

Exelon Pavilions at Millennium Park



CSA Partners Ltd.
Architects & Urban Designers



Top: View of east pavilion from park

Client Brief: The city of Chicago provided several stipulations for the new design and the site upon which it was built. Specifically, the city of Chicago requested that the pavilions be designed with the largest integrated photo-voltaic installation in the state of Illinois, which would be perhaps the largest in the entire country at that point in time. Of the two pavilions, one was designed to hold the museum and office of the director of the park, while the other was designed as a visitor's center. Because the site was situated above one of Chicago's busiest railway stations and garage parking areas, construction of the pavilions proved notably difficult.

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Context: Cyrus Subawalla, while a Principal at HBRA served as the project designer for these two pavilions. The firm was asked by the Mayor's office to create an urban landmark that would showcase Chicago as 'the Green Capital of the United States.' A 24-acre park over a railway station was subsequently planned for public use, with three of the park's buildings being the Music and Dance Theatre and two of the four Exelon Pavilions, all of which Mr. Subawalla was involved with.

Media Link:

<https://fmlink.com/articles/millennium-parks-north-exelon-pavilions-receive-leed-silver-rating/>

Project Data:

Building type
Government-City Visitor Ctr+Gallery
Sustainability/LEED
LEED Silver (Achieved 34 out of 35 Building Points)
Location
Chicago, IL
Site Area
24 acres
Project Area
12,000 sf spread over 2 structures
Client
City of Chicago
Completion Year
Substantial Completion July 2004
Construction Cost
\$ 3.998 Million in 2004

Client Satisfaction through Design Excellence

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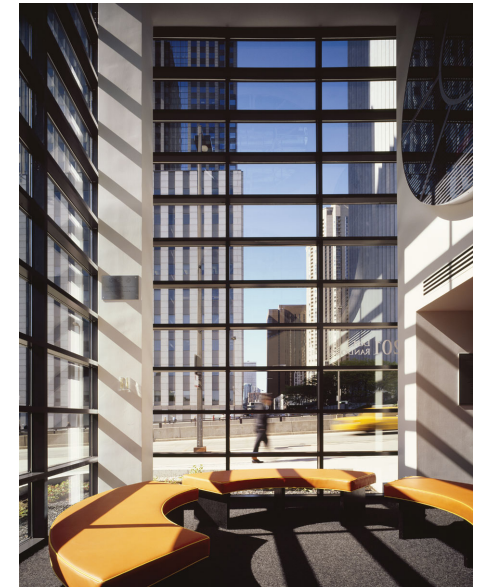


Top: View from Michigan Ave.

Concept: The pavilions were conceived as a confluence of the seminal ideas of several modernist masters. The parti, or chief organization scheme of the governing plan, was reintroduced in section as a means to further organize the spatial logic of the building. This allowed large double-height glazed public lobbies to be situated diagonally from one another within the interiors. These interior forms—laterally inverted symmetries of public space—also worked well in providing access to the park from the upper level and to upper Randolph Street from the lower level.

The design strategy expresses the interior functions of the building through a rigorous grid of punched openings in the facade that contrast with the large spans of glass elsewhere, a motif intended to reveal a clear distinction between served and servant space. The design also integrates custom mono-crystalline photo-voltaic cells into the double-wall system, ensuring that the convective cycle between the outer glazed and inner rated walls will cool the cells, thereby improving efficiency of the photo-voltaic panels. Finally, numerous other sustainable design features were integrated into the building, resulting in a success ratio of 95% with regard to the obtainment of LEED points.

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Intent and Recognition: The Exelon Pavilions are components of a larger ensemble of structures that received the AIA National Honor Award for excellence for Millennium Park. The building received a LEED Silver certification. Completed 2004.

Top: View from southwest
Middle: Street View from NW side
Top R: Interior View

Team

Head Partner Thomas Beeby
Cyrus Subawalla-As principal HBRA
Rahman Polk-Architect

3 Images: Jon Miller - Hedrich Blessing Photographers