

# Harrison Park Framework Plan

Prepared By:  
Department of Planning and Development  
Chicago Park District



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# Contributors

## Chicago Park District Staff

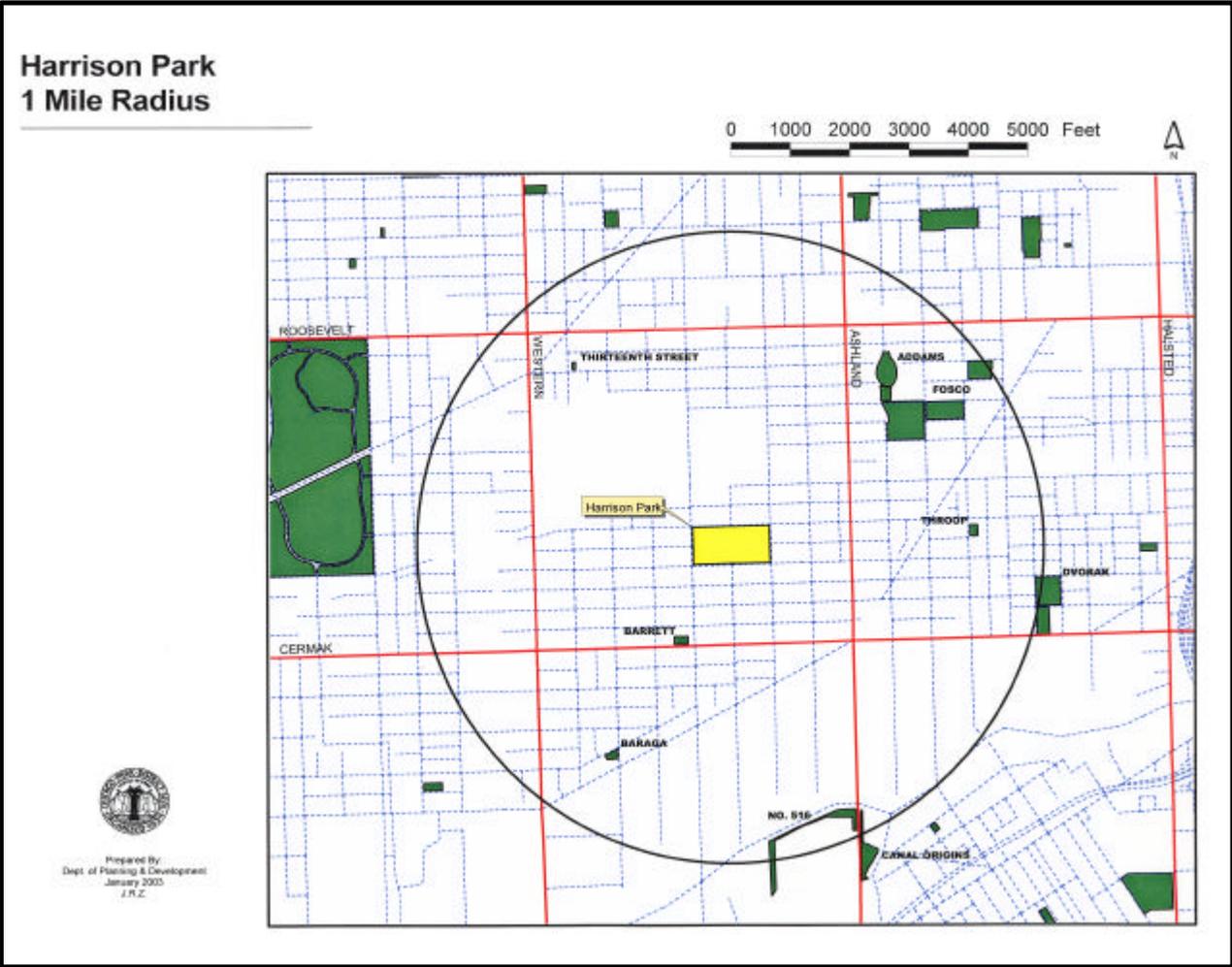
- Daniel M. Purciarello (Deputy Director of Planning and Development)
- Robert Foster (Project Manager)
- Cynthia Moreno (Region Manager)
- Art Richardson (Acting Central Region Manager)
- Tony Gonzalez (Park Supervisor)

