

A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware



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F O R E W O R D

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region. We seek to build on the region's assets and enhance the economic competitiveness of Greater Philadelphia. We have long believed that the Delaware River is one of our region's most significant assets. For more than a decade, the Foundation has sought to promote the historically industrialized Delaware Riverfront as a both a natural and community resource.

In recent years the riverfront has experienced tremendous redevelopment pressure. However, due to the absence of an effective master plan and weak land use controls, most of this development has occurred in an ad-hoc and uncoordinated manner, raising concerns that the city would fail to fully maximize the waterfront's economic and community development benefits and potential to deliver important new public access and amenities.

In response to these concerns, the Foundation launched the central Delaware riverfront planning process to provide needed planning resources for the waterfront. We also sought a new model for large-scale, open, transparent civic visioning and planning that we hope will be replicable elsewhere in Philadelphia and will set a new standard for public access and participation in the city's development decisions.

Although Philadelphia has come late to the waterfront development game, our tardiness gives us one important advantage – we can learn from the experiences of many other cities. And the lessons are very clear. Successful 21st century urban waterfronts are the result of a compelling vision, effective zoning and land use regulations, and strategic public investments.

While this document represents the culmination of a year-long period of intense civic engagement and thinking about the future of the Delaware Riverfront, this vision is only able to suggest possible options and future directions. To achieve a world class waterfront, there is much work

ahead: the big ideas of this plan need to be fleshed out at the neighborhood scale; Philadelphia needs to develop and adopt effective land use and zoning controls; city, state, and federal infrastructure investments need to be coordinated; and ongoing engagement with community and civic groups, land owners, and other key stakeholders must continue.

Despite the long road ahead, the completion of this document represents a major milestone and singular achievement for the city of Philadelphia. Many people made this vision possible, including Mayor John F. Street and Councilman Frank DiCicco who initiated the effort; Janice Woodcock, Executive Director of the City Planning Commission and the Commission's committed staff who provided critical support, insights, and ideas; and finally, the staff of PennPraxis, led by Harris Steinberg, provided exemplary leadership in managing an exhausting, yet highly meaningful public planning process. Special recognition is due to the 45 members of the Central Delaware Waterfront Advisory Group. These volunteers marshaled the public will necessary to drive the process forward amid significant challenges and tensions.

A local journalist and long-time observer of the city recently mentioned that Philadelphians were beginning to give up the old myths about the city – that Philadelphia is “second rate” or that “it can’t happen here” – but had not yet come up with the new story of the city. Our hope is that the ideas and images contained in this document will help to begin to fill in the new and emerging narrative of our beloved city. We are confident that a world-class, highly livable, vital, and diverse city is within our grasp...if we are willing to make the tough decisions necessary to achieve it.

Feather O. Houstoun

President

The William Penn Foundation

P R E F A C E

To the citizens of Philadelphia,

Over the past year, we had the privilege of working with thousands of Philadelphians who helped imagine a gleaming future for seven miles of the central Delaware riverfront. For that, we are extremely grateful. This report represents the fruits of those labors.

A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware rests upon the values, hopes and aspirations of the scores of Philadelphians from all walks of life who gave generously of their time, energy and passion to help craft a roadmap to the future. The civic vision is drawn from a sustained and, at times, provocative public conversation about how we can develop what is Philadelphia's signal natural asset—the Delaware River. As such, this is both a hopeful and a challenging document.

It is hopeful because it paints a picture of a city by a river that grows gracefully towards the water's edge. This is a vision of an inclusive Philadelphia—one in which commerce, culture and ecology peaceably coexist. It is challenging because it defies Philadelphia to aim high, change old habits and seize the opportunity to reestablish itself as a leading city of the world.

It dares us to believe in ourselves once again.

The work does not end with the publication of this document. Rather, the civic vision is a starting point for further dialogue and action, setting the table for the fruitful fulfillment of Philadelphia's sparkling potential. It lays out choices we can make about investment in public spaces; it calls upon us to continue talking; and it provides a framework for growth that can help us find common ground.

