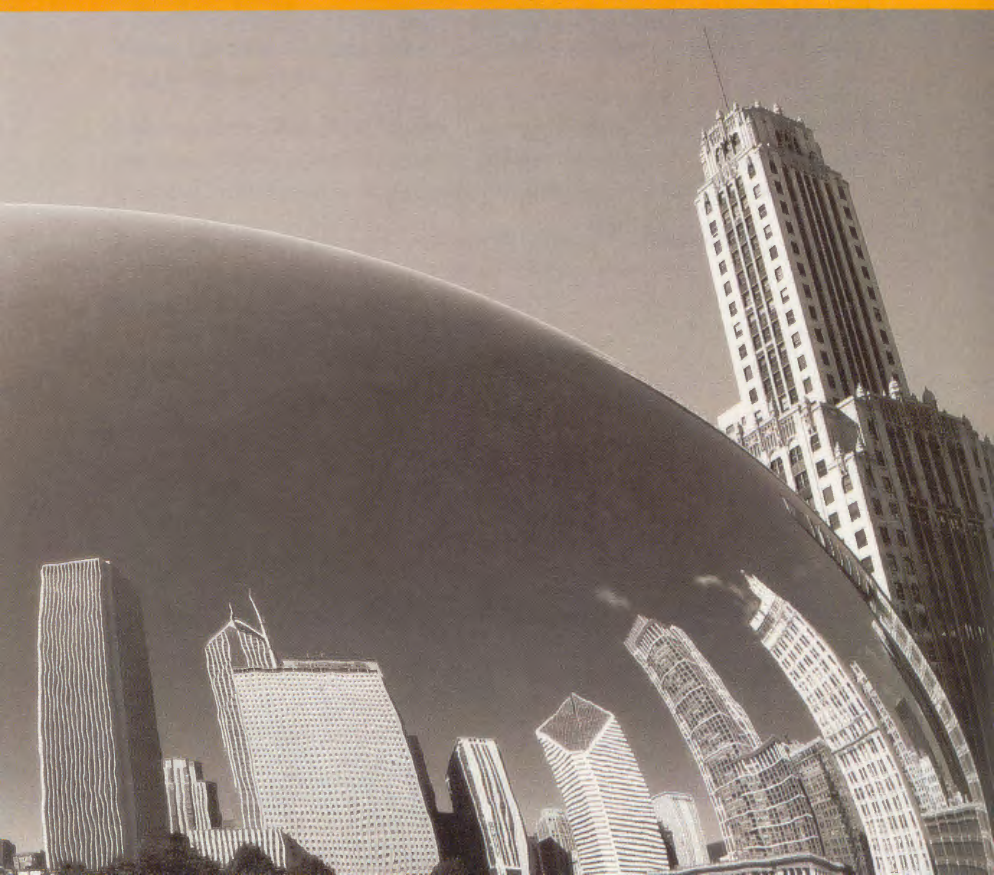


Staging the City



Representing Chicago in the 2016 Olympic Bid

BY CARRIE GOLDBERG

I. Chicago's Emergence on the Global Stage

The city is changing. You're not going to see factories back . . . I think you have to look at the financial markets—banking, service industry, the development of O'Hare Field, tourism, trade. This is going to be an international city.

— Richard M. Daley, during his 1989 mayoral campaign (Phillips-Fein, 1998).

We believe hosting the games will solidify Chicago's position as one of the great cities of the world and, in the process, strengthen the Olympic Movement.

— Richard M. Daley, Honorary Chairman, Chicago 2016 (Chicago 2016, 2007).

Chicago pursued the 2016 Summer Olympics to anchor its claim to "Global City" status. For more than fifty years the city has been involved in efforts to draw new business downtown, revitalize a once stagnant central business district and generate the amenities that attract professionals, tourists, and global recognition. Over the past decade Chicago undertook a number of large-scale projects in the central city. An integrated Museum Campus was built, with extensive lakefront paths that consolidated major

destinations for tourists and leisure-seeking residents. The city initiated the renovation of its football stadium, Soldier Field, redoubling its commitment to major sports franchises in the city. A west addition to McCormick Place was built in order to expand the city's capacity to play host to major international conventions and tradeshow. In 2004, Millennium Park, Chicago's "gift to the new century" (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 19) was unveiled, capturing the attention of an international audience with its playground of interactive spectacles designed by world-renowned artists and architects. These massive initiatives are part of an ongoing strategy to transform a once industrial urban landscape into a modern and innovative world city. With its 2016 Olympic bid, Chicago hoped to showcase these developments, and further its reputation within a global arena.

Though Chicago was not chosen to host the 2016 Games, the bid remains a valuable articulation of the values and forces that are reshaping the city. The bid, directed by Mayor Daley and the city's corporate elite, gave primary attention to building a succinct, memorable, compelling impression of the city of Chicago. They claimed the Olympics would have economic benefits for the city and would be an opportunity to spur urban development on the South Side. However, many Chicago residents were skeptical that Olympic-driven neighborhood revitalization would protect vulnerable populations and benefit local communities. Many suggested that the resources and collaborative effort mobilized for the bid would be better directed towards creating improvements in schools, infrastructure, transit, or health care. The Olympic bid presented a unique opportunity for self-reflection, a rare chance for a city to articulate its visions and aspirations. Yet the crusade to secure the Olympics incorporated only a select set of voices. The bid did not challenge existing structures of inequality within the city; rather, it largely reproduced them. The priorities and strategies that drove Chicago 2016 Olympic bid will continue to shape Chicago's urban landscape and the city's attempt to move forward as an international competitor.

Chicago, like many cities across the world, is grappling with rapid and fundamental transformations in a global era. The new millennium is marked by unprecedented movement across national borders of capital, commodities, people, cultural practices, and information. Chicago, once renowned as a manufacturing and industry giant must now establish solid footing in an evolving global economic order. In "Globalization and the Remaking of Chicago," Fasil Demissie explores the restructuring of Chicago due to both globalization processes and the associated rise of neoliberal approaches to public policy (Demissie, 2006). As manufacturing and industrial activities give way to service activities, city space, predominantly in the downtown central business district, is being rewritten for corporate services, retail activity, tourism, culture, and upscale residential development. Pauline Lipman notes the visible traces of this transformation in the built environment: "The face of today's Chicago is marked by upscale lofts and shops carved out of converted and abandoned manufacturing space, gentrified neighborhoods, and a central-core convention and tourist center with upscale housing and retail outlets, cultural venues, and parks" (Lipman, 2002, p. 389).

Downtown development was an intentional strategy that aimed to counteract the effects of deindustrialization and suburbanization. The effort to buttress the Loop as a business center and draw the middle class back to the city was directed by a cadre of Chicago's top business, financial, philanthropic, and civic leaders. Collaboration between the city's business, financial, real-estate interests, and municipal government characterized the policies of Richard J. Daley's mayoral administration during the 1970s and early 1980s. The same interests continue to reshape downtown Chicago under the leadership of his son, Richard M. Daley. However, processes of downtown redevelopment have always had uneven social effects. Central city "renewal" hinged upon the removal of the poor and working-class residents. As Lipman states: "Economic restructuring and globalization have led to *selective* reinvestment and reinvigoration of urban areas" (Lipman, 2002, p. 386). While the entire city of Chicago experienced the impact of deindustrialization and the

loss of jobs and middle-class residents to the suburbs, not all neighborhoods were given the attention shown the downtown area.

The sectoral and geographic restructuring of the Chicago economy had devastating effects on city residents and neighborhoods, particularly African American, Latino, and immigrant neighborhoods (Demissie, 2006; Lipman, 2002, pp. 386–389). Loss of manufacturing jobs fractured employment networks in African American and Latino communities, and the shift to the low-wage service economy has been associated with an upsurge of nonunionized jobs that often fail to provide health insurance, pension plans, or livable wages (Lipman, 2002, p. 388). According to Demissie, “these neighborhoods have been further marginalized by punitive public policies regarding housing, education, and transportation, which have deepened concentrated poverty” (Demissie, 2006, p. 22). As Chicago’s Loop has been transformed into a destination for corporate professionals, tourists, and the cultural elite, the residents of underserved neighborhoods have been pushed into further social isolation.

Globalizing Chicago is thus marked by a duality. The city’s downtown has become concentrated with sophisticated services, international markets, and corporate headquarters and has become a destination for arts, tourism, and leisure. Construction takes place on a grand and monumental scale and is expanding from the central business district to the north, west, and south along the lake and important transportation routes. In low-income neighborhoods on the South and West sides of the city, however, vast swaths of land are marked by boarded up buildings and empty lots. According to Demissie:

As with other ghettos around the country, whose predominant institutions have become liquor stores and storefront churches, the physical face of African American neighborhoods on Chicago’s South and West sides, far more than statistics, offers graphic demonstration of the ultimate effects of the passage of Chicago’s older, industrially centered economy (Demissie, 2006, pp. 23–24).

As the plans, projects, and desires of Chicago's corporate elites and municipal leadership become increasingly visible in the built environment, the robust social ties that once characterized the life and activity of working-class neighborhoods slip deeper into invisibility.

Chicago's development initiatives largely neglect low-income neighborhoods and city residents. John Betancur and Douglas Gills note that localized neighborhood development was strong during the mayoral tenure of Harold Washington, from 1983–1987. As opposed to the backroom deals and patronage of the democratic machine of Richard J. Daley, and to a considerable extent, Richard M. Daley, Washington's administration was reform-oriented, and sought to broaden the geographic scope of postindustrial redevelopment. Mayor Washington "promoted more balanced, redistributive economic development policies, including neighborhood job growth, efforts to stop plant closings, balanced growth of the downtown and working class neighborhoods, and greater public participation in decision making" (Lipman, 2002, p. 377). During Washington's tenure, neighborhood organizations and residents were treated as partners alongside businesses emphasizing local development.¹

The administration of Richard M. Daley has not built on Harold Washington's community development and pro-neighborhood framework. After his death in 1987, Washington's coalition of African Americans, Latinos, progressive whites, and grassroots organizations largely collapsed.

