GRANT PARK VS. MILLENNIUM PARK:
EVOLUTION OF URBAN PARK DEVELOPMENT

BY

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The research focuses on Grant Park and Millennium Park to determine the mechanisms of urban park development and its evolution throughout the 20th century in Chicago. Both the parks both played a significant role in park development for the city, and are used in this work as comparative case studies to examine the circumstances in which decisions were made regarding public spaces. This thesis demonstrates the crucial influences of the public and private sectors in the establishment of public parks, and how these influences control the design process as established by landscape architects. This research also makes a close examination of evolution of public-private partnership in urban park development. This includes the shared goals and motivations, the private interest in public space and the mechanisms of achieving equilibrium between oppositional interests. This thesis makes a contribution by providing designers, such as landscape architects a way to understand the evolution of urban park development, which would thus give designers an opportunity to be part of public process and take more proactive measures in order to promote a shared vision and get more people involved in the process.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION...........................................................................................................................................1

Chapter 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.......................................................................................................................5
  2.1 Literature Review in Urban Park Development.......................................................................................................5
  2.2 Public-Private Partnership in Urban Parks.............................................................................................................7

Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHOD......................................................................................................................................11
  3.1 Comparative Case Study..........................................................................................................................................11
  3.2 Research Framework..............................................................................................................................................12

Chapter 4 POINTS OF COMPARISON IN SHIFTING FORCES..........................................................................................13
  4.1 Development Stage & Demographics of Chicago.....................................................................................................13
  4.2 Degree of Economic, Social & Environmental Factor in Motivation.......................................................................15
  4.3 Financial Models........................................................................................................................................................17
  4.4 Organizational Structure..........................................................................................................................................25

Chapter 5 EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN URBAN PARK DEVELOPMENT...........................................29
  5.1 Shared Goals and Motivations................................................................................................................................29
  5.2 Private Interest in Public Space................................................................................................................................33
  5.3 Productive Equilibrium of Public-Private Partnership............................................................................................37

Chapter 6 CONCLUSION..................................................................................................................................................42

REFERENCES.................................................................................................................................................................44
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

According to Galen Cranz (1982), the history of urban parks in America can be divided into four stages - the pleasure ground, the reform park, the recreation facility and the open space system. These four stages reflect the evolution of design theory and philosophy in urban parks. The concept of urban parks shifts from its original role as luxury or amenity in the pleasure ground and the reform park period to civil facility in the recreation facility period, and eventually to an incorporated part of urban infrastructure in the open space system period. The design of urban parks has been the dominant focus of landscape architecture since its emergence. The creation of urban park is more than the design elements and processes themselves. Urban park is an important dynamic system of endless interactions among people, space and money.

There's yet another way to read the evolution of urban parks in regard to the development in consideration of motivation, financial model and organizational structure.

Historically, urban parks used to be developed and maintained by the public agencies with funds mainly from government in order to improve the quality of the urban environment. In more recent times, as a result of the bad economy, the government funding for urban parks has been cut in the face of municipal budget constraints. Some existing urban parks as well as ongoing park development projects are desperate for money. At this point, the notion of public-private partnership emerged to reach out for more potential money sources (Figure 1.1).
After nearly three decades of steady decline, changing public attitudes are encouraging cities to invest in public infrastructure, including parks. The interest in public-private partnership is increasing as urban parks themselves are becoming vital elements of urban revitalization nationwide. On March 29, 2012, Mayor Emanuel of Chicago announced a $7 billion project called Building a New Chicago Program. This initiative proposed the Revitalization of Chicago River, expanding of parklands and restoration of parks with the help of private funds\(^1\). This project thus encourages the need to examine the differences that the private sector will bring with the public-private partnership framework.

Urban parks are constantly being recognized as a catalyst for economic development. This is true in both public and private sectors. Given the former research on the impact of urban parks on real estate value, along with their role as recreational attractions, private sectors are willing to invest in urban parks. However, once private sectors are involved in the financing of urban park development, it is bound to cause conflicts between the interest of the public realm and private sectors.

This research focuses on forces of decision-making in urban park development and its change throughout the 20th century. It strives to answer the following research questions: What are the major forces influencing decision making in urban park development? How did these forces change through the 20th century? This research continues to examine the increasingly important public-private partnership in urban park

development, its causes and its impacts. What leads to the emergence of public-private partnership in urban park development? What benefits and issues does public-private partnership bring?

This research helps us understand the evolution of park development as it constantly relates to shifting motivation, increasing engagement of private sector and more efficient design process based on high level of collaboration between government, various organizations, private sectors and individuals. Thus, as designers we are able to adjust ourselves to the current situation and take more proactive measures such as engaging in the early stage of a park project to promote a shared vision and get more people involved in the process.

The landscape architecture profession builds on the collective knowledge from both theories and built projects from past. In addition, the success of precedent projects guides us in search of solutions for future situations and creates momentum to carry on. As shown in Figure 1.2, Grant Park and the 1909 Plan of Chicago set the precedent for the construction of Millennium Park from 1998 to 2004. Now, following the example of

Figure 1.2 Aerial Map showing spatial relationship of Grant Park, Millennium Park and Maggie Daley Park; and their construction period
Photograph from Chicago Park District. Enhanced by author.
Millennium Park, Maggie Daley Park which is directly to the east of Millennium Park, is already under construction with funding from both public and private sector\(^2\).

Chapter 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Literature Review in Urban Park Development

In The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America, Galen Cranz (1982) divides the history of American urban parks into four stages - the Pleasure Ground (1850 – 1900), the Reform Park (1900 – 1930), the Recreation Facility (1930 -1965), the Open-Space System (1965 and After) - and analyses their ideals accordingly. This book provides an idea of the general motivation for creating Grant Park in 1915 from landscape history point’s view. The method Galen used to divide the urban park history reveals the correlation between development background and motivation which is essential in understanding the evolution of urban park development. The understanding of causes makes it easier to see the trajectory of urban park development in the bigger social context and to foresee the potential of the future.