Special thanks go to Mayor John F. Street for authorizing this work and to First District Councilman Frank DiCicco for championing the process. The Central Delaware Advisory Group provided exemplary collaborative oversight. We are extremely grateful to the William Penn Foundation and the Knight Foundation for their generous support of this work and for their sage guidance over the course of the project. I am particularly thankful to PennDesign dean Gary Hack for his constancy and counsel. And I am indebted to the indefatigable efforts of the PennPraxis staff, the Penn Project on Civic Engagement, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission and the planning firm of WRT for producing a work of such sterling quality.

But it is the people of Philadelphia who merit the most profound thanks. Your efforts and engagement have created a work of depth and integrity, one that is real Philadelphia.

Harris M. Steinberg, FAIA
PennPraxis
School of Design
University of Pennsylvania

November 2007

The Central Delaware Advisory Group was composed of the following members over the year-long planning process created by Mayor John Street's executive order:

Janice Woodcock, Philadelphia City Planning Commission, Chair

Laurie Actman, Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce

Theresa Alicia, State Representative Marie Lederer

Marsha Bacal, Society Hill Towers Management Office

Jeremy Beaudry, Fishtown Neighbors Association

Blaine Bonham, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Joseph Brooks, Penn's Landing Corporation

Kirk Brown, Dickinson Narrows Civic Association

Hope Caldwell, Law Department, City of Philadelphia

John Childress, African-American Chamber of Commerce, Steering Committee

Darrell Clarke, Fifth Councilmanic District

Rina Cutler, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Romulo Diaz, City Solicitor, City of Philadelphia

Michael DiBerardinis, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Frank DiCicco, First Councilmanic District, Steering Committee

Anne Dicker, Neighbors Allied for the Best Riverfront

John Dougherty, Pennsport Civic Association

Fred Druding, Jr., Whitman Council, Steering Committee

Denise Earley, Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce

John Edelstein, Department of Commerce, Steering Committee

John Elfrey, Managing Director's Office, City of Philadelphia

Carl Engelke, State Senator Vincent Fumo

Varsovia Fernandez, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Mark Focht, Fairmount Park Commission

David Fogel, South Eastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

Vincent Fumo, State Senator, First District

John Gargiulo, Port Richmond on Patrol and Civic Association

John Grady, Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation

Robert D. Greenbaum, Society Hill Towers Management Office

Michael Groman, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Robert Gross, Delaware River Port Authority

Dave Hammond, South Street Headhouse District

Richard Horrow, Old City Civic Association

Mary Isaacson, State Representative Mike O'Brien

Loree Jones, Secretary of External Affairs/Managing Director City of Philadelphia

William Keller, State Representative, 184th District

Patty-Pat Kozlowski, Port Richmond on Patrol and Civic Association

Laura Lanza, Port Richmond on Patrol and Civic Association

Marie Lederer, State Representative, 175th District, ex officio

Paul Levy, Center City District, Steering Committee

Henry Lewandowski, Whitman Council

Jennifer Lewis, Northern Liberties Neighbors Association, Steering Committee

Peter Longstreth, Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation

Walt Lowthian, Queen Village Neighbors Association

Joseph Martz, Secretary of Administration, Governor Edward Rendell

Bernadette Mason, Pennsport Civic Association

John Matheussen, Delaware River Port Authority

Shawn McCaney, William Penn Foundation, Steering Committee

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Michael O'Brien, State Representative, 175th District

David O'Donnell, Queen Village Civic Association

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Pedro Ramos, Managing Director, City of Philadelphia
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Andrew Ross, Law Department, City of Philadelphia
Matt Ruben, Northern Liberties Neighbors Association
Blake Rubin, State Senator Vincent Fumo
Jeff Rush, Old Swede's Court Homeowners' Association/Queen Village Neighbors Association
Andrew Sacksteder, River's Edge Civic Association
Sandy Salzman, New Kensington Community Development Corporation
Anselm Sauter, Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce
Joseph Schiavo, Old City Civic Association
Mark S. Schweiker, Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce
Shanta Schacter, New Kensington Community Development Corporation
John Scorsone, River's Edge Civic Association
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Herb Shallcross, Fishtown Neighbors Association
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Penn's Landing is envisioned as a welcoming riverfront green space adjacent to a refurbished civic marina – becoming the centerpiece for adjacent development. With a new transit interchange, ferry terminal, and improved connections across I-95, Penn's Landing will become a signature urban park.

