

CHICAGO PLAN OF 1909 TIMELINE

By Karen Ambrose

- September 4, 1846: Daniel Hudson Burnham is born in Henderson, NY.
- January 18, 1855: Daniel Burnham arrives in Chicago with family.
- 1863: Daniel Burnham enters preparatory school in Waltham, MA.
- 1867: Daniel Burnham returns to Chicago after failing entrance examinations for Harvard and Yale Universities. Works in William L. Jenney's firm.
- 1869: Daniel Burnham in Nevada to mine for silver.
- 1870: Daniel Burnham runs for Nevada State Senate. Defeated. Returns to Chicago.
- October 8, 1871: Great Chicago fire.
- 1872: Daniel Burnham works with Peter Wight in his architecture firm where he meets John Wellborn Root.
- 1873: Daniel Burnham and John Wellborn Root become partners.
- 1874: Daniel Burnham receives first major commission, to design and build a house for John Sherman, a meat packer.
- May 12, 1874: Edward H. Bennett is born in Cheltenham, England.
- January 20, 1876: Daniel Burnham marries Margaret Sherman, daughter of John Sherman.
- December 27, 1877: Chicago Commercial Club is organized.
- April 25, 1890 : The US Congress selects Chicago as the site of the World's Columbian Exposition.
- 1890: Daniel Burnham is appointed with John Root as consulting architects for the Chicago World's Fair Corporation. First tentative, unified plan, drawn for the Fair.
- October 1890: Daniel Burnham is named Chief of Construction, later changed to Director of Works, for the World's Columbian Exposition.
- January 15, 1891: John Root dies.
- October 20, 1892: The World's Columbian Exposition is officially dedicated.
- May 1, 1893: World's Columbian Exposition opens.
- Oct. 30, 1893: World's Columbian Exposition closes.
- 1895: Edward Bennett begins studies at Ecole des Beaux Arts.
- March 27, 1897: Daniel Burnham makes a presentation to the Commercial Club on a scheme for South Shore Drive and park that would become nucleus of the 1909 plan. Includes ideas for widening streets and enlarging the park system.
- April 3, 1897: Same presentation made to the Merchant's Club.
- 1901: Daniel Burnham is appointed Chairman of the Park commission of the District of Columbia to take responsibility for modernization of L'Enfant's Plan of 1791.
- January 1901: Daniel Burnham is invited to become member of the Commercial Club.
- January 15, 1902: Washington, D.C. Plan is presented.

- June 20, 1902: Daniel Burnham is appointed Chairman of commission to advise Ohio cities on urban planning.
- September 22, 1902: Edward Bennett begins work with the firm of George B. Post in New York City.
- March 6, 1903: Edward Bennett, on loan from the George Post firm, begins work with Daniel Burnham on the design work for the West Point Military Academy competition.
- August 17, 1903: Daniel Burnham presents the Report on Cleveland Group Plan.
- 1904: Railroad Exchange Building, designed by Daniel Burnham, is built. Daniel Burnham moves his office to the top floor for a grand view of Lake Michigan, Grant Park, and Michigan Ave. as he develops his Plan.
- March 31, 1904: Edward Bennett leaves the George Post firm.
- September 1904: Edward Bennett returns to work with Daniel Burnham on the San Francisco Plan.
- September 15, 1905: San Francisco Plan is accepted.
- April 18, 1906: Earthquake in San Francisco. Plan not adopted.
- October 13, 1905: Philippines Plan is accepted.
- September 21, 1906: Daniel Burnham agrees to take charge of new planning for Chicago for the Merchant's Club.
- October 27, 1906: Daniel Burnham signs agreement with the Merchants club to produce a Plan.
- December 1906: Commercial Club and Merchant's Club merge, with the new entity to be known as the Commercial Club.
- November 1, 1907: Study is conducted and decision made for the main axis of the Plan to be Congress and Halsted Streets.
- January 25, 1908: Commercial Club approves the general direction of the work on the Plan.
- March 15, 1909: Completed Plan sent to printers, the Donnelley Company.
- March 30, 1909: Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett agree that Bennett will do planning work rather than "architecture of buildings."
- June 14, 1909: Copy of the Plan presented to the Plan and Publicity Committee of the Commercial Club.
- July 4, 1909: Plan of Chicago completed and ready for distribution.
- September 16, 1909: President William Howard Taft visits Chicago to view the Plan's drawings.
- November 1909: Mayor Fred Busse accepts the Plan of Chicago as a gift to the city from the Commercial Club. The Mayor creates the Chicago Plan Commission and appoints 328 members to it. Charles Wacker is the chairman.
- November 4, 1909: Daniel Burnham recommends Edward Bennett for the Portland, Oregon, Plan.
- 1910: Plan of Chicago is adopted by the City of Chicago.
- February 19, 1910: Daniel Burnham recommends Edward Bennett for the Detroit Plan.
- April 26, 1910: Edward Bennett is engaged for the Minneapolis Plan.
- June 1910: Daniel Burnham is appointed by President Taft to be the first chairman of the newly established National Commission on the Fine Arts.