In Valuation of Urban Parks, More, Stevens and Allen (1988) discuss two different perception of urban park values: in terms of landscape & in terms of economy. As shown in Figure 2.1, the landscape profession focuses primarily on green space, recreation, social equity and health, while the decision makers are more concerned about the economic indicators such as job creation, contribution to tax base and economic development. The value system reflects the dedication for creating a better urban environment and the passion of making urban parks an agency for both human to human and human to nature interaction. Thus, the value orientation of landscape profession is built on a relatively small and specific segment of human society. Similarly, the decision makers, mainly politicians, are constrained by the direct economic contribution in face of the two to four years reelection cycle. They would lean towards projects with better
economic performance instantly, since we are now living in a world where the economic prosperity has become the dominant concern.

**Figure 2.1** Two Systems of Perceived Value in Urban Park Development
Data from More, Stevens and Allen 1988

Under such circumstances, the failure to communicate the value of an urban park in economic terms is likely to lead to development pressure which can turn urban parks into schools, libraries, civic centers, interstate highways, sewage treatment facilities and other types of public facilities (*Figure 2.1*). This gap in communication indicates potential evolution in urban park development to build the bridge between the two different value orientation systems. Thomas’s reflection of urban parks’ valuation leads to the thought that the organizational structure of emerging public-private partnership, in fact facilitates the communication between the two value systems as a shared platform. This idea strengthens my research further to focus on the mechanism of public-private partnership in regard to financial models and organizational structure.
Andrew R. Stevenson (2007) analyzes the political process of Millennium Park development - dominant actors, primary goals, resource used and pathways of influence - in *Elites, Regimes, and Growth Machines: The Politics of Parks Development in Chicago and London*. This research reveals that the Millennium Park “is a new model of open space development: a coalition of public and private interests that by economic, environmental, and social indicators is considered an overwhelming success by almost all involved in the process.” Andrew’s research also shows that the emergence of public-private partnership as an evolution in urban park development to deal with economic, environmental and social concerns simultaneously. My research was encouraged by Andrew’s idea to treat public-private partnership as a new model in urban park development, which enables the analysis of the evolution of public-private partnership through the comparison of Grant Park and Millennium Park. This analysis ultimately guides my research to the core finding in the productivity and viability of public-private partnership in urban park development.

2.2 Public-Private Partnership in Urban Parks

Beginning in 1980, the Rockefeller Brothers created the Bryant Park Restoration Corporation (BPRC) in order to help turn around the deteriorate condition of Bryant Park (Bryant Park 2013). BPRC was the largest U.S. effort to provide private management, with private funding, to a public park at that time (Bryant Park 2013). With BRPC’s effort, Bryant Park was renovated and reopened in April, 1992, lavishing praise from citizens and visitors, the media, and urbanists. As the Urban Land Institute wrote it in an award citation, “the success of the park feeds the success of the neighborhood.” Soon the establishment was joined by the business community, whose assessments helped fund the
renewal and now benefit from higher rents and property values (Bryant Park 2013).

There has been over 20 years’ history of public-private partnerships in urban park development in America, counting from the reopening of Bryant Park. But what is public-private partnership by definition? In the paper Governance Forms in Urban Public-Private Partnerships, Ysa (2007) defines public-private partnerships, as “a voluntary, stable collaborative effort between two or more public and private autonomous organizations” to share the risks, responsibilities, and benefits in the delivery of goods and services. Ysa’s definition reveals the share of resources and benefits as the core concept of public-private partnership.

Following the precedent of Bryant Park’s huge social and economic success with private funding, more and more public parks are joining public-private partnerships. Significant research has been carried out on the causes of growing public-private partnerships in urban parks. According to Wilson (2011), public-private partnerships are increasingly used in public parks, mostly due to budget cuts in city government. In Public Private Partnerships in Urban Parks: a Case Study of Five U.S. Parks, Wilson also argues that the increasing public-private partnerships in parks are part of the overall trend from a centralized hierarchical government to network governance in which public goods and services are provided by a network of actors including government, nonprofits, for-profit firms, and informal friends groups.

A more theoretical explanation for the growth of public-private partnership was proposed by Michael Murray. Murray (2011) develops a theoretical model that essentially states that the management and control of funding of parks by a non-profit organization (NPO) reduces the cost of monitoring. According to Murray, NPOs as single
entities assume physical responsibility in public space in a way that contrasts strongly with the diffuse accountability of governmental managers and makes their performance easy to monitor. In addition, NPO takes over the funding of the space. In doing so, they become solely responsible for the financial success of the park. Centralization matters as it reduces the cost of donors of monitoring whether there is a critical mass of funds necessary for effectiveness. However, taking responsibility for fundraising also makes NPOs dependent on donors.

In *Partnerships for Parks*, Walker (1999) reveals the characteristics of public-private partnership in the sequencing of typical stages of a park development project. The partnership was flexible and constituted the core members in the predevelopment stage. In the design stage, the partners’ most valuable assets are their public image and the ability to mobilize constituents in order to attract more cash contribution. The general partners may lose some ability to control project activity at this stage. In the implementation stage, financial commitments during the design phase are called in. The value of funding and organizations’ resources rises dramatically with a relatively stable body of partnership members. Most limited partners drop out of active participation and leave the high level of control to general partners in the final management stage. This research mainly focuses public-private partnership in the design and management stage, in consideration of the level of activities and operation patterns.