Executive Summary

The central Delaware riverfront in Philadelphia is an area of enormous cultural, ecological and economic potential. With more than 1,100 acres of land stretched over seven miles—from Oregon to Allegheny Avenues and the Delaware River to I-95—the riverfront offers the city a prime opportunity to capitalize on this signature public asset. Its location along one of the world’s great working rivers, its proximity to the strong Center City Philadelphia real estate market, its vibrant neighborhoods to the west of I-95, and the stunning sweep of history along its shores place the central Delaware among the most important development areas in the region today.

Despite this potential, the goal of creating a world-class riverfront along the central Delaware has eluded the city for nearly forty years. The central Delaware has been hampered by a variety of factors, including zoning regulations that have not been updated since the city's industrial decline; weak economic cycles; unsympathetic development that has filled large, postindustrial parcels with suburban-style structures; minimal points of public access; the barrier created by public-infrastructure investments such as I-95; and the lack of a comprehensive plan to guide the creation of public spaces and private development.

The *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* presents the city with a challenge: to transform the physical, social and political landscapes of the central Delaware riverfront at a time when the city is facing explosive riverfront growth, including the possibility of two state-authorized casinos, within the project area.

The *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* offers a framework for development predicated on public riverfront access and urban design excellence. It is based on planning principles grounded in the values and civic aspirations of more than four thousand Philadelphians who participated in a year-long public-planning process.

The process was led by PennPraxis of the School of Design of the University of Pennsylvania and authorized by executive order of Philadelphia Mayor John F. Street on October 12, 2006. The charge was to "create a civic vision for the central Delaware that balances the public good, access to the waterfront, open space and quality urban development." The hallmark of the work has been the civic-engagement process, which was designed and facilitated in collaboration with the Penn Project on Civic Engagement.

These civic principles are the foundation for the vision:

Reconnect the city to the river's edge.

Build Philadelphia back to the river. Split up the sprawling, super-block-style street layout that currently undermines the character of the central Delaware, and increase and enhance the quality of the physical and visual connections between the riverfront and adjacent neighborhoods.

Honor the river.

The Delaware River is a significant regional resource. Acknowledge both the historical role the river played in shaping Philadelphia as a leading American city and its importance to the city today. Support the needs of the shipping industry and Philadelphia's working port, as well as the river's recreational and environmental potential.

Design with nature.

Remember that the Delaware River is a giant watershed. Plan development along the river's edge carefully, so that natural sites can coexist harmoniously with other uses, such as residences, businesses and the working port.

Strike the right balance.

Create a twenty-four-hour, livable and walkable community along the entire river's edge by encouraging a healthy mix of urban development

and public improvements. Successful cities offer a tantalizing blend of uses throughout the day and year, so no single type of building use should dominate the central Delaware riverfront.

Take the long view.

Do not be seduced by short-term gains in developing the central Delaware. Think big and create bold plans for the future of I-95 at Penn's Landing, the connections between the river and the neighborhoods and the possibilities for creating a world-class riverfront.

Protect the public good.

Connect city neighborhoods to the riverfront through a new and distinct network of public places that tells the story of Philadelphia and the Delaware River. Establish the riverfront as a meeting place for all Philadelphia residents, and provide multiple access points for neighbors to use.

Make it real, Philadelphia.

Honor Philadelphia's illustrious past and promising future through the design of the central Delaware. Make the riverfront a real place based on local values by ensuring that the implementation of the *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* is based on sustained civic engagement.

Throughout the process of creating this civic vision, PennPraxis worked with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission and lead planning consultant Wallace Roberts and Todd, LLC (WRT) to refine a vision for the central Delaware that honored the civic principles and incorporated best-planning practices. Participants in the design process included representatives of numerous city and state agencies that helped to develop both short- and long-term recommendations for Philadelphia's central Delaware riverfront. Citizens provided feedback throughout the process through public forums, advisory group meetings and focused group discussions. The process was open, collaborative, respectful, responsive and iterative.