1. In 1986, Lake View residents battled the Chicago Cubs franchise's attempt to introduce evening baseball games. Residents thought night games would increase traffic, parking problems, litter, and noise. Mayor Washington worked to broker a compromise: "Washington initiated discussions involving Cubs executives, Lake View residents, and city officials. The effect of these talks was to bring two of the three sides within hailing distance of an agreement" (Spirou & Bennett, 2002, p. 684). Although his approach to city development differed from Mayor Richard M. Daley, Washington engaged in a similar effort to solidify Chicago's economy and reputation via the creation and modernization of "spaces of consumption" (Spirou & Bennett, 2002, p. 675).

While extending token participation to African American and Latino supporters (Betancur & Gills, 2004, p. 99), Daley has relied primarily on middle-class sectors, developers, and downtown corporations to advance policies and plans written under his father's mayoralty. During the 1990s, Daley's redevelopment vision defined Chicago as an emerging global city (Demissie, 2006, p. 29) with downtown entertainment venues, hotels and convention centers, and marketing to local, regional, and international consumers. Meanwhile, many neighborhoods continue to struggle with the effects of poverty, homelessness, poorly performing schools, and racial and class divisions.

The campaign to secure the 2016 Olympics reiterated many of the processes and partnerships that drove other downtown development projects. Mayor Daley tapped into a circle of private funders, design firms, and individual leaders who had contributed to past Chicago mega-projects, such as Millennium Park. Chicago 2016 bid organizers concocted a plan to integrate Olympic venues with Chicago's cultural, entertainment, and sporting landmarks, as well as with boundless shopping opportunities. Designs for Olympic sites and stadiums in underserved South and West side neighborhoods sought to invite and delight tourists and middle-class visitors.

The effort to secure the 2016 Olympics catalyzed residents to imagine an improved city landscape. But behind the bid was a highly contested battle over the values and processes driving Chicago development initiatives. Many Chicago residents were concerned about top-down neighborhood improvement, and sought methods to balance corporate and neighborhood interests. Chicago 2016, however, pursued its plans with little input or participation from residents of the communities that would be most affected. While the bid committee polished and perfected Chicago's image for a global audience, it also glossed over many of the city's internal problems. Rather than systematically deal with internal struggles, Chicago 2016 remained disconnected from the specific trials, and assets, of the communities it breached. An uneven decision-making process produced the Chicago 2016 Olympic bid; the committee's plans

and rhetoric are thus not merely unfulfilled conceptual models, but blueprints of the city's social and political landscape.

II. Locating an Abandoned Community

In September 2006, Chicago 2016, the organization responsible for preparing Chicago's Olympic bid, announced that Washington Park, a 372-acre green space on the South Side, would house the main Olympic stadium. As the site of the opening and closing ceremonies, Washington Park would be a central space for constructing a powerful and lasting representation of the city of Chicago. Owned by the city, the site could be constructed without requiring the city to acquire land or undertake demolition of existing structures. The site's proximity to transportation infrastructure and connection to Jackson Park via the Midway Plaisance were valuable assets in constructing a compact and accessible network of Olympic venues. With the exception of Hyde Park to the east — an integrated middle-class neighborhood dominated by the University of Chicago — Washington Park is nestled in predominantly poor black neighborhoods.

Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux in the 1870s, Washington Park remains one of the largest stretches of open space in Chicago. The lagoon and wetlands serve as an ecological sanctuary and the open fields and baseball diamonds play host to baseball, softball, and cricket leagues. The park is the site of several summer festivals, such as the African Festival of the Arts, and home to the DuSable Museum of African American History. In the summer, families bring grills, chairs, tents, and music to the park for barbecues, reunions, and parties. For some, the park is a vibrant and inviting source of community life, for others, a dividing line or buffer between the neighborhood of Hyde Park and the "ghetto"² to the west.

2. "Ghetto" is a clichéd characterization and, in its classic meaning, inaccurately applied to Washington Park. The term was used by writers for the *Maroon*, the University of Chicago's student newspaper, and indicates a common, though underdeveloped, description of the neighborhood.



Figure 1. An abandoned lot and building in the Washington Park neighborhood.



Figure 2. Fishing at the Lagoon in Washington Park.

The neighborhoods bordering Washington Park to the north, west, and south are marked by segregation, poverty, and disinvestment. According to the Chicago Urban League, the Washington Park community area, which borders the park to the west “has been shackled by decades of private and public disinvestment leaving unemployment, run-down businesses, liquor stores, dilapidated housing, vacant lots and crime” (Chicago Urban League, 2007, p. 16). According to the 2000 U.S. Census, more than half of individuals and families live in poverty, with 78 percent of households making less than \$35,000 annually. The median income in Washington Park is \$15,160 (Figure 6). The unemployment rate is roughly 21 percent (Chicago Urban League, 2007, p. 16).

The landscape of the neighborhoods surrounding Washington Park projects an image of abandonment and neglect. The community area has a 10 percent homeownership rate, one of the lowest in the city, and a 25 percent residential vacancy rate (Chicago Urban League, 2007, p. 16). Since 1970 the neighborhood has lost 9,000 housing units and has the highest rate of foreclosures of all Chicago neighborhoods (Washington Park Consortium & LISC/Chicago’s New Communities Program, 2009). Vacancy is exacerbated by a lack of local commerce. For every dollar spent in Washington Park, \$5.18 is spent outside of it: “Put simply, the neighborhood is a desert for supermarkets, services, restaurants and small businesses” (Chicago Urban League, 2007, p. 16).

With high rates of poverty and unemployment and low rates of home ownership, Washington Park is cast as one of many South Side neighborhoods that would benefit from any type of “development.” However, it is important to understand the data and images not as indicators of “blight” or insurmountable social ills, but as measurements of longstanding processes of segregation, disinvestment, and neglect. Hyde-Park resident and activist, Jamie Kalven, has described such neighborhoods as “abandoned communities” (Kalven, 1998). His work and analysis have focused on public housing developments, such as the Robert Taylor Homes and Stateway Gardens, which by the late 1990s were considered nationally as examples of failed public-housing experiments. The Robert

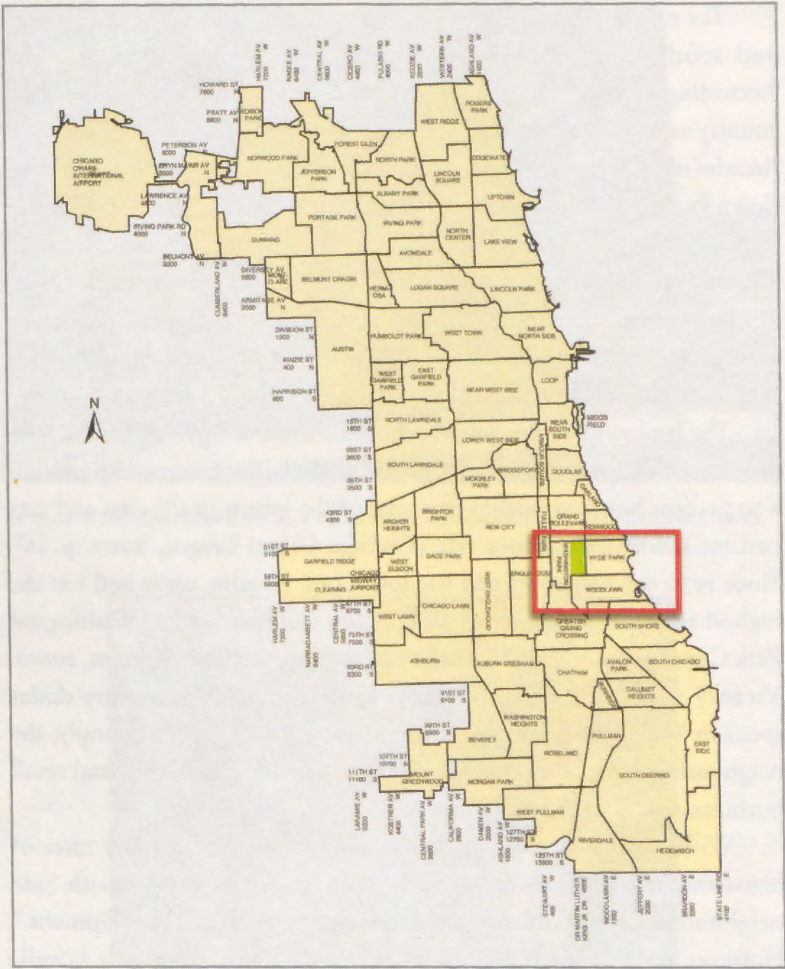


Figure 3. Chicago Community Areas, by name, with Washington Park highlighted.

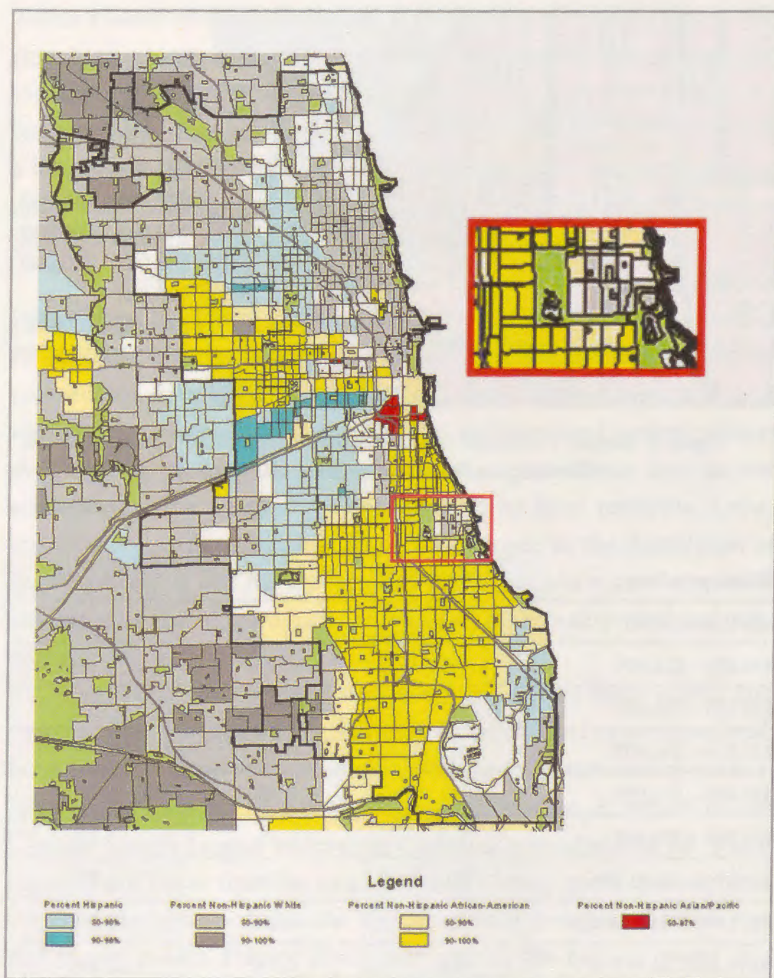


Figure 4. Major “racial” groups and Hispanic population by census tract, based on 2000 U.S. Census data. All census tracts in the Washington Park Community Area are 90–100 percent African American.