# Location: Aerial Maps

*Harrison Park Aerial*

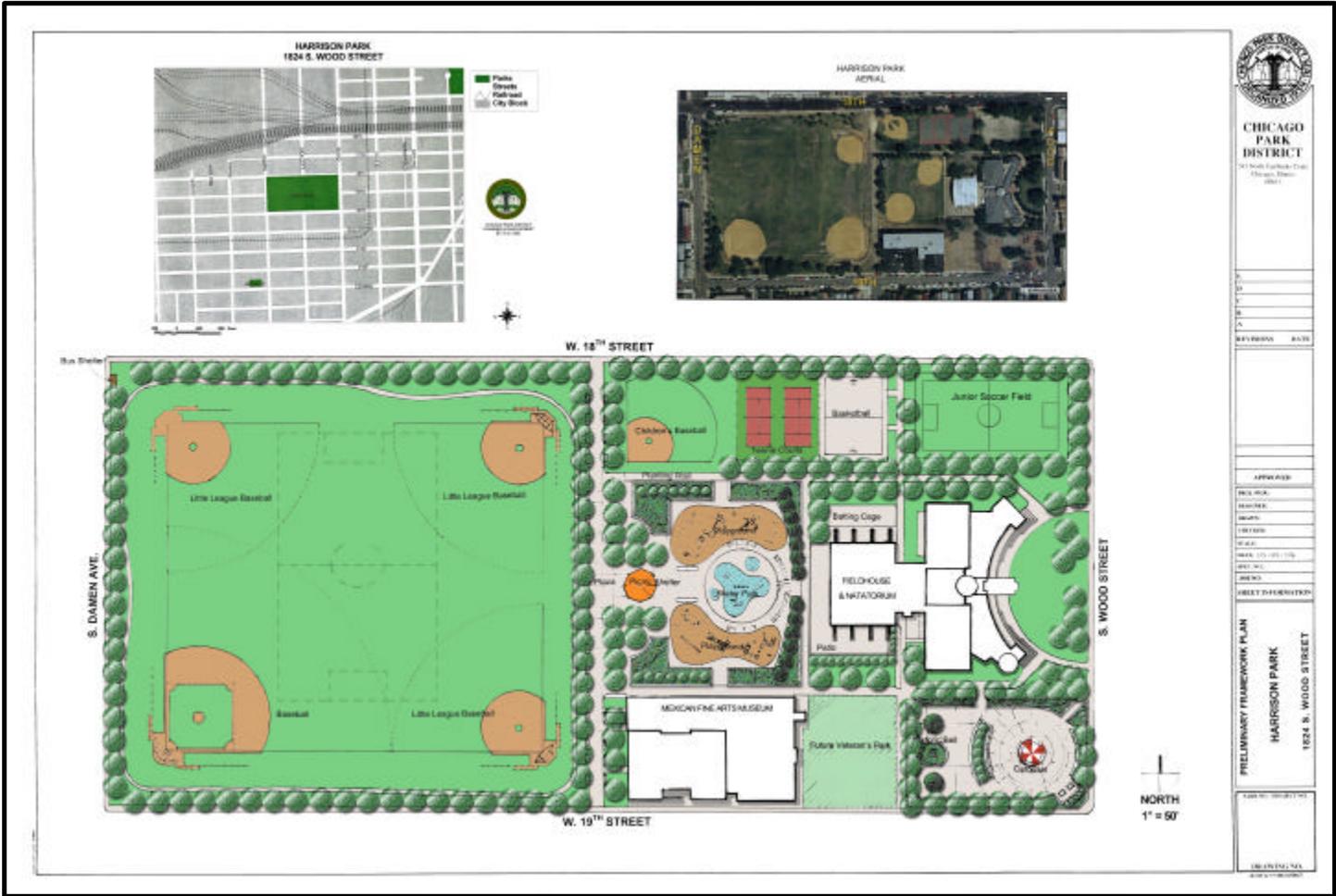


Harrison Park One Mile Radius



# Location: Rendering

Harrison Park Rendered Drawing



## Location: History

The West Park Commission created Harrison Park in 1912 to provide breathing space and social services to the overcrowded and industrialized lower west side. The commission's first three neighborhood parks, Dvorak, Eckhart, and Stanford Parks, were so successful that the State passed a bill permitting additional neighborhood parks in 1909 (Stanford Park no longer exists). The Special Park Commission identified several potential park sites, including an eight-acre parcel previously used for lime production. The West Park Commission acquired the lime kiln site and renowned landscape designer Jens Jensen created the park's original plan. Swimming and wading pools and a natatorium building were constructed in 1914. Within the next several years, other recreational features including children's gardens were added, however, the park did not have a fieldhouse until 1928.

In 1950, the Chicago Park District expanded the intensively-used small park by acquiring a stone quarry at its western boundary. During the following years, the neighborhood's Latino population grew, and in 1987, the natatorium was converted to the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum. In 1993, a new state-of-the-art fieldhouse replaced the original facility.