The *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* is based upon a set of three interlocking networks that establish a framework for growth:

Movement systems:

streets, public transit and trails

Parks and open space:

parks and ecological systems

Land development:

mix of uses

A Framework for Growth

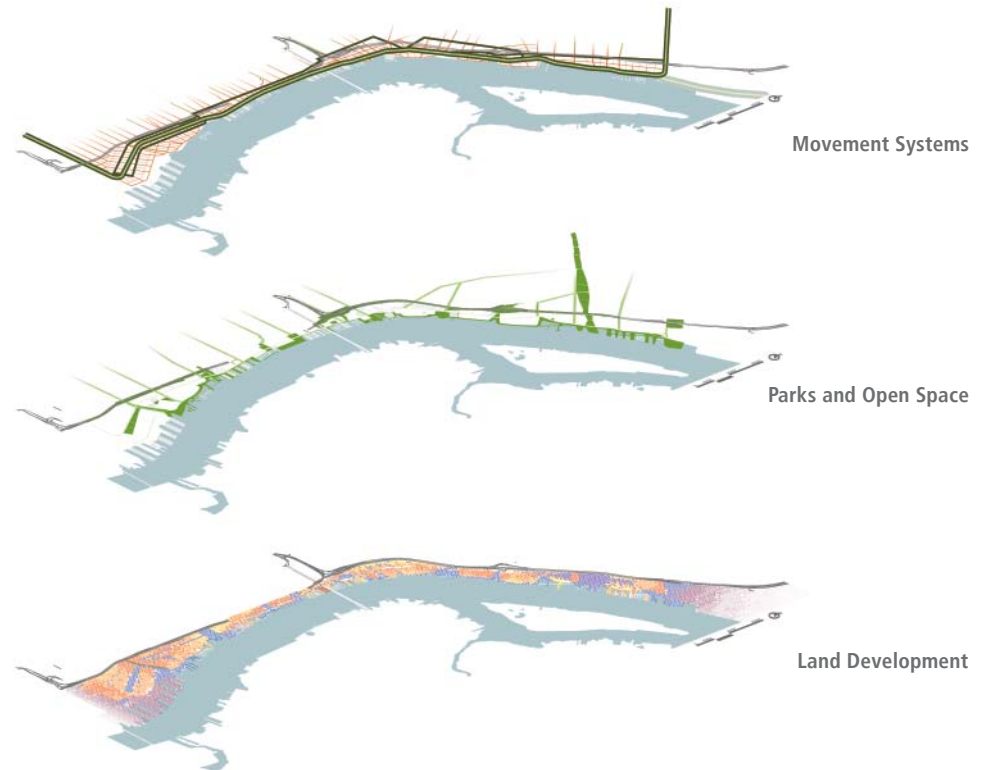


The framework for growth presented herein will enable the central Delaware to fill in gracefully over time. As a framework for development, the vision incorporates ideas of sustainable urban growth, ecological principles, transportation policies and implementation strategies.

The civic vision ensures that the public's ability to access the water is maintained for future generations through the creation of parks, streets, boulevard and trails. These improvements, when implemented over time, will provide a framework for development, increase property values and support a high quality of life.

The civic vision calls for bringing existing neighborhoods to the river's edge with mixed-use development that extends the traditional Philadelphia grid under and over I-95; the creation of new parks, trails and open spaces; and the implementation of sound economic policies and development controls to enable the creation of a humane, walkable, dense urban riverfront.

In short, it calls for the extension of Philadelphia to the river's edge.



The Three Interlocking Networks

A grid that extends to the riverfront is the foundation of the vision. Within the grid, parks and a mix of uses will bring Philadelphia's neighborhoods to the river's edge.





Reconnect the City to the River's Edge

Use bold, simple strokes. This civic vision imagines the city's grid leading to an expansive park at Penn's Landing, on the river's edge, which is connected to a series of riverfront parks and trails.



Honor the River

At Pulaski Park, both the river's ecology and its evident industrial heritage celebrate the legacy of Philadelphia's history as a "Greene Country Towne" and the "Workshop of the World."









