

Executive Committee & Board of Trustees  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye St. NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
Attn: Carolyn Mitchell, Honors and Awards Coordinator

Dear ASLA Leaders:

In recognition of his environmental leadership, vision, and stewardship as Mayor of the City of Chicago, it is my pleasure to nominate The Honorable Richard M. Daley, Honorary ASLA, for the 2006 Olmsted Medal.

Mayor Daley well deserves his reputation as the greenest mayor in the country. His national leadership includes the most aggressive planning, landscape planting, and environmental programs in the land. Originally elected Mayor in 1989, he has been re-elected ever since by overwhelming margins. As the city's chief executive officer, he directs city departments, appoints department heads, prepares budgets, presides over City Council, and most importantly, sets the agenda for civic discussion and action. We have heard time and again that he is an avid reader of *Landscape Architecture* magazine, marking articles and circulating them throughout his office to key staff. He recently appointed a landscape architect and ASLA member, Astrid Haryati, as Assistant to the Mayor for Landscaping Initiatives, and she reports to him directly on issues affecting the public realm.

On the planning front, Mayor Daley has addressed a host of urban problems. He invested in the building of new schools including the development of campus parks throughout all of the City's neighborhoods. On the crime front, Chicago's community policing program also became a national model, with 1,600 new beat officers working with citizens on anti gang programs, while tearing down the high rise tenements that foster criminal behaviors, and replacing them with new, clean, dispersed low-rise housing. His focus on quality-of-life issues has led to greater emphasis on the delivery of basic services, from removing graffiti, abandoned cars, and deteriorating buildings to creating more green space and instituting a citywide recycling plan.

Under Mayor Daley's leadership, the City of Chicago, the Chicago Park District, Board of Education, and Public Building Commission have invested more than \$7 billion in capital improvements since 1989. This includes 1,500 new classrooms serving 45,000 students; street, sidewalk, bridge, sewer and other infrastructure improvements in Chicago neighborhoods; more than 120 new acres of parkland; new ice rinks, recreation centers and swimming pool upgrades; and 41 new or renovated branch libraries. Public space at Navy Pier and the McCormick Place Exposition Center have been renovated and expanded. Millennium Park opened last year to great public and critical acclaim. Unafraid of controversy, Mayor Daley even closed an airport to put a park on the lakefront. Newsweek columnist George Will has called Mayor Daley the "Martha Stewart of mayors," and credits his green thumb with producing a "city chock full of gardens."

The Mayor's "flower power" has touched every aspect of landscape architecture practice. His specific green initiative programs include:

**Bartells/Jacobson Design**  
742 Euclid Avenue  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  
630-790-1693

- Chicago Landscape Ordinance. Mayor Daley envisioned a city where all commercial parking lots and structures are screened, contain internal plantings, and where streets are lined with trees. He passed the Chicago Landscape Ordinance—one of the nation's most comprehensive landscape ordinances—ironically making Chicago a "practice city" in a state without a practice act. Recognized as a model for other large cities, the ordinance won the Illinois Chapter ASLA President's Award in 2000.
- Chicago Zoning Reform. Mayor Daley's vision will revamp an outdated zoning code to include transportation oriented development, protect and preserve community character, and enhance quality of life by incorporating green space through all neighborhoods.
- Planning Initiatives. Various initiatives including the River Plan, City Space, and the Lake Calumet Area Plan address the preservation, rehabilitation, brownfields redevelopment and human use of neglected Chicago landscapes.
- Landmarks. Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has said "Mayor Richard M. Daley endorses a multitude of programs that have brought Chicago's landmarks back to life. The Chicago preservation movement has jumped light-years ahead. Under his guidance, Chicago's historic districts and buildings are enjoying a renaissance that will enrich Chicago for generations to come."
- Streetscapes and Medians. The Mayor's beautification of the city through its streetscapes and medians are the talk of the nation and have transformed a drab rust belt city into its originally intended *urbs in horto*, literally a "city in a garden." The Mayor says, "Flowers calm people down." The Michigan Avenue Median project has won both chapter and national ASLA awards and was featured in *Landscape Architecture* magazine.
- Community Development. Under Mayor Daley's leadership, the city has made a massive investment revitalize the parks and schools of Chicago, and then created Green Corps, a jobs program to train landscape workers to take care of that investment. According to Joyce Purnick in *The New Yorker*, "He gets national plaudits for reviving parks in Chicago, which cover 7,730 acres and have an annual budget of \$280 million. Mr. Daley is credited with cleaning them out, rescuing schoolyards from asphalt, improving park maintenance and addressing charges that the lakefront bordering poor, predominantly black neighborhoods was neglected."
- Environmental Initiatives. During his tenure, these include the Nature Centers (places for environmental education), the Bird Migration Treaty (which creates bird habitat along the Mississippi flyway), Openlands partnering (dedicated to preserving and enhancing open space), Brownfields Projects (turning industrial wasteland into usable space) and River Restoration Projects (enhancing and reconnecting Chicagoans with their river).
- Green Roofs Initiatives. Green roofs are one of Mayor Daley's pet campaigns and Chicago hosted one of the first green roof conferences in the nation. Moreover, in a stroke of leadership and as part of a multi-city urban heat island study with the United

**Bartells/Jacobson Design**

742 Euclid Avenue  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  
630-790-1693

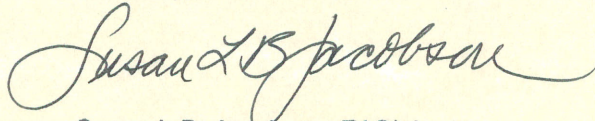
States Environmental Protection Agency, Mayor Daley put a green roof right on top of City Hall—another city project that has received a national design award from ASLA.

- Urban Forestry Initiatives. The Mayor has planted more than 300,000 trees and his foresters are at the forefront of tackling threats to our urban trees, including aggressive campaigns for expanded tree root zones and against the Asian Longhorn Beetle.

Mayor Daley's leadership has been recognized for many years by a number of prestigious organizations. In 1996, he headed the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He has received the Education Excellence Award from the National Conference for Community and Justice; the Public Service Leadership Award from the National Council for Urban Economic Development; the J. Sterling Morton Award from the National Arbor Day Foundation; and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Preservation Award in both 2000 and 2002. Chicago was voted one of the "10 Best Places to Live" by *Money* magazine in 2002, in no small part to the efforts of Mayor Daley in making it one of the most livable cities in our nation.

I hope you agree with me that Mayor Daley has demonstrated innovative and courageous leadership as the steward of the City of Chicago, setting a wonderful example for public officials across our nation, and is very deserving of this high honor from the Society.

Sincerely,



Susan L.B. Jacobson, FASLA

**Bartells/Jacobson Design**  
742 Euclid Avenue  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  
630-790-1693