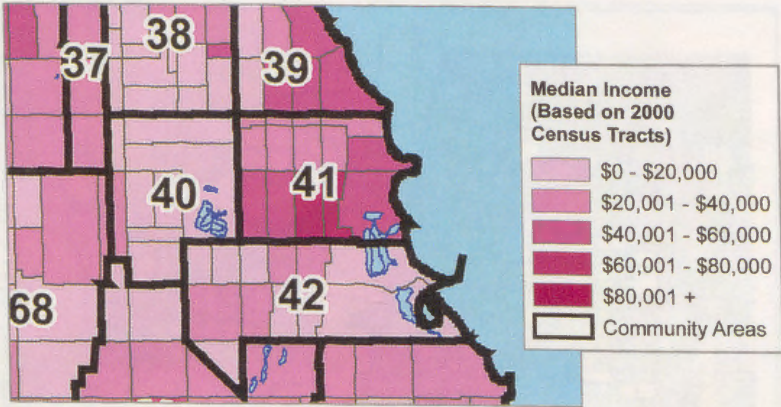


Figure 5. Median Household incomes based on 2000 U.S. Census data. Washington Park is community area “40.”

Washington Park	Total	%	Chicago %
Less than \$15,000	1,989	47.1%	20.0%
\$15,000 – \$24,999	756	17.9%	12.5%
\$25,000 – \$34,999	447	10.6%	12.5%
\$35,000 – \$44,999	351	8.3%	15.9%
\$50,000 – \$74,999	367	8.7%	17.6%
\$75,000 – \$99,999	145	3.4%	9.2%
\$100,000 – \$124,999	71	1.7%	4.9%
\$125,000 – \$149,999	20	0.5%	2.5%
\$150,000 – \$199,999	20	0.5%	2.2%
\$200,000 +	55	1.3%	2.7%
Households	4,221	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 6. Income data for Washington Park based on the 2000 U.S. Census.

Taylor Homes consisted of twenty-eight buildings marking a two-mile stretch of concentrated poverty; the southern end of this corridor was located in the Washington Park neighborhood. In 2007, the sixteen-story concrete high rises were destroyed. The demolition is a new example in a long trend of urban renewal: the identification of neighborhoods as crime-ridden and populations as dangerous, and redevelopment efforts that lack the input of local residents.

The term “abandoned community” exposes the relationship between places like Washington Park and dominant institutions in society. Abandoned communities and their residents have been deserted by commercial development interests and public institutions, and civil rights and welfare organizations. When the dominant powers address the resulting poverty, disenfranchisement, and violence, they do not acknowledge the assets and resources held by local residents. Long-standing institutional neglect reaches its apogee in the demolition of housing projects like the Robert Taylor Homes, where an entire social landscape is erased from sight and its inhabitants dispersed and rendered invisible.

Social and institutional abandonment derives from subtle and covert practices whose outcomes can easily be claimed as unintentional. Economically motivated investors, for example, often employ incomplete measurements to assess community vitality. A report of the Chicago Urban League addressing economic opportunities for Washington Park notes that the neighborhood’s heavy participation in an informal economy prevents the area from being recognized for its true purchasing power. Private developers analyze the buying power of a neighborhood before deciding to launch an investment. But the private sector uses traditional models that “look at household income as a strong determinant of purchasing power” and that do not account for the cash economy on which the neighborhood largely functions (Chicago Urban League, 2007, p. 17). This fails to capture the true spending power of Washington Park, which is estimated at \$93 million annually (WPC & LISC/Chicago, 2009, p. 5), suggesting that the neighborhood

has the resources to support dynamic economic activity, while incomplete market analyses have served as a barrier to its development.

One approach to generating urban renewal is to address the factors that discourage private investment. Another is to tackle the prejudice and alarm of media coverage and dominant discourse regarding “troublesome” neighborhoods. Rather than acknowledging the bedrock of human capital and cultural resources that could serve as a basis for renewal, circulating images and stories depict Washington Park as empty, lifeless, and deserted:

Images of the physical conditions in abandoned communities are mobilized in support of the argument that the neighborhood is dead, that any form of development would be better than this. In effect, power declares empty the places it wants to appropriate. It asserts that no one lives there and hence that no one will be hurt by the development it intends to impose. The vacant lot left by demolition is the emblematic expression of this logic: not a place with a history, not someone’s home, but a blank canvas, *tabula rasa*, raw potential awaiting “development” (Kalven, 1998).

Chicago’s Olympic bid must be understood in the broader context of the social and historical dynamics that have shaped Washington Park, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the experiences of local residents. How would the urban renaissance catalyzed by the Olympic bid seek to respond to the problematic characteristics of the neighborhood? Would the process feature robust democratic discourse or render invisible certain voices and activities that define current neighborhood life?

III. The Proposal: Constructing Chicago for the Olympic Bid

The Olympic Bid sold a particular image of the city of Chicago to itself and to the rest of the world by branding Chicago as a globally competitive city. Mayor Richard M. Daley stated that his vision was “to broaden the perception that Chicago is a modern and diverse city for the twenty-first century, uniquely positioned to compete in the global economy for the best jobs, the best businesses and other new investment” (Mayor’s Press Office). Repackaging the city’s image was expected to bring substantial benefits to Chicago through physical and economic investment, by boosting Chicago’s attractiveness as a social and cultural destination for the world’s most mobile and elite individuals, and correspondingly, by convincing residents that the Games would stimulate civic improvements.

Going for the Olympics

The traditional physical and economic character of many city landscapes has shifted due to deindustrialization, economic globalization, and reduced public spending. The character of urban governance is experiencing an associated shift from “managerialism” to entrepreneurialism (Shoval, 2002; Banerjee, 2001). Place marketing and promotion, especially through major cultural and sporting events, can facilitate a city’s emergence or recognition as a postindustrial city. Place marketing attracts investment in a service-based economy and advertises a city’s new position as a center for leisure and culture on the global stage. Securing an event like the Olympics can stimulate these processes:

In a crude sense, all these changes attract more tourists and increase consumption. In a longer term fashion, however, the investments and the activities they contain contribute to raising the quality of urban life which, it is thought, will make cities magnets for the new movers and shakers of the global

economy — the entrepreneurs and the creative people from whom new innovations will flow (Ward, 2007, p. 121).

Changes to physical character and economic activity ensure a city's place in the global economy while reconfiguring the symbolic experiences and iconography of the built environment.

Events like the Olympics are increasingly seen as a good strategy for urban renewal. Financial risks associated with hosting the Games have decreased since 1984, when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) shared revenues of broadcasting and sponsorship rights with host cities (Shoval, 2002, p. 586; Bennett, Bennett & Alexander, 2008, p. 4). The reduced economic expenses have increased incentives to stage the Games. Barcelona's use of the 1992 Games as a catalyst for strategic urban projects encouraged other cities to view the Games as an opportunity for positive transformation. City benefits are expected to include "the legacy of sport facilities and associated amenities built for the event, the short-term economic stimulus from new construction before the event, visitor spending during the event, highly visible marketing opportunities to recruit business and promote tourism, and significant urban redevelopment" (Shoval, 2002, p. 586). Certain benefits are even experienced by cities that fail to land the mega-event (Ward, 2007, p. 121). Economic stimulus remains a motivation for bid organizers and a justification deployed to influence local residents, even while the real economic benefits remain in doubt.

The People Driving the Bid

Mayor Daley was a key figure in identifying the monumental opportunity in hosting the Olympic Games, and he became a driving force in the campaign. Falling in line with recent trends in the organizational structure of Olympic campaigns (Ward, 2007), Chicago's bid sought the involvement of local and regional business leaders, rather than remaining strictly administered by city government. Working with Patrick Ryan, founder and former chairman of the Aon Corporation, the mayor

assembled the team that would be responsible for designing and submitting Chicago's bid. The organizing committee, Chicago 2016, was a private nonprofit organization headed by Ryan, with Mayor Daley serving as honorary chairman. The fourteen directors would provide oversight and strategic direction and fifteen senior managers would oversee individual aspects of the bid. The roughly 350-member Chicago 2016 committee included a broad base of support meant to ensure representation and consideration from the community. Committee members sat on the sixteen advisory councils that provided feedback to the board and senior managers.

The board and management of Chicago 2016 consisted of business leaders, former city government administrators, Olympic bid consultants, and marketing professionals, culled from "familiar corridors of power" (Hinz & Yue, 2008). The assembled team could draw on a wealth of corporate connections and intelligence regarding the mechanics of the bidding process in order to package the most compelling bid possible. The efforts of Chicago 2016's innovative, connected, specialized individuals were given additional strength due to enthusiastic support from city government. The Olympic bid created an ambiguous blend of private and public power: "The resultant partnership has an unusual status, in which the limits of governmental and private action become difficult to define" (Ward, 2007, p. 123).