Design With Nature

Create riverfront value. The restoration of the river's edge and the integration of riverfront parks and greenways will set the stage for Philadelphia to be a first-choice city. The South Philadelphia riverfront offers unique opportunities for nature and development to work together.



Strike the Right Balance

Imagine a place to work, live and play. Nearly seven miles of riverbank offer opportunities for all types of uses. The civic vision imagines the old Port Richmond Rail Yard as the home to twenty-first-century commerce and industry, which will provide jobs for new generations of Philadelphians who can live, work and play along the river.







Take the Long View

Foster new places in a new economy. In South Philadelphia, the civic vision offers a view of new neighborhoods, shopping and entertainment alongside a thriving port. By making strategic investments and balanced policy decisions, Philadelphia will continue to lead the nation in downtown living and to embody sustainable, smart growth.



Protect the Public Good

Establish river vistas and access. This civic vision provides a framework that reconnects the city and its river. One can imagine vistas of the river from every major street and the extension of the unique character of William Penn's street grid and parks.





Make It Real, Philadelphia

Create bold and balanced investments. Capture Philadelphia's timeless layering of history at the foot of Market Street where the Christ Church steeple rests comfortably against the contemporary skyline.





The goals of the *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* can be accomplished by following these key recommendations:

Ensure public access to the riverfront through zoning, conservation easements and acquisition of public spaces. Create a continuous riverfront trail and parks every 2,000 feet. Improve the health of the river through a naturalized riparian buffer, and transform Penn's Landing into our signature riverfront public park.

Connect the city to the river's edge by adopting a new street grid across the project area that connects adjoining neighborhoods with the riverfront, disperses traffic and creates a pedestrian-scaled urban environment. The new grid will include a new boulevard with mass transportation that is a part of a comprehensive, regional network of traffic and transportation. Capitalize on the rebuilding of I-95 over the next thirty-five years to redress the divide that the highway creates.

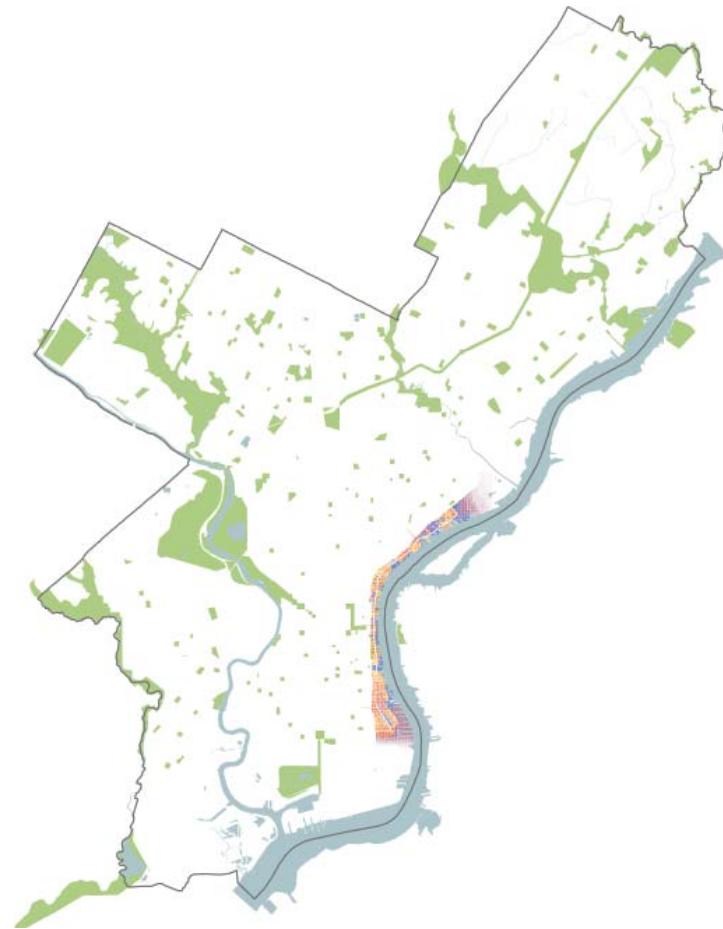
Improve the quality of development through the creation of both an interim zoning overlay and a long-term riverfront zoning classification. The zoning classification, to be completed by the new Zoning Code Commission, needs to codify the goals of the civic vision. Ensure the protection of both natural and historic resources along the central Delaware.