The park honors one of Chicago's most popular mayors, Carter H. Harrison, Sr. (1825-1893). A native Kentuckian who settled near Union Park, Harrison served as mayor for five terms between 1879 and 1893. He was assassinated by a disappointed office seeker late on the day of October 28, 1893. Ironically, the day had been designated Mayor's Day in Harrison's honor because it marked the closing of the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago's first world's fair. There is a monument to Harrison in Union Park.

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\*Historical Profile prepared by Julia Bachrach, Historian for the Chicago Park District, available on-line at [chicagoparkdistrict.com](http://chicagoparkdistrict.com)

# Process

## **Community Meeting**

A community meeting was held on May 23, 2002

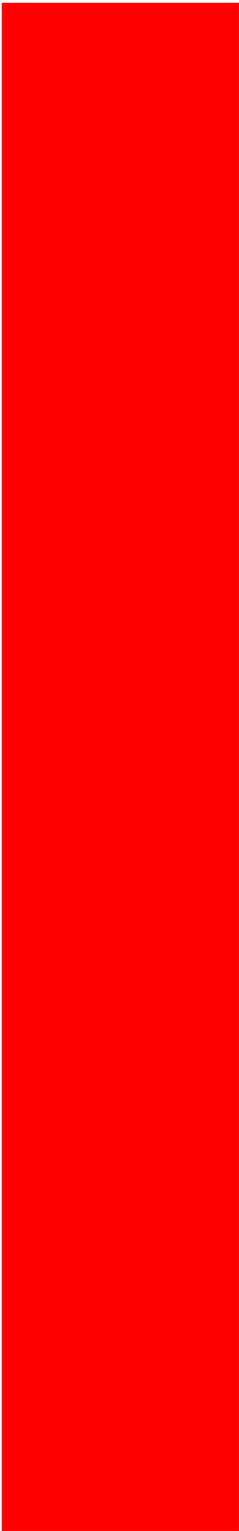
## **Workgroup Meeting**

Four workgroup meetings were held on: July 24, 2002  
August 29, 2002  
December 3, 2002  
February 11, 2003

The workgroup participants were Alderman Danny Solis, Lilia Peredes, Daniel Fitzgerald, Leticia Ramirez, Barb Jablonski, Frank Malkovich, Phil Coronado, Mario Bustos, Lydia Huante, David Balderas and Carlos Tortolero. CPD staff includes Daniel Purciarello, Robert Foster, Cynthia Moreno, Art Richardson, Tony Gonzalez, Joe Cini, and Marcelino Garcia.

## **Concept Plans**

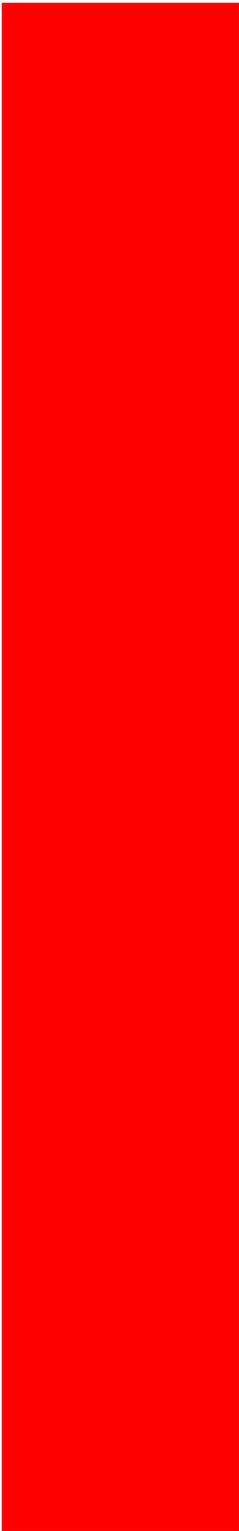
The Planning & Development Staff created concept plans.



## Concept Plan Goals

Through the different meetings held, the following concept plan goals were developed:

- Develop a capital improvement plan for the park
- Create a list of improvements that can be handled in a short period of time
- Identify issues that affect park use (e.g. number of users, existing site conditions, security, parking, utilities, programming)
- Determine what programs and amenities are used



## **Key Challenges**

After the goals were established, key challenges were identified from the list, they include:

- Balance different user groups in the park (e.g. baseball/softball, playground, soccer, museum)
- Determine strategies for stabilizing the west athletic fields
- Parking

# Major Recommendations

The following recommendations were made to achieve the concept plan goals:

- Fieldhouse maintenance and repairs (e.g. water fountain, lighting, locker rooms)
- New playground
- Interactive water park
- Infrastructure improvements
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Jogging trail
- “Paseo”, including seating, ornamental lighting, accommodations for concessions
- Plaza
- Soccer field
- Rehabilitate three athletic fields on west side of park and add one (1) new field in northwest corner