Chicago 2016's composition lacked representation by community-based organizations whose neighborhoods would be affected by the bid. DePaul University's Egan Urban Center reported: "Of the 308 members identified at the Committee's website . . . on October 25, 2008, four were affiliated with community-based organizations. As such, neighborhood organizations in the areas that will host the Olympics have slightly more representation than the Pritzker family (three members) and out-of-town professional sports franchises (the Phoenix Suns and Green Bay Packers) (Bennett, Bennett & Alexander, 2008, p. 18). With no built-in accountability to residents, Chicago 2016 had little commitment to transparency or community consultation.

The Task of the Organizing Committee

Chicago 2016 submitted the city's candidature file for consideration by the International Olympic Committee. Of particular interest to this paper are the sections devoted to the marketing and the staging of the Games across the city landscape. Common strategies used to market a city in successful Olympic bids incorporate cutting-edge media and technology, political campaigning, and celebrity endorsement. The promotional message should emphasize the city's cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, and openness to visitors; in short it should present the city at a global crossroads, identify deep and longstanding commitment to culture and sport and reinforce the city as a physical and social infrastructure ideal for hosting the Games.

The Venue Plan

Chicago 2016's venue plan sought to create a compact and convenient layout that would utilize the extensive park system and lakefront. The bid emphasized the historic incorporation of green space into the city landscape by "visionary leaders" like Daniel Burnham (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 9) and claimed Chicago to be a city "designed to host global celebration" (Chicago 2016, 2009c, p. 33). Though later plans reconfigured the location of certain sports events, the basic framework focused on four "clusters" of venues and activities that remained fixed throughout the bidding process. The layout emphasized sustainability, legacy, and the centrality of the athletes.

The bid map (Figure 7) shows four clusters within a 15 km radius (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 27), which would host more than 85 percent of the Olympic sports (Chicago 2016, 2009c, p. 30). The Central Cluster, the focal point of the Games, contains nineteen Olympic sports and disciplines, the Olympic Village, and Grant Park as the point of "celebration and diversity."³ The dotted orange rings depict 5 km intervals from the

3. A 2007 American Institute of Architects (AIA) *Focus* report described the five-block "live site" planned for Grant Park. An open space with video screens

Table 1. Table detailing the compact nature of Chicago's venue plan.**Source: Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 43**

Minutes To/From Olympic Village To Competition Venues	Baseline midday travel times		Dedicated-lane travel times	
	% of athletes	% of venues	% of athletes	% of venues
5 minutes or less	27	25	29	32
10 minutes or less	36	43	76	61
15 minutes or less	85	75	91	79
1 hour or less	100	100	100	100

“Center of Games,” which emphasize the proximity of events to the Olympic Village — represented by the red triangle in the central cluster. Supplementary tables (Table 1) outline travel times from the Olympic Village to competition venues. The map’s heavy orange lines describe roadways with dedicated Olympic lanes to reduce travel times for athletes and the “Olympic Family.” As the candidature file highlights: “The athlete experience has been the first and driving consideration in every element in planning and operations of the Games” (Chicago 2016, 2009c, p. 30).

Though the greatest number of venues is concentrated in the Central Cluster, the majority of sports events would actually take place in Washington Park. The South-Side park would house “the two star attractions of the Games” (Kamin, 2008) — the swimming and diving venue and the main stadium for track and field events. The park would also stage the opening and closing ceremonies, making the South Side a prominent part of the Games and vital component of the city image projected to

would comprise an interactive global village. “Each Olympic nation will have its own pavilion with a two-way Webcam link to a site in that country. Chicagoans and visitors will have a place to meet the athletes, and all three groups will be able to communicate with people in other countries. This could well be the centerpiece of what Patrick Ryan foresees as a true ‘people’s Olympics.’” (Peterson, 2007, p. 16).



Figure 7. Central, North, West and South Clusters and venue locations. Though some of the venues were relocated after this map was produced, the four “clusters” remained fixed throughout the bidding process. Chicago 2016 described the plan as compact, convenient and athlete friendly. “Thirty percent of competitors will be within walking distance of their competition venues (though shuttles will be available), and 91 percent will be less than 15 minutes from their events,” (Chicago 2016, 2007, p.43). The heavy orange lines shown on the map mark roadways that would have dedicated Olympic lanes for athletes and the “Olympic family.”

the rest of the world. Yet the venue map suggests that the majority of Olympic sports and festivities would be located in the heart of the city. This is achieved through the use of a larger shaded circle depicting the Central Cluster, as well as the concentration of the pictorial representations of events drawing the eye to the center of the map and the city's other amenities: "The Chicago venue plan has been designed to give the Games a true celebration center in the heart of the city . . . In this picturesque setting, the Games will create a multitude of opportunities for everyone to experience not only the magic of the Olympic spirit in the venues, but also the magnificent cultural attractions, restaurants, shops and nightspots that make downtown Chicago so vibrant and exciting" (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 27).

The use of color-coding conveys whether the venues were "existing" (blue) or "additional" (red). At the heart of this cartographic choice is an attempt to highlight the bid's theme of sustainability and legacy. Pointing out that "Chicago already has some of the world's premier sports and multipurpose facilities" (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 25), Chicago 2016 planned to use existing venues to ensure that the Games were fiscally and environmentally responsible.⁴ Seventy-nine percent of sports would be staged in either existing or temporary venues (Chicago 2016, 2009c, p. 31), and only five new permanent structures would be built (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 25). Chicago 2016 stated: "The plan gives priority to the use of existing facilities, and new construction is limited to those structures justified by significant community needs and long-term commercial viability" (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 25). Of the five new permanent structures, three would be located in the South Cluster: the Olympic Stadium

4. Madrid, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, and Chicago all proposed environmentally conscious initiatives. Chicago 2016 attempted to distinguish itself from other candidate cities by advancing a "Blue-Green Games" that elevated clean water as focal point of environmental sustainability. The concept also highlighted reduced carbon emissions, nature preservation, and recycling and reuse of venue materials. Among the proposed tactics was to recycle Olympic Stadium seats into 80,000 wheelchairs following the event (Cromidas, 2009a; Chicago 2016, 2009c).



Figure 8. South Cluster of Olympic Venues in Washington and Jackson Parks.

Venue	Venue Status	No. Of Events	Capacity	Current Use	Current Ownership	Post-Games Use
Olympic Stadium [11]	New	47	80,000	Public park	Chicago Park District	Sports and entertainment facility
Jackson Park Hockey Fields [13]	New	2	—	Public park	Chicago Park District	Public park and hockey stadium
Olympic Aquatics Center [12]	New	44	20,000	Public park	Chicago Park District	Aquatics center

Table 2. South Cluster competition venues: use and ownership (Chicago 2016, 2009a, pp. 10–12, 22–23).

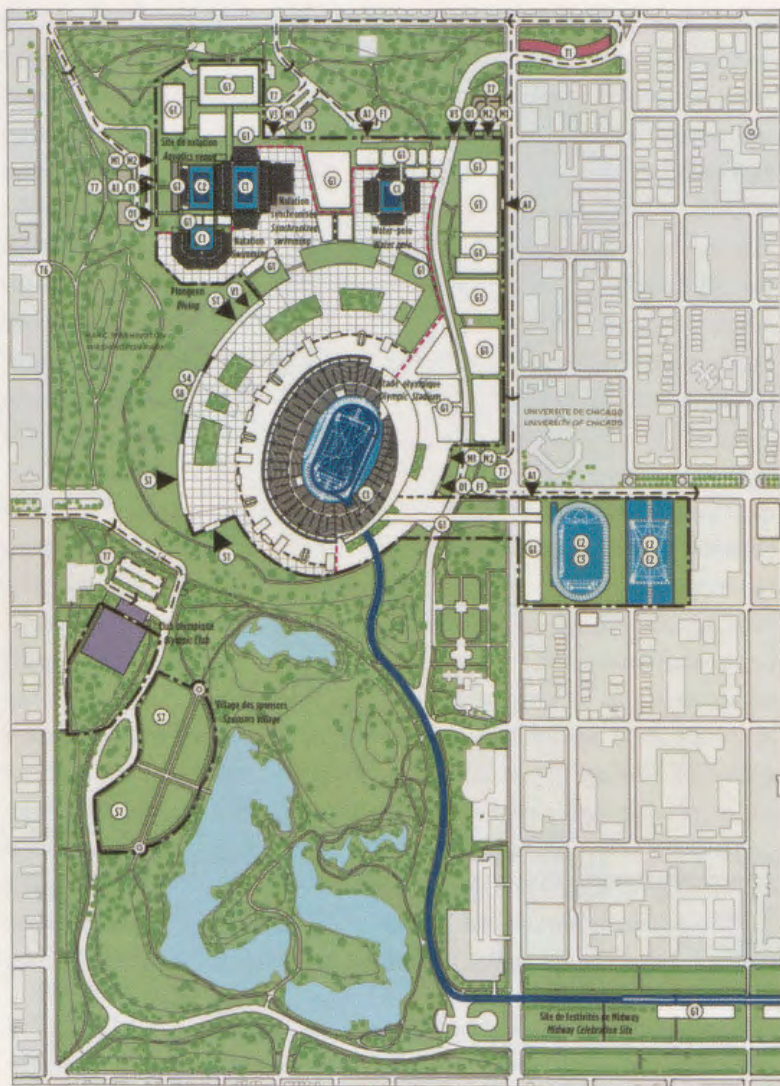




Figure 9. Olympic venues in Washington Park and Hyde Park. The map highlights the competition and warm up facilities (shown in blue) as well as the "Olympic Family" lounge (shown in purple). The pool and track at the University of Chicago were slated to be used as training and warm-up facilities for Olympic athletes. Like the other maps of the South Cluster submitted to the IOC, Washington Park is situated in relation to Hyde Park, the neighborhood to the east.



Figure 10. Rendering of the Olympic Stadium in Washington Park.