There is a growing body of research on public-private partnerships in urban parks, including successful case studies, the causes of growth, its risks & benefits and so on. However, no comparative research has been done yet on the evolution of public-private partnerships in urban park development with the concern of shifting balance between
public and private sector. It would be interesting to see the impacts of shifting balance between the public and private on the public-private partnership, and the evolution of public-private partnership in response to the shift. Therefore, the latter part of this research studies the evolution of public-private partnerships in urban park development with the curiosity in the adjustment process towards a productive equilibrium.
Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Comparative Case Study

This research constitutes a thorough comparative case study and peripheral study of existing resources, including background information, economic and social context and literature in public-private partnership. The comparative case study is conducted by in-depth research of the two selected urban parks, Grant Park and Millennium Park (Figure 3.1), which are built in the same city adjacent to each other, at different time periods with approximately a century gap. Their geographic proximity eliminates other variables in regard to context. In this sense, Grant Park and Millennium Park make a good comparison to examine the changes in urban park development from early 20th century to late 20th century. The comparative analysis of general context, development history, governmental documents, related literature and financial data is intended to show the change of various forces influencing decision-making and evolution of public-private partnership in urban park development.

Figure 3.1 Spatial Relationship of Grant Park and Millennium Park Aerial Map from Google Earth
3.2 Research Framework

In order to compare Grant Park and Millennium Park, a framework was developed to show the change and evolution of urban park development through the 20th century, especially in regard to public-private partnership. On one hand, it analyses various forces influencing decision-making, including development stage, demographics, environmental concern, and economic performance and social context. On the other hand, this research examines the shifting balance of public and private sector in financial models and organizational structure since they serves as critical forces influencing decision-making as well (Figure 3.2). The public-private partnership went through a maturing process under the change of various forces as well as accumulation of collective understanding and knowledge of urban park development. This research synthesizes the evolution of public-private partnership from its emergence out of shared goals and motivation, to private privilege in the public realm, and finally into a productive equilibrium form (Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.2 Research Framework**
Chapter 4 POINTS OF COMPARISON IN SHIFTING FORCES

The legacy of Grant Park began with the designation of “Public Ground- A Common to Remain Forever Open, Clear, and Free of Any Building” when the former Fort Dearborn Reserve became part of the town site in 1809 (Bruner Foundation 2009). Until the early 20th century, Grant Park was developed into a formal park with cycles through multiple proposals, including the design from Daniel Burnham and the Olmsted Brothers (Bruner Foundation 2009). The site of Grant Park expanded with several rounds of landfill activities and ultimately grew into the 319-acre large public park.

In 1997, the reacquisition of the land in the northwestern corner of Grant Park, which was previously occupied by Illinois Central rail yards and parking lots, made the story of Millennium Park possible (Bruner Foundation 2009). The CDOT recommended building a new parking facility on the newly acquisitioned land and replacing the entire top structure of the Grant Park North Garage (Gilfoyl 2006). Later on, the Mayor’s Office proposed to make “enhancement” on top of the parking structure with private donations to offset the cost of the Park to taxpayers (Kearney and Merrill 2011). This proposal ultimately led to a massive public and private collaboration in the Millennium Park project.

4.1 Development Stage & Demographics of Chicago

In the early 20th century when Grant Park was built, Chicago was going through industrialization to become a major industrial and transportation hub, dominated by railroads, grain, and meatpacking. In this transitional stage, the city was crowded by incoming workers and the air was polluted by factories. The creation of Grant Park fit

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into this context as a way to pursue clean air and water in urban environment.

By the late 20th century, the city had arrived at the final stage of economic development and become the regional core. The service sector including financial service and tourism has become increasingly dominant. The quality of life had become a critical factor to attract highly educated people in order to keep economic competence and maintain a health tax base. In the 1990s, Chicago experienced the reversal of city-to-suburb flight that began in 1950s. As shown in Figure 4.1, the population of Loop began to climb while lots of big cities were still struggling with downtown declining. Under such circumstances, the construction of Millennium Park was intended to trigger economic growth and maintain population with new recreation and cultural facilities for people to visit, use and explore.

![Figure 4.1 Population of the City of Chicago and the Loop District from 1900 to 2010 Data from U.S. Census](image.png)

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4.2 Degree of Economic, Social & Environmental Factor in Motivation

4.2.1 Grant Park as an Ideal of Pleasure Ground

According to Cranz’s (1982) *The Politics of Park Design*, the original concept of Grant Park came from the Pleasure Ground. In this period, the creation of urban parks was mainly driven by two major concerns: the improvement of urban environment and the fulfillment of aesthetic desire. Parks were anti-urban ideal to improve environment of cities and solve problems at that time. They were meant to be pieces of country to provide fresh air, meadows, lakes & sunshine (Cranz 1982). Therefore, the motivation of building Grant Park was driven primarily by the environmental concerns. In the meantime, the ideal of Pleasure Ground values picturesque open space for people to appreciate the beauty of nature. It resists art collection, amusement, commercial activities and political gathering opposed to “Nature” (Cranz 1982). Urban parks were designed to meet the classical aesthetic expectation rather than to fulfill the needs of citizens.

4.2.2 Historical Roots of Grant Park

As shown in Figure 4.2, the plan of the Fort Dearborn Addition to Chicago noted the designation of “Public Ground – A common to remain forever open, clear and free of any buildings, or other obstruction whatever” on the open space along the lakefront. This designation set the premise for the future battles and development of Grant Park (Macaluso, Bachrach and Samors 2009, 12-13). Later on, the 1893 World’s Columbia Exposition stimulated a movement devoted to lakefront improvement (Gilfoyl 2006). In 1904,
the Report of Special Park Commission made an analysis of Chicago Park System and kicked off the city-wide movement of park development (Bradley 1905). Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett created the vision for Chicago’s major downtown lakefront open space -Grant Park- in the 1909 Plan for Chicago. As Burnham and Bennett (1909) stated in the Plan, “It affords them one great unobstructed view, stretching away to the horizon, where water and clouds seem to meet…”

The momentum of those historical events contributed to the creation of Grant Park, showing the growing concern for the public realm, especially public open space. Later on, this social trend has led to the preservation of the vacant lot as well as the construction of Chicago Park System. It would be more accurate to put that while the major concern of the construction of Grant Park was primarily based on environmental improvement, it also reflected the social trends and context to a certain degree.