Build on economic assets by making use of innovative strategies for financing public infrastructure, city/state/federal collaborations and partnerships with anchor institutions, such as the working port, for job creation and retention.

Ensure sound implementation efforts with early-action projects that demonstrate the viability of the vision. Create collaborative strategies to design, implement, manage and oversee the long-term realization of the vision while maintaining ongoing civic engagement. First, do no harm, ensuring that short-term gain does not preclude achieving long-term goals.

To achieve these goals, Philadelphia will need to use tools it has not often used over the past thirty years, as it has largely handed over the role of public planning to the private development sector. Key among these traditional city powers are adopting new streets onto the official city plan and enacting and enforcing zoning regulations that support the civic vision. Indeed, it is the city's responsibility to determine its own form and to regulate how buildings act along its streets.

The *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* sets forth a new model for civic engagement in planning and development in Philadelphia—one that places civic values at the heart of public decision-making.



The Genesis of the *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware*

The Power of Planning

The Philadelphia Story: A Timeline of City Planning and Growth

Current Features of the Project Area

Recent Planning Efforts along the Delaware Riverfront

Riverfront Development Pressures Reach New Heights

The Challenges Facing Riverfront Development and the Potential for New Growth

The Advisory Group's Work to Address Casinos on the Riverfront

Riverfront Susceptibility to Change

A CIVIC VISION



"The Philadelphia Of Today: The World's Greatest Workshop"

A poster commemorating the 225th anniversary of Philadelphia, 1908

2 A Civic Vision

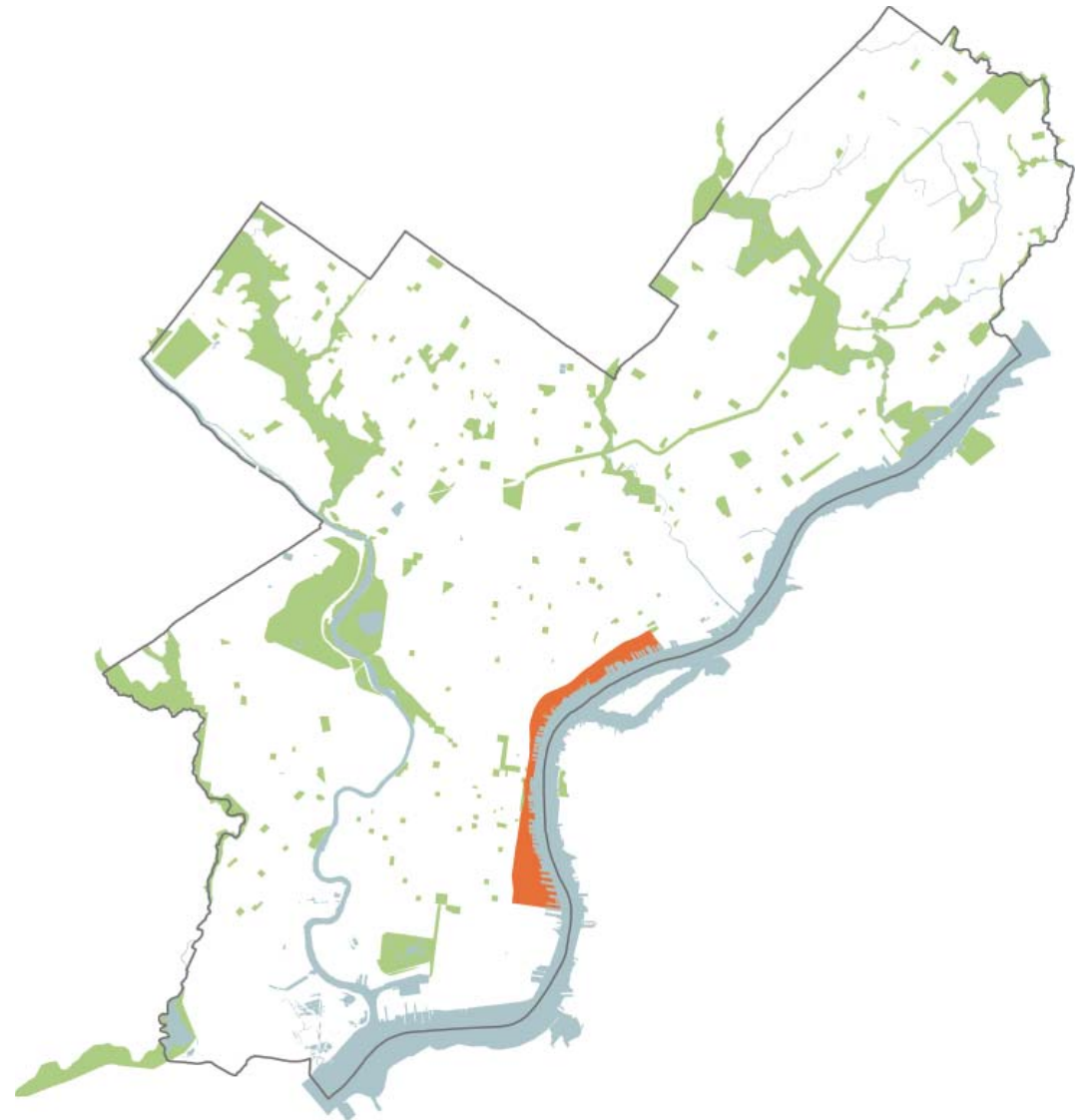
A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware covers 1,146 acres of land in an area once known as the Workshop of the World. Following an industrial decline affecting the entire region, the riverfront has undergone dramatic changes in land use, and the city adjoining it has also been transformed. The central Delaware landscape has the potential to become one of the great urban riverfronts of the world.

