



Chris Gent | Landscape Studio

Urban Design | Landscape Architecture

| Projects, Transportation |

Lake Shore Drive, North
Chicago Park District

Design | Lead:

- Research into salt tolerant plant material
- Design of landscaped median wall and landscape
- Construction Management

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Client: Chicago Park District
Project Date: 1991 – 1992
Project Budget: \$1,000,000
Design: In-house



In 1991, when North Lake Shore Drive was going to be resurfaced by IDOT so it could serve as an alternate route during the reconstruction of the Kennedy Expressway (I-94), community organizations protested the proposed inclusion of a jersey barrier down the middle of the road. What developed from the dialog is known as the “Chicago wall” median and barrier. It is based on an existing Art Deco wall near Oak Street and Lake Shore Drive. At that time very few medians with landscaping had been designed. Gent researched the list of potentially salt tolerant plants to be used on the median, working with the Morton Arboretum to study the effects of salt on the plants over the next year.