

BURNHAM 2.0: A Patchwork Plan for the High-Speed Rail City

Chicago Architectural Club
6 May 2008

WHAT WE'RE DOING:

The Chicago Architectural Club, along with the Chicago Humanities Festival and the Chicago History Museum, is organizing BURNHAM 2.0: A Patchwork Plan to mark the centennial of Burnham and Bennett's *Plan of Chicago* through new projects and speculations.

BURNHAM 2.0 will be a collaborative urban plan and an international design competition for the reshaping of the metropolitan Chicago and the Midwest through a regional high-speed rail system.

Toward this end, Burnham 2.0 will be developed in parallel trajectories:

1. An international design competition will be launched in Summer 2008. This competition will deal with one of the puzzle pieces in the new composite urban plan, the development of an intermodal train terminal in Chicago's West Loop district. The competition will be judged by architects from Chicago and beyond, and the results will be announced at the Chicago Humanities Festival in November 2008.
2. In parallel to the international design competition, members of the Chicago Architectural Club will be working in teams to rethink the Chicago metropolitan area upon the arrival of high-speed rail. The city will be divided into discrete zones, and teams will work in loose affiliation with one another to produce a patchwork urban plan.

We are currently looking for teams to participate in trajectory 2 above.

WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH IT:

The Patchwork Plan and the results of the competition will be exhibited at the Chicago History Museum starting 8 November 2008. The show will run for roughly two months at the Museum, and may be continued at another venue at the end of its run at the Museum. A Colloquium and Panel discussion with invited guests, both local and of exotic importation is also scheduled for the first week of November at the History Museum. All aspects of Burnham 2.0 are integrated into the programming schedule and formidable publicity campaigns of the Chicago Humanities Festival and the Chicago History Museum.

A modest stipend is available for groups participating in the Patchwork Plan. The History Museum will print all material in-house; participants are required to submit files only.

The CAC will publish the Patchwork Plan and Competition as soon as possible after the opening of the show. All teams involved in the Patchwork Plan will receive a copy of the publication.

WHAT THE POINT IS:

Much of Burnham and Bennett's 1909 *Plan of Chicago* dealt with a rationalization of movement, both within the city itself, and throughout the broader region. Today's challenges are similar--when high-speed rail arrives in Chicago, we will be handed the tools for the reinvention of the city and its surrounding region.

The establishment of a high-speed rail system is fundamental part of any attempt to deal with climate change, as well as an effort to face one Chicago's most important challenges – mobility. Burnham 2.0 aims to use this system to shape a livable, sustainable, prosperous metropolis.

The problem at hand is not merely to design the infrastructure itself, nor is it enough simply to design stations and interchanges and to provide access to them. The problem is to rethink the city.

WHY WE FRAGMENT:

The contemporary city is far too pluralistic, too decentralized and too complex to admit the sort of comprehensive urban plan adopted and enacted from the top down. We require new tools, new mechanisms, new strategies. Through the international design competition and group proposals, Burnham 2.0 will assemble a new Plan of Chicago based on discrete topics, episodes, and urban projects designed by a group of individual architects and planners working in parallel but not in lockstep.

Out of this loose confederation of designers will emerge a vision of a sustainable, vibrant, and pluralistic Chicago; a city transformed once again by the arrival of infrastructure, seizing the opportunities that accompany high speed rail to reshape the city and the metropolitan area as a whole.

Daniel Burnham cautioned us to "make no little plans." Burnham 2.0 challenges the true meaning of these words, in an attempt to generate a deeper and more immediate impact on the city according to the reality of our time. In the end, a series of discrete interventions can add up to a plan that is not small at all.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

- 1.** Establish a working group with common interests in order to submit a proposal. Email the information on your group as soon as possible to: burnham@rdstudio.info
- 2.** Pick a site, or allow us to assign you one based on your interests.
- 3.** Acknowledge and accept the deadlines and commitments required for the Exhibition. We will email you a formal sign-up sheet once you indicate your intention to participate. Stipends can only be processed with formal commitments to participate.
- 4.** Produce a project for exhibition. Keep in mind that the show, like the original Burnham Plan, is in large part directed in a non-architect public. Exact production requirements will be issued, but will not exceed 3 boards @ 22" x 30". NOTE: Printing will be done in-house at the Chicago History Museum, and is not expected of the groups.
- 5.** Attend mid-reviews on 9 September and 30 September. We will invite all club members and outside critics to comment on the progress of the work.
- 6.** Make a really nice project. Send us the files on or before 15 October.

SCHEDULE:

May 6:	Burnham 2.0 Launched
May 13:	Expressions of Interest Due: burnham@rdstudio.info
May 20:	Brief Coordination Meeting With Teams – Formal Commitments Due
September 9:	CAC Progress Pin-Up and Discussion
September 30:	CAC Pin-Up and Discussion with Invited Guests
October 15:	DEADLINE: Submission of Files
November 8:	Exhibition Opens at Chicago History Museum Panel Discussion with Invited Guests

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

All files are available for download at: www.mediamax.com
(Please use these files with discretion, do not distribute)

User ID: burnham2008
Password: smallplans

Please direct all questions to burnham@rdstudio.info or call David Goodman: 847.404.5495

SITE LIST:

- Site 1: Clinton Street Corridor
- Site 2: West Loop-River
- Site 3: West Loop-North
- Site 4: West Loop-South
- Site 5: Chicago Riverside Rail Yards
- Site 6: Kennedy Air Rights
- Site 7: Circle Interchange
- Site 8: Dan Ryan Air Rights
- Site 9: Eisenhower/Post Office Gateway
- Site 10: Eisenhower Air Rights
- Site 11A/11B: Ashland/Circle Line Corridor
- Site 12: Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal / I-55 Corridor
- Site 13: Midway Connector
- Site 14: Jefferson Park
- Site 15: Englewood
- Site 16: Cicero Corridor
- Site 17: Joliet, IL
- Site 18: O'Hare International Airport
- Site 19: Gary, IN

Large Scale Sites 20, 21, 22 – Chicago North / Mid / South