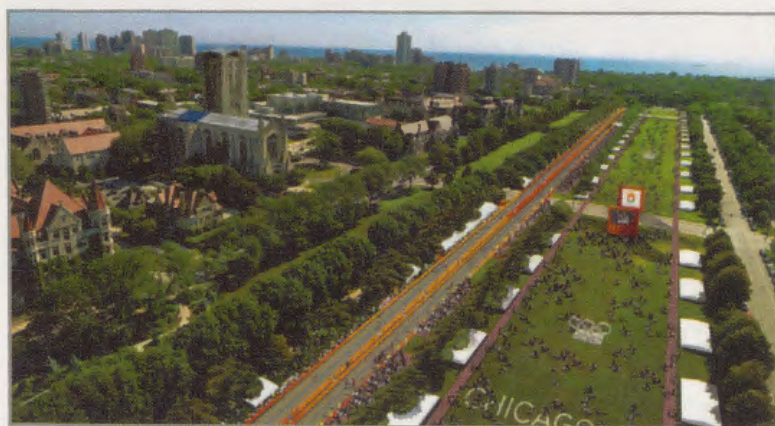


Figure 11. Rendering of the Midway Plaisance, site of Olympic festivities and a race walk. The Midway cuts through the University of Chicago campus and connects Washington Park to Jackson Park, proposed location for the hockey fields. While Olympic planners hoped to emphasize the connectivity between the South Venues, it is notable that the only existing South Side locations specifically depicted in maps and renderings were in the middle-class University neighborhood to the east of Washington Park. Despite claims that the South Side venues would revitalize the communities to the north, west and south of the park, these neighborhoods received little visual attention in the designs put forth by Chicago 2016.

and Olympic Aquatic Center in Washington Park and the Hockey Fields in Jackson Park (Figure 8).

Chicago 2016 claimed that two key venues in Washington Park would revitalize one of the city's long-term urban-renewal priorities (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 9). Built to hold 80,000 spectators during the Games, the Olympic Stadium would be converted afterwards to a smaller amphitheater with 2,500 seats. The scaled-down stadium would be "the centerpiece for the revitalization of Washington Park and Chicago's South Side" (Chicago 2016, 2007, p. 25), providing a venue for sports, concerts, and other civic events. In December 2008, as part of a revamped bid, Chicago 2016 announced that the Olympic Aquatics Center would be moved from the West Side's Douglas Park to Washington Park. The competition pool would be temporary, while the smaller warm-up pool — more appropriate in size for future community use — would be permanent. According to Chicago 2016, the modified facilities would respond to community needs and serve as visible markers of the Games' positive legacy.

The legacy associated with the transformation of the urban landscape was supplemented by Chicago 2016's purported commitment to Chicago youth. A nonprofit organization, "World Sport Chicago," was founded as the "living legacy" of the bid, meant to carry forward the empowerment of youth through sport generated by the Olympic bid. Quoted in the *Chicago Tribune*, Chicago 2016 Board President, Lori Healey, said, "the cornerstone of our legacy is our programmatic legacy. It's really about getting kids involved in sports. Stay in school. Stay away from drugs" (Kamin, 2009). Organizers frequently expressed this mission as one of their driving goals.

Legacy, sustainability, and commitment to the athletes are all formulaic themes understood to be central in devising successful Olympic bids (Ward, 2007). The imagery of city landscape and resident personality suggested an innate and established commitment to the ideals underlying the Olympic movement.

Branding the City / Marketing the Bid

Chicago 2016 treated the bid as Chicago's emergence onto a global platform. In a presentation about the role of new media in the Olympic bid, Mark Mitten, Chicago 2016's director of marketing and legacy, described the city's underappreciated global potential: "As our bid team has learned as we've traveled throughout the world in talking about the Chicago 2016 opportunity, we're finding out that people really don't know how special Chicago is" (Chicago Convergence, 2008). Mitten's team put together a promotional video viewed by the IOC in Beijing:

There's a common reaction people have when they first visit Chicago . . . it's that reaction of "I had no idea it was so big, so beautiful, so clean, or just so much fun." Chicago, you see, has this habit of surprising people (Chicago Convergence, 2008).

The video presents Chicago's surprising history and its contributions to humanity: the Great Fire, the World's Columbian Exposition, the reversal of the river, the birth of the skyscraper, the growth of grand museums, fine dining and theater, and the construction of Millennium Park. The video concludes with the proposal that hosting the 2016 Olympics could push the city to its earned central position in the global imagination:

Now imagine a city that offers everything Chicago does hosting the athletes of the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, a Games focused on the athlete, in the center of the city, in the heart of a nation, becoming the focal point of a global celebration (Chicago Convergence, 2008).

The theme of centrality drove bid rhetoric. Chicago is within the "heartland" of America, a place that embodies American values and aspirations; it is the hometown of President Obama, appealing to local pride and honing in on a globally appreciated figure to claim Chicago's



Figure 12. Due to International Olympic Committee regulations prohibiting applicant cities from using Olympic imagery such as the torch, Chicago revised its original logo. Accompanying the release of the new logo on September 19, 2007 was a change in Chicago 2016's motto from "Stir the Soul," to "Let Friendship Shine."



Figure 13. Olympic banner over the Chicago River along the Michigan Avenue Bridge. With the Wrigley Building towering in the background, this Olympic ad is nestled among iconic Chicago landmarks.



Figure 14. Olympic medal hung around the Chicago Picasso sculpture at Daley Plaza. Organizers of the Olympic bid sought to emphasize Chicago as a center of arts and cultural activity.



Figure 15. Dyed water in a Daley Plaza fountain. Known for dyeing the river green for St. Patrick's Day celebrations, Chicago drew on this quirky tradition to muster local pride during the Olympic bid.

prime position in a “new era of hope.” Mayor Daley expressed his hope for Chicago’s newfound centrality: “Hosting the 2016 Olympic and Paralympics would also present Chicago with a unique opportunity not only to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors, but also to place the city — through the national and international media — in the homes of billions of people all around the world” (Mayor’s Press Office).

The two logos for Chicago’s candidacy exemplify image as rhetoric. The bid logos sought to evoke a distinct understanding of Chicago’s history, amenities, and personality (Figure 12). The original logo was a torch, with its flames rising from the Sears (now Willis) Tower. The red and yellow flames recalled the city’s rebuilding after the fire of 1871; the torch tower represented Chicago as the birthplace of the modern skyscraper and innovative architecture; the green and blue of the torch’s handle represented the lake and the parks, the natural background of the city’s growth, health, and vitality. Green also emphasized the city’s effort to create an environmentally friendly Olympic Games in one of the nation’s leading cities of sustainable practices.

In 2007, Chicago 2016 was forced to change its logo because only chosen Olympic cities can use the image of the torch. The new logo retained the previous references and added the six-pointed star of the Chicago flag. Beyond generating further Chicago-rooted visual impact, the star added an allusion to a particular construction of the city’s history. On the flag, the four six-pointed stars represent places and events that shaped Chicago’s development: Fort Dearborn, the Great Fire of 1871, the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition, and the 1933 Century of Progress International Exposition. Had Chicago been chosen to hold the 2016 Summer Olympics, a fifth star would have been added to the flag (Chicago Convergence, 2008), seamlessly integrating the use of visual representations in the process of creating an officially sanctioned city history. Ironically, the carefully constructed bid logos put forth a symbolism that was ultimately internal, not obvious to the rest of the world.

The bid logos produced an uplifting and uncomplicated history of Chicago that emphasized the accomplishments of powerful white “city-builders” like William Le Baron Jenney, Marshall Field, Daniel Burnham,

and the two Daley mayors. There is no imagery of Chicago's past as a manufacturing and transport hub — an intentional exclusion as the city sought to portray itself as a postmodern city primed to participate in the service-based sector of the global economy.

Chicago 2016's advertising campaigns further promoted the city's brand. Strategically placed advertisements for Chicago's Olympic candidacy were tied to the city's iconic landmarks (Figure 13), existing Chicago amenities (Figure 14), and local tradition or pride (Figure 15). The marketing campaign integrated efforts to generate local enthusiasm and promote awareness of Chicago landmarks and practices for a global audience.

Powerful actors in Chicago selectively used history and identity-markers in the materials and campaigns to envision the city's future. In *Lure of the Local*, Lucy Lippard wrote:

In this society, history tends to mean what we (or more likely some powerful group) have chosen to remember — usually not the mean, greedy, unjust, unfair, or ecologically disastrous aspects of our collective past. Americans willingly forget pasts in favor of our future (Lippard, 1997, p. 13).

The bid's marketing symbolism conveyed an incomplete picture of the city's past and character. Bid organizers attempted to mask opposition by tying the campaign to iconic aspects of the cityscape, an effort made possible by an existing imbalance of power in which particular groups and interests decide the use of the city landscape. The campaign messages prioritized certain agendas and celebrated particular ways of understanding and experiencing Chicago. The effort feeds into a practically undetectable process of authorizing certain viewpoints and practices while devaluing, or excluding, others.

IV. Participation in Planning: Olympics a Function for Social Integration?

On the farewell page of the recently dismantled Chicago 2016 Web site, organizers express thanks to the bid's supporters: "We created a connected community committed to a cause that transcends barriers and marks our place in history." Such a broad and uplifting statement begs the question: what sort of civic spirit and participation did this bid actually engender? To which "community" do they refer? The individuals, local organizations, civic leaders, and bid organizers addressing this effort in the years leading up to the October 2009 decision were far from unified in vision or planning methods. Despite the claims of the Olympic organizing committee, there was no uniform or unbridled support for the bid across the city of Chicago.