4.2.3 Millennium Park: A Response to Current Trends

In the sense of consistency, Millennium Park aims to fill up the missing piece of Grant Park as what was planned to create an enlarged lakefront park for Chicago in the 1909 Plan for Chicago (Burnham and Bennett 1909). It echoes the dedication to public open space as Burnham and the citizens of Chicago have always been pursuing since the establishment of the city. It was however, the call from economic development and social issues that was even more compelling. In the meantime,
with the growing body of knowledge in the economic lever effect, the understanding of urban park as a catalyst for economic growth was widely accepted. Therefore, as shown in Figure 4.3, the Millennium Park Project was primarily conceived as an effort to revitalize Chicago which can stimulate economic growth by retaining business, maintaining health tax bases and expanding tourism visits (Landscape Architecture Foundation 2011). In addition, the project was also working with other alternative and initiatives to attract and sustain the population in the downtown area. The Millennium Park project reveals the growing concerns in economic and social factors in the decision-making process of new urban park development. Thus, landscape professionals need to cooperate with the shifting forces, putting more efforts to the solutions of economic and social challenges in order to gain supports from the public and make the design scheme work.

4.3 Financial Models

4.3.1 Money Source: Public Spending vs. Private Support

The financial models and structures define the identity and behavior pattern of an organization, which thus enables to get an idea about all the decisions to be made from a deep understanding of financial models. In regard to urban park development, the money source has direct relation to the proportion of shareholders from the public sector and private sector. The proportion of capital contribution from the public and private sector indicates the power in decision-making and further influences the distribution of
rights and benefits generated by urban park development. With growing share of money from the private sector, the decisions made by the board would naturally lean towards private interests. Therefore, this research studies four major money sources in urban park development (*Figure 4.4*), including public taxes and municipal bonds from government and private donations from individuals, corporations and foundations. The research analyses the proportion of each money sources in regard to Grant Park and Millennium Park and its impacts on the development process.

In Grant Park’s scenario, the primary money source came from public taxes and municipal bonds with a small portion from private donors. As shown in *Figure 4.5*, the South Park Commission took the responsibility of funding for the initial construction in 1915 (Bradley 1905). In the 1940s, Chicago Park District made additional park improvement in Grant Park with federal funding from works progress administration (Macaluso, Bachrach and Samors 2009). Both of these two major constructions were approved to improve the public space for the citizens of Chicago, with the latter one also serving as jobs generator. However, the Buckingham Fountain - the landmark of Chicago in the 20th century- was built with private donation from Kate Buckingham in memory of her bother⁶. The

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construction of Buckingham Fountain indicates the preference of the significant feature rather than overall improvement with the involvement of private money.

With the approaching of 21st century, it’s becoming harder to secure funding from public sector in face of both municipal budget constraints and increasing concerns about public spending. The proposal for a new park has been challenged and put off, since the structure of park financial arrangement is legally an option or amenity, not a necessity. In the meanwhile, there’s a philanthropy tradition which is about giving money back for public welfare. Foundations and corporations are willing to support new urban park project with growing interests in green space and economic development.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 4.6** Money Source: Millennium Park
Data from Uhlir 2005

Under such circumstances, the proportion of the money source for Millennium Park from public sector and private sector was almost half to half (Uhlir 2005). The public sector strived to find financial instrument to make Millennium Park Project self-sufficient. As shown in Figure 4.6, both construction bonds and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Funds were channeled to the project to secure the cash flow for the construction (Uhlir 2005). The municipal bond is a traditional financial tool for urban park development. The city of Chicago managed to lower the risk of issuing the Millennium Park Project Bond by associating it with the revenue flow from its underground parking garage. In addition,
the financial burden of public sector was also reduced by the introduction of TIF Fund. TIF is a financial tool which creates funding for public or private projects by borrowing against the future increase in these property-tax revenues\(^7\). It is designed to subsidize improvement where development would otherwise not occur. The aerial location and economic estimation of Millennium Park Project made it qualified for Central Loop TIF Fund. In 2007, both the municipal bond and TIF Fund were ultimately paid off by the money from the lease of Millennium Park underground parking garage (*Figure 4.6*).

\[\text{Figure 4.7} \text{ Millennium Park: City Funded Elements}\]
\[\text{Data from Bruner Foundation 2009}\]

This research shows several implications with a closer analysis of the relationship between the money sources and the feature of Millennium Park. The separate illustrations of the city funded elements and donor founded features in Millennium Park demonstrates

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the differences in the priority of concerns between the public and private sector. As shown in Figure 4.7, three out of five major city funded elements in Millennium Park belong to infrastructure, including $99 million for underground garage, $61 million for metro crossover structure and $43 million for park landscaping (Bruner Foundation 2009). Other major public spending includes $40 million for design and management, and $25.5 million for partial construction cost of the Jay Pritzker Music Pavilion (Bruner Foundation 2009). Therefore, it implies that public spending is mainly supportive for infrastructure construction, general improvement and design & management cost in urban park projects.