While cities around the world have developed comprehensive plans for revitalizing their waterfront areas in recent years, the central Delaware riverfront has lacked a plan that reflects current market trends. The city of Philadelphia has allowed the area to be developed on an ad hoc basis, without the benefit of a comprehensive and sustainable urban vision. This leaves us at considerable risk of losing the rare opportunity to create a varied cityscape of beauty and consequence and leave an invaluable legacy for future generations.

The Genesis of the Civic Vision for the Central Delaware

A *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* presents a civic vision that seeks to create a road map for future growth along the central Delaware riverfront. It aims to combine high-quality, private urban development with current thinking about sustainable urban systems and the concept of the greater public good. By adopting this civic vision, Philadelphia can join the ranks of progressive, world-class cities that have envisioned new futures for their riverfronts and created places of inestimable value that inspire visitors and residents alike.

This civic vision was forged through an exhaustive process that recognized the need to balance public and private interests to ensure a sustainable future for the central Delaware riverfront. Through an open, transparent public process and the engagement of multiple stakeholders, the project team has married expert knowledge and citizen values in a plan of unusual breadth and strength. The process itself gave thousands of Philadelphians the chance to have a strong influence over the governing principles and values underlying this document, as well as allowing countless others in public and private roles of consequence to share their concerns. The resulting vision offers a comprehensive look at the riverfront that is appropriate for the twenty-first century—a vision supported by both the on-the-ground knowledge of citizens and best planning practices from around the world.



Project Location within Philadelphia County

The project area covers 1,146 acres of land along Philadelphia's central Delaware River.



Philadelphia's central and southern riverfront, circa 1870

The vision establishes a sound yet flexible framework for development that will make the central Delaware riverfront into an active, vital asset for the city of Philadelphia and its environs. Because achieving this aim requires the integration of multiple factors, including civic values, best planning practices and numerous ownership interests along the riverfront, the civic vision outlines implementation strategies that emphasize collaboration.