Chicago 2016 worked to deliver a cohesive image of city preparedness and wholehearted embrace of the Olympic effort. It claimed that 77 percent of Chicago residents were in favor of hosting the Games (Chicago 2016, 2009c, p. 17).⁵ "We back the bid" signs were fixed to buses, buildings, and bridges, and the Mayor encouraged residents to put homemade signs in their windows (Mayor's Press Office). The lights of downtown buildings and monuments, and fireworks against the backdrop of the city

5. University of Chicago economist, Allen Sanderson, questioned Chicago 2016's polling methods. An early 2008 poll by the bid committee found that 84 percent of Chicago residents supported hosting the Olympics. In a May 2008, *Chicago Tribune* op-ed, Sanderson wrote, "I suspect that at least 84 percent of those polled were also in favor of world peace, fewer potholes, and the Cubs winning the 2008 World Series. But a more relevant way to elicit information is to face respondents with some prices or notion of the sacrifice required to achieve a stated objective" (Sanderson, quoted in Sinhababu, 2008). A September 2009 *Tribune/WGN* poll found 47 percent of Chicago residents in favor of the 2016 Olympic bid, and 45 percent opposed. In poetic fulfillment of Sanderson's prediction, the same poll found that 84 percent of Chicago residents opposed using tax dollars to cover any financial shortfalls for the Games (*Chicago Tribune*, 2009).

skyline (Figure 17), expressed a zeal and coordination of efforts that far outshone the messages of groups resisting the bid (Figure 16).

Compared to these displays, the opposition seemed mild, their ranks diminutive, the concerns expressed minor. In fact, uncertainty about hosting the Olympics was widespread and involved a variety of voices attacking different aspects of the bid. The following section will focus on Washington Park and the local constituencies that expressed opposition to the Olympic plans.

In September 2006, the bid committee announced plans to build the main stadium in Washington Park. Coverage by the Hyde Park–Kenwood Community Conference indicated that this initial announcement was made without prior notice to local aldermen or the Washington Park Advisory Council. Chicago 2016’s lack of transparency and inclusion spurred a storm of debates. While the bid received a great deal of support,



Figure 16. Demonstrators show their opposition to the Olympic bid at Chicago City Hall on September 29, 2009. The protest, organized by No Games Chicago, called for improved city commitment to clinics, transit, housing and schools.



Figure 17. Chicago skyline lit up in support of Chicago 2016. Millennium Park's Jay Pritzker Pavilion sits in the foreground. Though protesters were able to gather large crowds to demonstrate the public's opposition to the bid, Olympic organizers were able to mobilize significantly greater resources, and imprint their message on the entire downtown cityscape.

it was also met with distrust regarding the claimed benefits to the city and the committee's rhetoric of friendship and cooperation. Many understood that going for the Games would not elevate *all* city residents.

Opposition to the bid arose from many different constituencies with a variety of agendas. The cacophony of voices lacked a single, cohesive, easily grasped message. Based on reporting by newspapers and local park or neighborhood groups, I have identified three main types of organizing that occurred around the use of the park. One opposed stadium construction in order to retain the vision of open green space by the park's designer, Frederick Law Olmsted. A second attacked the logic of using a mega-event to lead an urban renaissance, and identified community needs overlooked in the plans of the bid committee. A third did not oppose using Washington Park as a venue, but pushed for guarantees for local residents. These efforts were not discrete or opposing movements — in fact, they often overlapped.

Civic groups and organizations, such as Friends of the Parks, the Chicago Historical Society, and the National Association of Olmsted Parks, wanted to preserve Frederick Law Olmsted's vision of the park.⁶ They considered the placement of the Olympic Stadium and Aquatic Center in the park incompatible with Olmsted's "signature public open spaces and sweeping vistas" (Loughlin & Davidson, 2009). Significantly, the groups involved in the conservation efforts did not oppose the Olympics in 2016, but asked that the bid committee recognize the importance of the historic landscape. They suggested that Chicago 2016 use the placement of Olympic venues to revitalize brown fields and neglected city land.⁷

6. In their letter to Chicago 2016 Board President Healey, representatives of the National Association of Olmsted Parks referred to the park as a "masterpiece of American values." They wrote: "An Olmsted landscape embodies the democratic, egalitarian principles upon which this country was founded. Recognizing the need for open spaces in the overcrowded cities of the mid-19th century, Olmsted created publicly accessible parks for all people, regardless of class or ethnic background, places that were the 'heart and lungs' of a community where citizens could come together to celebrate their diversity" (Loughlin & Davidson, 2009). Many scholars discuss an alternate trend in the design of public space that privatizes and "fortifies" space (Davis, 2006) denies access to undesirable users, and is associated with a decline of the public realm (Mitchell, 2003; Bannerjee, 2001; Low, 2002). While the park preservationists recognized Washington Park as a site of diverse community use and participation, they did not associate Chicago 2016's plans with an encroaching trend of privatization and policing of public space. They were simply opposed to the presence of a stadium that would impose a specialization of park function.

7. A Fall 2006 *Advocate* report released by the nonprofit organization Friends of the Park (FOTP) urged committee organizers to consider other large tracts of land located on South Side for potential stadium locations. Among the proposed alternatives were the USX site, a 580-acre swath of cleared land at 79th Street and Lake Michigan that formerly housed the U.S. Steel Corporation plant, and the Illinois International Port District land at 89th Street and Lake Michigan. FOTP pitched the sites in Chicago 2016's language. They expounded upon the sites' striking views of the Chicago skyline and appealed to Chicago 2016's claimed

Conservationists sought to leverage the park's listing on the National Register of Historic Places, which confers some protections on the park's use, and Chicago 2016 organizers recognized the threat of potential legal disputes. Committee spokesman, Patrick Sandusky, guaranteed that they would "leave behind what's needed and appropriate" (Sandusky, quoted in Heinzmann, 2009). In a conciliatory gesture to community organizers, Chicago 2016 lowered the size and seating capacity of the amphitheater that would remain after the Games. Yet Chicago 2016 remained steadfast in keeping the stadium in the park, and the late addition of the Olympic Aquatic Center reinforced the bid committee's intention to move forward with plans for the park, despite acknowledged opposition.

The second type of organizing expressed skepticism that city government could construct such a mega-event on budget, free of corruption, and with decision makers accountable to city residents and voters. A chorus of individuals and groups produced opinions and analysis. While Chicago's two major newspapers, the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*, endorsed the 2016 Olympics in April 2009, much news coverage in the city investigated or criticized aspects of the bid. Coverage by *Chicago Reader* reporters, Ben Joravsky and Mick Dumke, was notably harsh. They focused on Chicago's fiscal crisis, tying the bid to underfunded public services, and Mayor Daley's history of over-budget construction projects. They denounced the bid as the pet project of a dishonest, corrupt, megalomaniacal mayor. Some activist groups took a similar tone, using their web sites and public protests to voice opposition. No Games Chicago, an organization of social justice advocates, protested at Federal Plaza on April 2, 2009, on the day of the International Olympic Committee Evaluation Team's visit to Chicago and again at City Hall before the IOC's October decision. They also compiled a

interest in legacy by noting the lasting economic and infrastructural benefits an Olympic venue would bring to either community. The proposal, however, was given no formal consideration by the Olympic bid committee.

“book of evidence” that they delivered to the IOC in Geneva before the final October decision. The 150-page book opened with a Joravsky editorial and consisted mainly of photocopied newspaper articles highlighting four main reasons they opposed the bid: lack of finances, lack of competence, lack of infrastructure, and lack of public support (No Games Chicago, 2009).

In contrast to heavily opinionated reporting, many parties offered expert knowledge or specialized analysis to balance the projections of Mayor Daley and Chicago 2016. University of Chicago economist Allen Sanderson, a vocal opponent of the bid, used local news media as a vehicle to question the true economic costs and benefits of hosting the Olympics (Cromidas, 2009b). Anderson Economic Group, an independent research and consulting firm, released a 2009 report designed to inform area businesses of the Olympics’ probable impact (Watkins & Anderson, 2009). The Chicago Urban League directed their analysis to the likely effects on the African American community, including Washington Park residents and minority-owned businesses (Chicago Urban League, 2007). The Geneva-based NGO, Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), released a 2007 report that explored the experience of previous host cities. The 278-page report highlighted the role that mega-events have in displacement, gentrification, and repression of minorities and vulnerable populations in host cities (COHRE, 2007). In November 2008, Claire Mahon, a senior researcher and primary author of the COHRE report, served on a panel discussing the potential impacts of a Chicago Olympics at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

This second form of community opposition included large numbers of existing organizations working in Chicago and the South Side to resolve problems associated with poverty, gentrification, unemployment, or struggling schools. Southsiders Together Organizing for Power (STOP), Southside Solidarity Network, Southsiders Organizing for Unity and Liberation (SOUL), and Coalition for Equitable Community Development (CECD) were among the groups that used the Olympic bid to question the city’s top-down approaches to community development. They raised

concerns about a vision of the city that prioritizes the needs of global and corporate interests over local needs and claimed that people in Chicago *did not* and *should not* support the Olympic bid.

A third form of organizing recognized that Chicago's Olympic bid was being pursued whether or not there was full support from the local population and that the decision ultimately lay in the hands of the distant IOC. Some local residents, like Cecilia Butler, longtime president of the Washington Park Advisory Council, argued that it was better to be heard early in the process than renounce any participation whatsoever: "A lot of African Americans appear to be against the Olympics. But there's a whole lot of people who are for it. The other residents of our city are making plans for 2016. If you don't, you'll be left out again" (Butler, quoted in Hawley, 2009). Some of the studies generated in an effort to analyze the impacts of the Games included recommendations for how local communities could protect neighborhood resident interests and participate in planning and profit from the Games. The Chicago Urban League report and DePaul's Egan Urban Center report were notable examples. Recognizing the value of such a proactive approach, many community groups



Figure 18. Activists appropriated the imagery of the Chicago 2016 Olympic Committee to present their opposition to the Olympic bid.

formed coalitions to identify concerns and visions for Washington Park and the surrounding neighborhoods. Additionally, some groups worked with local aldermen and Chicago 2016 to stake out community benefits that would be binding on the Olympic bid committee.