Figure 4.8 Millennium Park: Donor Funded Features
Data from Bruner Foundation 2009
Figure 4.8 illustrates the distribution of donor founded features in Millennium Park, together with the private donors’ names or logos. It turned out that all the features in Millennium Park was constructed with private funding. The big corporations with their branches in Chicago - including AT&T, BP, Exelon, J.P Morgan Chase, The Boeing Company and Wrigley’s - made their contributions to the construction of the amazing plazas and art works (Bruner Foundation 2009). Their generous donations to Millennium Park reflect both the willingness to give back some of their profit to the society and the need to build up a good reputation as part of the branding and public relation strategy. Thus, the eye-catching features are in line with their demand to support Millennium Park and to make advertisements for their corporations simultaneously. The spatial distribution of the corporation donors’ office locations shows an even more direct correlation between their motivation to support the public open space improvement and the proximity of the corporation locations to the site of Millennium Park. As shown in Figure 4.9, all the major corporation contributors mentioned above are located within the Central Loop. Therefore, they are more likely to get direct benefits from the attraction effect of Millennium Park.

Figure 4.9 Spatial Distribution of Donors (Corporation) Photograph from Google Earth. Enhanced by author
In the meantime, lots of individuals and foundations showed their support for Millennium Park through donation as well. As shown in Figure 4.8, the Pritzker family funded a quarter of the construction cost of the Pritzker Pavilion with $15 million donation; the Harris Theater was named after its primary benefactors, Joan W. and Irving B. Harris; Ann and Robert H. Lurie Foundation donated $10 million for the endowment of the Lurie Garden; while the Crown Family contributed $10 million donation for the Crown Fountain (Bruner Foundation 2009). Private donors pledged increasing amounts of money to finance additional features and actively participated in the design process of the features and venues (Bruner Foundation 2009). The major private contributors got the naming rights of the features just as a way to show the respect for their generous donations (Gilfoyl 2006). Yet, there were lots of private donors staying as “unknown heroes” for the creation of Millennium Park.

4.3.2 Revenue Generating & Financial Independence

Dating back to the time when Grant Park was built, there was no consideration of revenue generating in the financial plan of urban park development. The city of Chicago issued construction bonds for new park development and paid the money back with income from other public services and the budget for the Chicago Park District. All the municipal income and spending went to the big money pool. There was no way to tell the exact financial balance and performance of a single project. Under such context, it was no wonder that the revenue flow of the Grant Park North Parking Garage never went directly back to Grant Park, though it was built underneath Grant Park in the 1950s (Figure 4.10).

In case of Millennium Park, the parking structure revenue bonds played a critical role in the construction cost of the whole project. The new Millennium Park Garage
(Figure 4.10) helped to fill in the gap of tight municipal budget and built the foundation for Millennium Park to be a financial independent entity.

Millennium Park has been managed by a private, not-for-profit conservancy which was transformed from Millennium Park, Inc. after its official opening (Bruner Foundation 2009). The conservancy is in charge of the maintenance of the landscape and amenities with the money from both public agency and private sector. The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs devoted approximately $7.85 million of their $19 million annual budget to support the operations and programming of Millennium Park, while the reminder of the $12.85 million total annual operating budget for 2009 is combined with sponsorship and rental revenues as well as Millennium Park, Inc. reimbursements (Bruner Foundation 2009). In addition, several of the amenities in the Park have endowments dedicated to their maintenance. This relatively balanced money sources created a neutral standing embedded its funding structure. Therefore, Millennium Park, Inc. is able to function as a platform to negotiate the interests from the public and private sector.
4.4 Organizational Structure

4.4.1 Major Actors

The major actors of Grant Park were planners such as Burnham and Bennett from professional group and the South Park Commission - later Chicago Park District - as public agency. It was basically a top-down park design and development process with little public participation. In the words of park district officials, the park serves as “the interface between Culture, the city and the Nature”, the French countryside in the case of Versailles, Lake Michigan for Chicago (Gilfoyl 2006).

In the case of Millennium Park, Mayor Daley acted as the primary promoter from the top level political power; the City Council supported the project as the legislative body of Chicago; governmental agencies such as Chicago Park District, Chicago Transit Authority, Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Chicago Department of Planning and Development played an important role in the project (Bruner Foundation 2009). As shown in Figure 4.11, the key difference lies in the heavily involvement of nonprofit organizations (NPOs) from both Friends of Park Groups and Business Improvement

![Figure 4.11](image-url)
Districts. Those NPOs includes Chicago Central Area Committee, Central Michigan Avenue Association, New Eastside Association of Residence from Business Improvement Districts; and Openland Project, Friends of the Parks, Grant Park Conservancy and City Park Alliance from Friends of the Park Groups (Bruner Foundation 2009).

With the diversity of NPOs getting evolved in the Millennium Park development process, the concerns and interests of different groups were expressed through the well-established organizations. Thus, the design and plan of Millennium Park was built on a more solid understanding of the needs and anticipation of the public. In addition, with members gathered under the shared goal and belief, the NPOs are more efficient and accurate in articulating their vision than individuals in regard to decision-making. Those NPOs also serve as platforms to build up the enthusiasm for the Millennium Park Project, as they accumulates a deeper and all-sided understanding of the project through their direct participation and contribution. Furthermore, the reputation and credibility of the NPOs had positive impact on gaining public acceptance and support for Millennium Park which was critical to the success of urban park project.

4.4.2 Relationship of Public & Private Sector

Since the government played the dominant role in urban park development, there was no public-private collaboration dating back to the time when Grant Park was built. The only exception was the involvement of capital contribution in the form of donation from individuals. Thus, the Chicago Park District acted as the sole stakeholder without words from the private donor in the decision-making process of Grant Park (Figure 4.12).
In the case of Millennium Park, the primary fundraiser Bryan put together a "Blue Ribbon Committee" comprised of fellow corporate officials with experience in civic and cultural affairs to coordinate the effort, which evolved into the Millennium Park Board of Directors later (Bruner Foundation 2009). According to the case study of Bruner Foundation (2009), Millennium Park, Inc. raised money for the construction of the park’s above-ground amenities and became solely responsible for the financial balance of the park after its opening. Therefore, the private donors get dominant control over the design process in return for their capital contribution.