- October 22, 1910: Daniel Burnham presents a paper “A City of the Future Under A Democratic Government” at the London Town Planning Conference of the Royal Institute of British Architects. His presentation is the basis for the motto Make No Little Plans.
- 1911: MANUAL OF THE PLAN OF CHICAGO: MUNICIPAL ECONOMY published for all 8th graders in the Chicago public schools. Served as a promotion aimed at the students, teachers and the parents.
- August 16, 1911: Daniel Burnham, Edward Bennett and Ernest Graham agree on the 12th Street site for the Field Museum.
- September 30, 1911: Edward Bennett completes agreement with the Panama Exposition Company to make a general plan.
- October 5, 1911: Detroit planning is awarded to Edward Bennett.
- April 1, 1912: Commercial Club recommends the Plan’s drawings remain on deposit at the Art Institute of Chicago as property of the Club.
- June 6, 1912: Daniel Hudson Burnham dies.
- 1913: State of Illinois passes legislation to establish Forest Preserve districts. The 1909 Plan envisioned parks outside the city of Chicago.
- January 29, 1913: Edward Bennett enters into agreement with the Commercial Club to continue operational work of the Plan as Consulting Architect to the Chicago Plan Commission. The Club will pay Bennett’s salary, the salaries of his staff and his expenses.
- November 30, 1913: Edward Bennett is appointed to do Plan for Ottawa, Ontario.
- January 30, 1914: Minneapolis Plan is adopted.
- 1916: Municipal Pier #2 opens, renamed Navy Pier in 1927.
- 1919: Lake Front Ordinance passed by the City of Chicago calling upon the Illinois Central Railroad to electrify its operations into Chicago. It also provided for public development of parks and beaches along the shoreline from Grant Park south to 67th St.
- February 22, 1919: Monroe Street Bridge over the Chicago River opens.
- May 14, 1920: Michigan Avenue Bridge opens.
- 1923: Chicago Regional Plan Association is established. Daniel H. Burnham, Jr., serves as one of its leaders.
- 1925: Union Station opens, the first step in the attempt to consolidate all the railroad terminals as suggested in the Plan.
- 1926: 12th Street (later named Roosevelt Road) is widened as part of the Plan’s inner circuit of roadways.
- October 20, 1926: Opening of Wacker Drive, a two-level roadway in the central business district.
- May 23, 1927: Edward Bennett is appointed Chairman of the Board of Architects to coordinate the design of the Federal Triangle, Washington, D.C.
- August 7, 1926: Illinois Central Railroad begins using electrical rail service for their suburban lines.
- 1928: Straightening of the Chicago River’s South branch, between 13th and 18th Sts.

- March 25, 1928: Edward Bennett is appointed to make a general plan for the World's Fair of 1933 in Chicago.
- August 5, 1930: Position of Consulting Architect to the Chicago Plan Commission is terminated.
- 1933: The main Post Office opens.
- May 27 – Nov. 12, 1933, May 26 – Oct. 31, 1934: Century of Progress Exposition, located on Northerly Island, one of the several islands envisioned by the Plan. Daniel H. Burnham, Jr., is Director of Works.
- October 5, 1937: President Franklin Delano Roosevelt dedicates the Outer Drive Bridge over the Chicago River.
- March 21, 1944: The Commercial Club relinquishes its ownership of the 1909 Plan's 50 drawings, giving them to the Chicago Plan Commission at City Hall.
- 1948: Meigs Field opens on Northerly Island.
- October 14, 1954: Edward H. Bennett Dies.
- August 10, 1956: Congress Expressway completed, "the great boulevard to the west and the central spine of the city" as recommended in the Plan.
- 1966: Thirty-one drawings are returned on permanent loan to the Art Institute of Chicago. Twenty-one drawings disappeared between 1944 and 1966. Subsequently, 9 drawings were located in public and private collections, 6 drawings were located in the Chicago Historical Society Painting Collection.