The most significant effort was the Community Benefits Agreement, also called a “memorandum of understanding.” On March 27, 2009, the Chicago City Council’s finance committee passed an ordinance introduced by Alderman Toni Preckwinkle that formalized goals for Olympic-related spending. The ordinance resulted from a nearly year-long process of research and reflection by a team including aldermen, an umbrella coalition of community groups, social justice and labor organizations called Communities for an Equitable Olympics (CEO), the Washington Park Advisory Council, and the Chicago Urban League. The agreement, signed by key Chicago 2016 board and committee members committed to contracts for minority- and women-owned businesses, agreed to a minimum level of affordability in the reuse of Olympic Village, and agreed to hire local workers and graduates of employment training programs (Preckwinkle, 2009). Though considered a significant step towards cooperation between community stakeholders and Chicago 2016, questions over the agreement’s enforceability or legality as a binding contract left some community members skeptical (Cholke, 2009).

Another noteworthy effort involved the Washington Park community area’s Quality of Life Plan. Under the leadership of Alderman Willie Cochran and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation of Chicago (LISC/Chicago), a variety of neighborhoods institutions and residents began meeting in March 2008 to develop the plan titled “Historic, Vibrant, Proud and Healthy.” By identifying existing neighborhood resources, the group planned to strengthen local organizations and build partnerships to rehab historic buildings and improve access to jobs, health care, and constructive activities for local youth. The plan states:

Neighborhood stakeholders consider the Olympic bid and the University of Chicago land purchases as both opportunities and

threats. While they bring new investment and trigger implementation of projects in this plan, they could also repeat urban-renewal mistakes of the past that displaced residents or reshaped communities without the input of local residents. We intend to be full participants in decisions about our neighborhood's future, and will use this plan to guide development (WPC & LISC/Chicago, 2009, p. 4).

In coming together to articulate a community-driven vision for neighborhood revitalization, residents of Washington Park sought to both empower local residents and counteract the invisibility imposed on vulnerable communities by traditional city- and business-led approaches to urban renewal.

Fears of Displacement

You know damn well we can't trust Daley, because he's never done anything for black folks in this area.

—Kublai K.M. Toure, Executive Director Amer-I-Can Illinois Inc. (Hawley, 2009)

It may result in jobs at concession stands, but I don't know that it's going to do anything for the people in the community. It seems like Chicago is becoming a place for middle-class and upper-class people.

—Shawn Keez, Washington-Park resident (HPKCC Web site)

We don't know our future, if we're going to be here— not only in the neighborhood but in the city.

—Lonnie Richardson, Southsiders Together Organizing for Power (Sinhbabu, 2008)

Residents surrounding Washington Park, Douglas Park, and the south-of-the-Loop site proposed for the construction of the Olympic Village expressed fears that Olympic development would push people out of their homes and neighborhoods. While there was little concern about widespread eviction, people were concerned that Olympics-related real

estate speculation and ballooning rents would bring about mass displacement nonetheless. With 10-percent home ownership in the Washington Park community area, the large population of low-income renters were particularly vulnerable in the face of Olympics-driven development.

DePaul University's Egan Urban Center and the Geneva-based Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions reported on the degree of residential displacement experienced in recent Olympic cities. The report's findings, frequently deployed by activists and reporters, suggested that local residents' concerns were not unfounded:

COHRE research has established that the Olympic Games and other mega-events are often catalysts for redevelopment entailing massive displacements and reductions in low cost and social housing stock, all of which result in a significant decrease in housing affordability. In addition, specific legislation is often concurrently introduced, for example to allow for speedy expropriations of property or to criminalise [sic] homelessness. These factors all give rise to housing impacts which disproportionately affect the most vulnerable and marginalized members of the community (COHRE, 2007, p. 11).

The organization estimated that Olympic Games have displaced two million people in the last twenty years, including 30,000 people in Atlanta, which hosted the Summer Games in 1996. This displacement resulted from gentrification, the demolition of public housing, rental speculation, and associated urban-renewal projects. Though the use of public parks for Chicago Olympic venues meant that no homes would be demolished for Olympic construction, Washington Park residents expressed concern that "unattractive elements" of the local landscape — people included — would be pushed into invisibility in the city's feverish preparations for the global limelight.

Local housing activists noted the lack of low-income housing and existing processes of gentrification taking place within the city. They

expressed concern that Olympic efforts would accelerate and intensify these conditions. Though the city of Chicago owns roughly 400 properties within two blocks of Washington Park (Figure 19) (Loury, 2009), local activists were skeptical that a significant portion of the housing would be guaranteed affordable for low-income families. Many South Side residents were unimpressed with the city's commitment to affordable housing, particularly in light of the recent fate of public housing. Since 1999, the Chicago Housing Authority had demolished thousands of homes, with no effort to track the relocation of evicted residents, and much of the land had been sold to profit-seeking developers: "Townhouses starting at \$500,000 now sit on the land that was once the infamous Cabrini-Green housing project" (Gaus, 2007).

Many local constituents were aware of the elite groups that were dominating the bid process and that were slated to benefit from Games-related building and development. Olympics-stimulated urban development means privileging external, design-led neighborhood intervention over locally generated identification of needs and plans (Coaffee & Johnston, 2007, p. 143). Protection of low-income housing and the rights of vulnerable populations could easily be ignored in the service of economically motivated groups dominating the planning of the bid. As Alderman Toni Preckwinkle reminded the public:

The Olympic bid is being made by a privately funded group of individuals and corporations. While the city and state have provided guarantees, the obligation of preparing the bid and conducting the Olympics, should we be chosen, belongs to this private entity (Preckwinkle, 2009).

Determined to capture some of the benefits bound to result from a successful bid, many individuals and organizations from neighborhoods surrounding Washington Park contributed to the construction of the community benefits agreement that was eventually signed by Chicago 2016 Board President Lori Healey. The memorandum guaranteed that

no residents would be directly displaced as a result of the 2016 Games and provided guidelines for guaranteeing that a percent of homes constructed for the Games would be affordable.

Lucy Lippard wrote, "For many, displacement is the factor that defines a colonized or expropriated place. And even if we can locate ourselves, we haven't necessarily examined our place in, or our actual relationship to, that place" (Lippard, 1997, p. 9). Fear of being made invisible by the Olympic Games pushed community members around Washington Park to consider their attachment to their own neighborhoods. The histories, memories, and personal experiences entwined in the local landscapes were shared and mobilized to locate common goals and strengthen a previously unarticulated community voice. Documents like the Washington Park Quality of Life Plan put forth values and identity-markers unseen in the materials of Chicago 2016.

V. Contextualizing the Bid: Consumption and Privatization in Urban Settings

The pursuit of the Olympic Games can be viewed as part of a larger strategy to commodify city space and "produce" the city along market lines. With the creation of Millennium Park and the transformation of the South Side in the last decade, particularly in regard to public housing demolition and the growth of mixed-income developments, the city has promoted certain ideals regarding urban form, social composition, and citizen behavior. The Olympic bid produced a positive and memorable depiction of the city's history and identity and emphasized tourist and cultural attractions for a world-traveling, culturally elite audience. Plans and designs banished undesirable elements from the cityscape, and organized urban open space to accommodate a depoliticized, consumption-driven public.

The meaning and construction of public space is integrally tied to the "public realm." The openness of public space, the degree to which it

attracts a diverse audience and invites participation, can be understood as a measure of democracy, a place where people practice and struggle over the rights of citizenship. While the values and symbolism associated with urban open space have evolved over time, the “publicness” of public space has never been pure or unambiguous. Individuals inhabit city space out of a desire for interaction, to engage in creative activity, to disseminate information, to convey symbolism, to play, or out of necessity. Yet systems of domination and opportunity have always characterized the utilization of public space; in city spaces groups come up against a dominant order or moral code, or increasingly, against the rights of property.

In *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*, Don Mitchell emphasizes *representations of space* as an important factor in determining the shape of political and social rights within a society. Mitchell discusses Lefebvre’s notions of *representational spaces* (space in use, lived space) and *representations of space* (planned, controlled, ordered space) (Mitchell, 2003, pp. 128–129). While a courthouse, plaza, or park (like Washington Park) may be designed as a representation — to memorialize an event, to endorse a particular brand of history, or to promote a type of consumption — as spaces are used in new, creative, unintended ways, their meaning evolves and we see public space as *socially* produced, which creates a “dialectic of public space.” In public space, individuals, groups, and political organizations can represent themselves to the larger population and give visibility and force to their needs or demands. This unmediated and so-called subversive activity is often countered by attempts to order and control the uses of “public” space. If order and control is upheld through some authority, the visibility and power of unwanted or dangerous members of the population can be restrained.

Seeking order and control in public spaces does not always happen in *response* to marginalized groups appropriating space and using it to press their claims. Often, exclusion is achieved through covert tactics to depoliticize populations and convey who is welcome and what sort of behaviors are acceptable. Though the idealized public space — truly

open, accessible, democratic space in which a diverse citizenry participates in community decision-making — has never existed, Mitchell argues that the publicness of space is being threatened by “the steady erosion of the ideal of the public, of the collective, and the steady promotion of private, rather than democratic, control of space as the solution to perceived social problems” (Mitchell, 2003, p. 137). Corporate and state planners have effectively managed to banish discursive politics from the natural gathering places in the city.

Tridab Banerjee notes that another apolitical notion of public life derives from our desire for relaxation, social contact, entertainment, or leisure. Significantly, “the settings for such public life are not necessarily public spaces” (Banerjee, 2001, p. 14). Coffee shops, bookstores, and health clubs are spaces of public interaction, and are often associated with notions of culture or urbanity. Accommodating the human desire to look, gaze, and watch, these spaces are “created and shaped to facilitate the display of merchandise for mass consumption” (Banerjee, 2001, p. 14). Mitchell articulates a trend in urban planning that began to take hold in the second half of the twentieth century. With the development of “festive” spaces, politics, social difference, and active inhabiting of space are subverted to the ideal of a carefully constructed space built to encourage consumption by depoliticized subjects. “In the name of comfort, safety, and profit, political activity is replaced in spaces like the mall, festival marketplace, or redesigned park . . . by a highly commodified spectacle designed to sell — to sell either goods or the city as a whole” (Mitchell, 2003, p. 138).