As shown in Figure 4.12, the amazing success of Millennium Park, Inc. lies in the neutral standing between governmental agencies and private sectors created by its joint public-private partnership. The participation of private sector made it creative in developing new features and programs for parks. The freedom given to the patrons of Millennium Park, Inc. transformed the project’s vision and made it possible to work closely with various artists and architectures. Thus, Millennium Park became “one-of-a-
kind cultural center, featuring the best of contemporary art and architecture that attracted visitors and Chicagoans” (Bruner Foundation 2009).

As a not-for-profit organization, the separated and independent entity made Millennium Park, Inc. accountable since the donors only need to monitor one budget in order to determine whether their contributions will be effective. Therefore, it was able to tap funding sources which would be otherwise unavailable to public agencies, including donations from individuals, corporations, and private foundations. (Bruner Foundation 2006)
Chapter 5 EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN URBAN PARK DEVELOPMENT

The evolution of public-private partnership discussed here refers to conceptual sequences in the history of public-private partnership in urban park development, rather than the evolution in a chronological order. This research studies the evolution from its birth out of shared goals and motivations, to conflicts and controversial between public and private, toward an equilibrium status capable of meditating oppositional interests. Chapter 4 has analyzed the changes of circumstances influencing decision-making in urban park development through the comparison of Grant Park and Millennium Park. Given the comparison from Chapter 4, this chapter synthesizes the key to the successful public-private partnership of Millennium Park, by examining the unique characteristics of the partnership as well as the particular conditions which stimulated its evolution.

5.1 Shared Goals and Motivations

5.1.1 Budget Constraints and Development Opportunities

There has been a dramatic change in the city’s political landscape since 1980. Municipalities had discovered that little money was available for physical civic improvement with the federal government financial aid to cities cut by 46 percent between 1980 and 1990. Declining federal support was magnified by the growing resistance of taxpayers to municipal and other government expenditures. Therefore, Mayor Richard M. Daley was compelled to develop creative development strategies which intended to encourage private capital investment and cut back municipal supervision. (Giloyle 2006, 92-93)
Under such pressures from municipal budget constraints, the city of Chicago was actively in search of money sources for the Millennium Park project. Mayor Daley’s appointment of John Bryan as the primary private fundraiser led to the formation of the not-for-profit Millennium Park, Inc. (City Parks Alliance 2012). This public-private partnership formed the basic fundraising and management structure to create Millennium Park. Under such circumstances, the public agencies were prepared to negotiate with the pay-backs and lose some ability to control project activities (Walker 1999) for the private money contribution.

In recent years, urban regeneration strategies have increasingly focused on public space and sometimes associated with cultural spectacles. From the perspective of local government, the regeneration of public space can assist in developing positive images of the city and potentially serve to improve the city’s attractiveness to potential investors (Inroy 2000). Indeed, the Millennium Park project was an example of such effort to lay the foundation for future residential and commercial development though regeneration of public space with active and diversified public programming and events (Bruner Foundation 2009). In the meantime, the private sector had equal interest in the vision of the real estate development opportunity that a new urban park would bring in. It would make a good investment to contribute to the Millennium Park project and capitalize on the primer effect of the Park afterwards. Thus, the bond between public and private sector was strengthened by the shared vision for future development opportunities.

In addition, Mayor Daley was determined to bring more activity to downtown Chicago with Millennium Park in order to promote tourism (Kearney and Merrill 2011). In the final decade of the 20th century, Chicago and other U.S. cities had been
campaigning aggressively for the tourist dollars in a competition equivalent to 19th century cities competing for railroad line (Gilroy 2006, 93). It was a common strategy to enhance a city’s visibility and global identity by exploiting cultural institutions.

Daley’s idea of creating a tourist destination was reassured by an estimated 7 million visitors (Gilroy 2006, 92) that the Navy Pier had brought to Chicago by the end of 1997.

Downtown residents and corporate communities were convinced that recreation and commercialized culture were critical elements of lakefront economic performance (Gilfoyl 2006, 94). The overlap in the motivation built the common ground for successive collaboration.

In a word, in the face of municipal budget constraints, potential development opportunities and tourists’ expenditures, the public and private sector joined in the partnership to promote the Millennium Park project with shared vision for the economic and social prosperity of Central Loop. As a result, the collaborative public-private partnership enabled the combination of the assets and resources of the public and private sectors in novel ways to create the new urban park (Walker 1999).

5.1.2 Empirical Data from Performance Benefits

![Figure 5.1 Premium Effect of Millennium Park Map from Tavern Hotel](image-url)
According to Millennium Park Economic Impact Study, Millennium Park gets positive data feedback in regard to the goal of promoting economic growth. Hotels in the Millennium Park area have capitalized on the premium effect of Millennium Park to attract guests. As shown in Figure 5.1, the Tavern Hotel across the East Randolph Street is using Millennium Park as marketing device, branding as “Tavern at the park” and showing its location in relation to Millennium Park in the direction map. With the large amount of pedestrian traffic attracted by Millennium Park, retails and restaurants in the area experienced increases in both customer volumes and sales revenues (Goodman and URS 2005). For tourism sector as a whole, Millennium Park attracts approximately 5 million visitors annually, a 60% increase in a 6-year period; generates estimated annual revenue of $1.4 billion in direct visitor spending and an additional $78 million in tax revenue (Goodman and URS 2005).