Chicago’s Olympic bid was an effort to organize the city as an experiential landscape, a set of destinations offering entertainment, consumption, and spectacular displays. This can be seen in both the marketing of the city to the local, national, and international publics, as well as in the design and layout of physical structures on the landscape. The stadium and landscape design for sites such as Washington Park and the Olympic Village create a particular spatial order for the park and the groups who would enjoy it.



Figure 20. Scene of the proposed Olympic Village, located just south of Chicago's downtown.



Figure 21. Proposed Olympic Stadium and Aquatics Center, Washington Park.

The image in Chicago's bid book of the proposed Olympic Village (Figure 20) presents active and healthy users of a highly manicured public space. The strikingly few people who are sitting use patio-style tables, rather than lounging on grass or on edges of planters. The background umbrellas are presumed to be sidewalk cafes. The rendering of the Olympic Stadium in Washington Park (Figure 21) shows a similar manicured order. The curved paths reflect Olmsted's design of the lagoon, though a leisurely stroll through this space would not provide framed views of natural landscape, but awe-inspiring encounters with monumental stadiums. Spectatorship is emphasized, and clean, well-lit paths provide for safe and easy navigation of a gigantic city park. These spaces are designed for recreation and entertainment, subject to use by an appropriate public—primarily middle-class visitors. Their publicness is not defined by their ability to promote participatory and potentially disorderly citizenship. Rather, "public space is imagined in this vision to be a controlled and orderly *retreat* where a properly behaved public might experience the spectacle of the city . . . Users of this space must be made to feel comfortable, and they should not be driven away by unsightly homeless people or unsolicited political activity" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 128). Beyond framing the city skyline in the background, there is little to indicate that these sites are in Chicago, let alone in a specific neighborhood. The generic design, meant to accommodate a diverse international crowd and facilitate manageability and consumption, does little to underscore local histories or practices relevant to nearby residents.

People intimately connect "who we are" with "where we live," and over time, attach symbolic meanings to aspects of the landscape. For Setha Low, "Place attachment develops over time through personal involvement: living in a location, spending money to buy a home, telling stories about a particular landscape, and learning about the socio-historical and sacred importance of a site" (Low, 2002, p. 398). Diane Grams addresses how local individuals or groups stake claims to local space with "territorial markers," such as locally produced public art, plaques, and cultural facilities that articulate or redefine values, histories, struggles, and hopes (Grams, 2005, pp. 2–3).

The introduction of Olympic stadiums and athletics centers in Washington Park was entirely imposed and disjointed from local history and initiative. They would not symbolically reflect an existing neighborhood identity; in fact, the redesign of the park was an attempt to imprint the space with a new order that would be more controlled and less participatory. Because place and the built environment are such important components of how people define themselves, it is important to consider the impact on local populations when a dominant class and set of economic interests expropriate representation and design of space.

While park residents would need to fight for symbolic representation in the park and stadium design, they would also need to contend with outright exclusion from the Olympic park and its environs. Low's discussion of the "postindustrial plaza" focuses on commercialization and privatization in restricting access to what might otherwise be spaces of diversity and democracy. While there is a presumption of "publicness" in corporate plazas, shopping malls, and attractions like Millennium Park, in reality, they are in the private realm. As Banerjee explains: "The owner has all the legal prerogatives to exclude someone from the space circumscribed by sometimes subtle and often invisible property boundaries. The public is welcome as long as they are patrons of shops and restaurants, office workers, or clients of businesses located on the premises" (Banerjee, 2001, p. 12). Street performers, late-night dog walkers, or objectionable "loungers" may not have the right to inhabit such space.

Low points to a "fortress mentality," in which fear of the Other (usually along race stereotypes and class bias) "limit[s] participation to those who can afford it and conform to middle-class rules of appearance and conduct" (Low, 2002, p. 399–400). Groups have limited the spatial rights of others through a variety of practices, including the "surveillance and policing with guard dogs and weapons, inhumane bench and ledge design, and subtle cues based on the pricing and type of goods sold in the area" (Low, 2002, p. 401). Some opponents of Chicago 2016's plans were concerned that the Games would exacerbate existing processes of

exclusion and surveillance. The Olympic Stadium's close proximity to marginalized communities could mean disproportionate targeting of "undesirable" groups, such as the homeless, prostitutes, or young black males. The criminalization of homelessness, for example, was a key feature of the 1996 Atlanta Games. Arrest citations were preprinted with physical characteristics that made particular individuals suspicious: "homeless," "black," and "male" (COHRE, 2007, p. 124).

Fear of terrorism can also curtail social rights: "What was once considered 'Big Brother' technology and an infringement on civil rights is now treated as a necessary safety tool" (Low, 2002, p. 401). A *Chicago Tribune* article addressing security measures for Chicago's Olympic Games discussed face-recognition technology, which would compare images of arriving travelers with vast databases of "known troublemakers," and also discussed sharpshooters positioned around Olympic venues (Geib, 2007). The rendering of the Olympic Stadium avoids any depiction of security features (Figure 2).

The Olympic agenda reflected a trend in which modern city spaces are planned "for us rather than by us" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 18). Bid organizers generated plans to make the park and its environs palatable for the middle-class visitor accustomed to convenience, safety, and entertainment without addressing much-needed improvements identified by local user-groups and residents. The hum about civic renaissance, community development, a new era of hope, and Chicago's place in the global community ignored the lived reality of residents, especially of the poor. The plans contained a subtle set of messages about the right way to be a citizen of Chicago, about the behaviors and activities permitted if people are to enjoy social and civic involvement. The logic and agendas underlying the Chicago 2016 committee's city-making illustrates how structures of inequalities get entrenched and reproduced in the built environment.

VI. Aspirations in the Aftermath: Legacies of the Bid

What lasting outcomes, if any, did the Olympic bid produce? For powerful city builders and neighborhood residents alike, the Olympics gave people in Chicago a sense of direction and purpose. For Mayor Daley and his cohort, competing to host the Games was, in itself, a worthwhile endeavor. Even without winning, compiling the bid was an opportunity to advertise a succinct city brand of attractions and services to an international audience. Washington Park groups and other neighborhoods surrounding proposed Olympic venues seized the opportunity to reflect on neighborhood identity and to articulate a common vision for local development.

The achievements of community-based collaborations have a different character than the projects proposed by the Chicago 2016 Olympic committee. Local plans were not designed to impress an external audience, but to address the needs of Chicago residents and to encourage participatory action. Local Initiative Support Corporation, or LISC/Chicago, is an organization providing a model of sustainable community-driven development. Unlike Chicago's Olympic planning, this organization systematically addresses the inequities defining the urban landscape, and seeks to mobilize community input and resources. LISC/Chicago's New Communities Program helped guide Washington Park through the creation of its Quality of Life Plan, and is involved in other community-based activities that are carrying ambitions stimulated by the Olympics forward.

In 2009, when Chicago was still competing to host the Games, over 1,500 youth from across the city participated in Spring Into Sports, a week-long competition and showcase of Olympic sports and events. Neighborhood Sports Chicago (NSC), an organization serving as the community-based alternative to World Sport Chicago, organized the program. NSC was founded by LISC/Chicago with a grant from the 2016 Fund for Chicago Neighborhoods, which was formed by a group of Chicago philanthropic organizations to support neighborhoods that would be most affected by the Olympics (Feldman, 2010). As a grant

recipient, LISC/Chicago built on partnerships founded through its New Communities Program to establish NSC, a consortium of community-based organizations that offer athletic programs for children and young adults in underserved neighborhoods in Chicago. Spring Into Sports, NSC's kickoff event, received much attention during the Olympic Bid. World Sport Chicago, a non-profit created during the Olympic drive as the official "living legacy" of the Olympic bid, collaborated with NSC, arranging appearances by Olympians to share their experiences with participating youth (Finkel, 2010).

Neighborhood Sports Chicago continued to operate after Chicago lost its Olympic bid, by introducing new athletics programs and promoting cross-city leagues and tournaments. NSC is also working to enhance existing programs through youth internships, mentoring and leadership development, health awareness campaigns, open space initiatives, and equipment exchanges. After funding from the 2016 Fund for Chicago Neighborhoods ended, NSC established an endowment to continue operations. Without 2009's anticipatory Olympics buzz and citywide mobilization of Olympics-related resources, NSC's second Spring into Sport was smaller in scale. Over 200 youth from eight Chicago Housing Authority sites participated in competitions and clinics. Organizers emphasized the role of sport in helping young people overcome the rivalries and distrust that spawn gang activities between neighborhoods: "Youth established new friendships despite invisible, yet real, neighborhood borders" (Eggleston, 2010). Though Spring Into Sport continued to emphasize Olympic sport and values, World Sport Chicago did not choose to participate in the 2010 program.

The bid committee's plans empowered many Chicago residents to examine their neighborhoods and the dynamics shaping local community life. In Washington Park, residents used LISC/Chicago's Quality of Life Plan planning process to reflect upon their shared neighborhood identity and articulate a vision for improved neighborhood vitality. The inclusive planning process identified local resources that could anchor neighborhood growth, acknowledged the stakeholders effected by plan-

ning strategies, and determined the groups responsible for seeing specific aspects of the plan through. A nonprofit organization, the Washington Park Consortium, was established to lend strength and permanence to this community collaboration and coordinate the implementation of the neighborhood Quality of Life plan. The organization will facilitate the slow, deliberate process of building a genuine and lasting neighborhood-based social and political infrastructure. Partnerships and efforts initiated during the Olympic bid will thus be carried forward over the long term.

Chicago's Olympic bid suggests that future initiatives will involve top-down implementation of construction projects designed to generate global attention and attract corporate businesses, elite professionals, and tourists from around the world. Yet Chicago's Olympic bid also highlighted powerful community-based organizing by Chicago residents and local neighborhood organizations. Conversations and partnerships spurred by the bid have elicited ongoing commitment to neighborhood development. Communities in underserved South- and West-Side neighborhoods are building and expanding institutionalized structures to support efforts for local neighborhood growth. This will provide a necessary framework for advocating for inclusive social change as locally oriented Chicago residents seek to counteract the forces driving "global-city" development efforts. ■

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