In addition, Millennium Park also successfully stimulated the urban redevelopment of the area as what was planned. It had helped to increase the number of residential units in the underutilized part of the city by 57%, resulting in a population increase of 71% within a 6-year period. Millennium Park itself became a major identity in the East Loop as a neighborhood and triggered the emergence of a competitive submarket for residential development. From 2005 to 2014, a total of $1.4 billion in residential development is projected. (Goodman and URS 2005)

5.1.3 Interwoven Relationship of Citizens, Public & Private Sector

As shown in Figure 5.2, the inputs and gains for government, citizens and private sector in Millennium Park has an interwoven relationship. The government spent municipal money on construction of Millennium Park with approved budget, while the
park provides venues for public programming and events and stimulates economic and social activities. The private sector made their contribution through donation, and what they expected was the return on their real estate investment in the neighborhood, the prestige venues for their corporate campaign and the business activities the crowd of people would bring in. The citizens seemed to be a less engaged group in Millennium Park; their donation didn’t play a significant role in the financing. However, it was their entertainment activities together with shopping, having dinner and drinks which made Millennium Park and Central Loop more attractive and active. In fact, the pattern of interwoven relationship reveals the nature of the public and private collaboration: the inevitable interconnected network of all kinds of social and economic activities.

5.2 Private Interest in Public Space

In the early years of Grant Park, there have been lawsuits about the early designation of “Public Ground” for Grant Park when proposals of new civil buildings arouse. The body of precedent that Ward’s Lawsuits created saved Grant Park as open space for the use and enjoyment of future generations for more than a century (Kearney and Merrill 2011). In the dusk of 20th century, the city of Chicago managed to finance the construction of Millennium Park without regular taxpayer funds, in response to their
resistance of municipal expenditure. However, the public-private partnership brought in new issues of social equality together with its contribution of private capital. Some citizens were frustrated to see the closure of several venues in Millennium Park for private events. Therefore, the publicity of Millennium Park was questioned for unequal accessibility to a public space for private events.

**Figure 5.3** Timeline of Ward’s Lawsuit
Data from Kearney and Merrill 2011

Battles to preserve Chicago’s lakefront have been fought since the mid-1800s. The greatest was the Ward’s Lawsuit series over two decades by Aaron Montgomery Ward, the famous catalog merchant (*Figure 5.3*). In October 1890, Ward initiated his first of a series of lawsuits to block a variety of constructions in Grant Park. Ward sued, claiming that the proposal of construction violated language on a map of the original subdivision where his property was located which stipulated that the space east of Michigan Avenue would be "public ground forever to remain vacant of buildings". In 1892, the Supreme Court ruled that the land was held by the State of Illinois “in trust of public”. This rule granted the public dedication creates rights in abutting private land owners, allowing them to insist on strict adherence to public uses. However, it couldn’t stop the spread of
the Art Institute on the understanding that all landowners had consented to its construction. The series of lawsuits was over in 1909 when Illinois Supreme Court ultimately ruled in Ward’s favor in his opposition to the erection of the Field Museum of Natural History. (Kearney and Merrill 2011)

Ward’s Lawsuits successful kept Grant Park an open space for the people of Chicago as well as set precedent for the Michigan Avenue landowners. As shown in Figure 5.4, the Field Museum was rejected in the 1909 final Ward’s lawsuit. In addition, the public dedication invoked by Ward made the proposal of a National Guard Armory in the northern part of Grant Park rejected in 1902 during the series of Ward’s lawsuits. Following Ward's victories, generations of Michigan Avenue landowners fended off constructions of public buildings in what became a 319-acre park. In contrast, Art Institute, which got built in 1892, exploited the original consents given by the Michigan Avenue landowners by continually expanding to the east (Kearney and Merrill 2011). Therefore, it is fair to imagine without the Ward’s Lawsuits, the entire site of Millennium Park could be occupied with all sorts of civic buildings and there would be no open space left in the lakefront of Central Loop.
In Ward’s case, his action to protect the lakefront reflected his interest as a property owner of commercial real estate. In 1887, Ward purchased a property on the west side of Michigan Avenue facing Lake Michigan with his partner. The pair paid a premium for the land because it allowed them to construct a building favored with sunlight, fresh breezes, and lake views over the public land to the east (Kearney and Merrill 2011). Ward’s opposition to these proposed structures in Grant Park appeared to be guided by a sure sense of how different projects would affect the market value of real estate on Michigan Avenue. Nonetheless, his pursuit of private interest invoked the public dedication in Grant Park as a tool to protect public space. The result of Ward’s and his successors’ efforts created Grant Park, a spectacular public space in the center of Chicago, one of the most dramatic urban spaces in the world today.

The debates and controversies of Millennium Park mainly focuses on the public accessibility issue that certain venues are closed when they are rented to private events or receptions, given that Millennium Park is a public space in regard of its ownership. On September 8, 2005, Toyota Motor Sales USA paid $800,000 to rent all park venues from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. except Wrigley Square, the Lurie Garden, the McDonald’s Cycle Center and the Crown Fountain. It was controversial to close a public park partly paid for with taxpayers’ money for corporate events, as was the exclusion of commuters who walk through the park and tourists lured by its attractions.

However, temporarily closing a public space for private events represents a common practice for revenue generating rather than limited public accessibility caused by public-private partnership. Chicago Park District regularly rents public spaces such as

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Cafe Brauer and the South Shore Cultural Center for private events (Gilfoyl 2006). In addition, the revenue generated from the private rental is generally used for the park’s maintenance and endowment. In case of the Toyota events, the money was used to fund day-to-day operations, and for free events such as the Lurie Garden Festival, a Steppenwolf Theater production, musical performers along the Chase Promenade\(^9\). In this way, the revenue from private rental ultimately benefits the public taxpayers.

**5.3 Productive Equilibrium of Public-Private Partnership**

**5.3.1 Productive Design and Development**

Following the stereotype of the Reform Park stage, Grant Park constitutes of a sequence of board open spaces with passive use and sports field. As shown in Figure 5.5, the design of Grant Park from Frederick Law Olmsted and Jens Jensen’s hands is a perfect example of beaux arts classical projects (Gilfoyl 2006). The symmetrical form together with grand water feature, musical shell and open lawns shows the traces of the typical urban development in pursuit of a formal and united image of urban garden, from the single vision of designers or planners in the up-down design process. As a result, the only gathering space in Grant Park for public events is the Buckingham Fountain, the home of the famous annual Taste of Chicago Festival.

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In contrast, Millennium Park demonstrates a hybrid of popular art and the complexity of culture through a series of distinguished venues and art works from a board range of designers with their strong self-expressions (Gilfoyl 2006). It was made possible with the funding from private sector as well as their connections with renowned architects and artists. As shown in Figure 5.6, each component was designed with an interactive quality to stimulate viewers’ reaction and encourage the enthusiasm for the art and architectural works. The attraction and tension created by the vivid identities of different pieces illustrates productive collaboration of art, corporate sponsorship and urban politics (Gilfoyl 2006). In addition, the critical physical density of art elements brought by private sectors in Millennium Park reinforces the attractive and powerful mystery of the whole site.

The private donors also have predominant control over the design process of their session of Millennium Park. With their involvement and contribution, Millennium Park is composed of spatial boxes enclosed by green spaces designed with anticipation of large public gatherings, and turned out to accommodate high volume visitors with the
relatively high ratio of hard surfaces (Figure 5.7). The various sizes and characters of different venues provide ideal sites for all kinds of activities. Thus, the spatial form facilitates all sorts of public and private events, ranging from famous musical festivals, art exhibitions and park tours to hand-on education programs. Indeed, Millennium Park is a park for the people where celebration, communication, conversation and everyday social interaction occur (Inroy 2000).

In addition, the development time span of Grant Park and Millennium Park also reflect the level of efficiency and productivity with public-private partnership. As shown in Figure 5.8, the construction of formal landscape in Grant Park begun in 1915, followed by the dedication of the Buckingham Fountain in 1927 and the completion of additional improvement in the 1940s. In contrast, the development of Millennium Park was on an incredibly “fast track” with a well-planned and organized process. Mayor Daley announced the project of Millennium Park in 1998 and the whole park opened to the public in 2004. It was made possible by the political influence form Mayor Daley and collaborations and supports from all types of organizations, including public agencies, civic and environmental groups and business associations.
Figure 5.8 Timeline of Grant Park and Millennium Park
Data from Gilfoyl 2006
5.3.2 Mechanism of Achieving Equilibrium

Though the public-private partnership in Millennium Park grew from strong connections between two sides with the shared motivation and interest, let us consider the mechanism of achieving a mutual satisfaction and overall equilibrium when conflicts arise. The financial model of development funding from both public and private sector determined the organizational structure of Millennium Park, Inc. With the predominant private money from the private sector, the board of Millennium Park, Inc. committee on board was constituted of skated holders from private corporation and foundation, civic group and public agencies. Thus the board functions as a platform to mediate and negotiate the conflicts of interests. It appeared to be a much more efficient way to run the detailed discussions and negotiations as an organization instead of a series of meetings arranged for different parties.

In the design and development process, the broad public involvement and participation served to ensure the sustainability of the Millennium Park project, since people were more likely to feel ownership and obligation when they were involved. However, to avoid the complicated process of direct broad public participation and subsequently excess time of negotiation, the involvement of wider community appeared to be in a relatively passive form (Inroy 2000). They were being explained to the decisions which were made in the development phrase and asked for agreement in regard to these decisions. Thus, this public involvement strategy provided a stage for public to voice their concerns in order to obtain the support critical to the success of Millennium Park without sacrificing the overall efficiency of the development.
Chapter 6 CONCLUSION

The comparative case study of Grant Park and Millennium Park serves as a framework to identify the changes of driving forces and their influence in urban park development. The process by which these two Chicago parks came into existences is a complex set of circumstances. By comparing these circumstances, this thesis reveals some of the long-term trends of urban park development. With municipal budget constraints and mutual interest in urban park development as catalyst for economic growth, public-private partnerships are increasingly involved. The financial model and organizational structure of public-private partnerships promotes broader public engagement and brings in thoughts and visions of urban parks from various groups. This changing landscape in urban park development means that the design is more consistent with public needs for programs and events; and the development process is more efficient based on high level of collaboration between government, various organizations, private sectors and individuals.

The public-private partnership model of Millennium Park in comparison to Grant Park demonstrates a trajectory of evolution towards a productive equilibrium. The public-private partnership emerged with the shared bright goal and went through doubts about the private privilege in the public open space. Indeed, the private interest in public space has influenced the course of urban park development in one way or another. Nonetheless, the public dedication doctrine and the transparency in the decision-making process provide the protection needed for public space. Most importantly, the success of Millennium Park largely lies primarily in the balanced committee from both public and private sector. The organizational composition of Millennium Park, Inc. is the key to
serve as the platform for negotiations of different interests within the organization. Nonetheless, the extraordinary contribution from the private sector had a direct relationship with politics. Mayor Daley and his personal connection made a huge role of pushing the private engagement in the project. John Bryant also stands for his connection with wealthy families and corporation and execution skills in both fundraising and development process.

The analysis and conclusions of this research are based on the comparative case study of Grant Park and Millennium Park. Therefore, some of the phenomenon of urban park development discussed above might only apply to the particular circumstances in the city of Chicago during the particular time period. In response, this research strives to avoid the case specific scenarios by acknowledging other urban park developments with public-private partnerships. Since it was not feasible to conduct a series of case studies covering the cross section of public-private partnerships in urban park with different sizes, locations, financial models and organizational structures due to the limited time frame and workload; this research intends to serve as part of the collective effort in understanding the mechanism of urban park development and public-private partnerships in order to promote the visions of the future urban parks. Hopefully, this research could provide useful materials and thoughts for the systematic research on this topic later.
REFERENCES