A vision plan is vital for clarifying and transforming the city's role in determining the future of the central Delaware riverfront. These are some of the benefits that *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* provides for the city of Philadelphia and its citizens:

- **A starting point for future civic action that builds the case for more detailed planning, as well as economic, environmental and technical studies;**
- **A framework for advocacy, ongoing public dialogue and action by public officials based upon extensive civic engagement;**
- **A focus on "big idea" concepts that encourages the implementation of progressive public policy and public investment in civic infrastructure; and**
- **A broad-based vision that demonstrates what is possible while allowing for growth and adaptation.**

The Power of Planning

Cities are organic entities that grow and change over time, and sound urban planning and design help them evolve in beneficial ways that create a framework for our lives. They are shifting landscapes.

Visionary plans influence urban-development practices for decades and even centuries; perhaps the most notable example of this in the United States is Daniel Burnham's plan for Chicago in 1909, which established the template that has guided subsequent growth. The most revered cities around the world still adhere to elements of their hallmark plans, from the plan of Pierre L'Enfant in Washington to that of Baron Haussmann in Paris. Quality urban design is attuned to the rhythm of the era, but it also stands the test of time. It informs development, makes a city more memorable and can even help us feel safe in our neighborhoods. By giving sites a feeling of permanence, sound city planning allows buildings and sites to be adapted over time without losing their essential character.

Successful planning requires that we balance the interests of the public and private sectors, but the process of creating a successful plan also teaches us that these interests are intertwined. Public policy that is written to create and preserve quality urban development will benefit private-sector interests by stimulating demand. However, the decline of both public and private investment in recent decades shows that Philadelphia's land-use policies are out of date with current development pressures, allowing for development that does

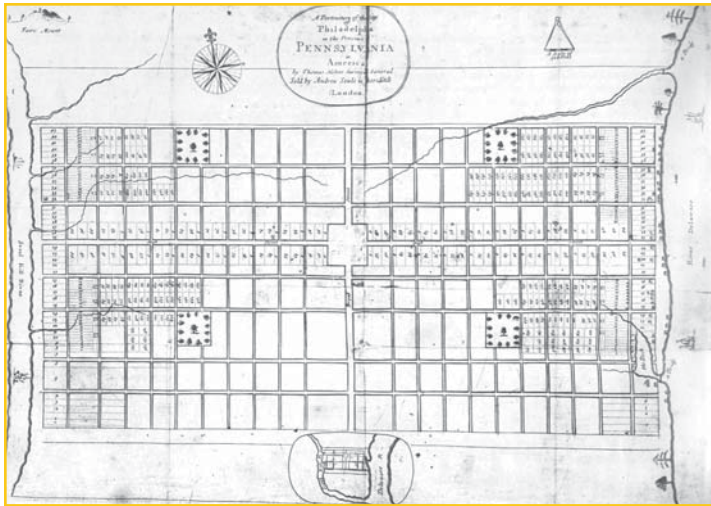
not adhere to sound principles for planning, land use, transportation and quality of life. As a result, the quality of the built environment has been compromised.

The city was not always characterized by a haphazard development style. In fact, Philadelphia began with a plan: William Penn's plan for the city, a holy experiment that was also a real-estate deal. The plan, which Penn designed with his surveyor, Thomas Holme, was first published in 1683. It laid out development parcels and public squares along a network of parallel streets, reflecting the planners' efforts to resolve the tension between religious freedom and aristocratic land ownership, community interaction and private property. This plan allowed for growth within a formal framework, and economic realities led to the speedy filling in of Penn's blocks with dense, mixed-use neighborhoods. There was a prescient template for growth that survives to this day.

Penn's clear delineation of development parcels, a street network and open space has served the city as a template for 325 years of growth. Today, in the absence of comprehensive planning, this growth has been implemented mainly at the hands of private developers and property owners. What follows is a brief history of city planning in Philadelphia and the central Delaware.

As planning historian John Gallery notes, the city began as Penn's vision, yet it is now "the story of the collective vision of many men and women—civic leaders and professional planners . . . [created] to express their vision of a city both beautiful and practical."

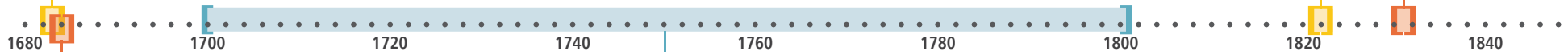
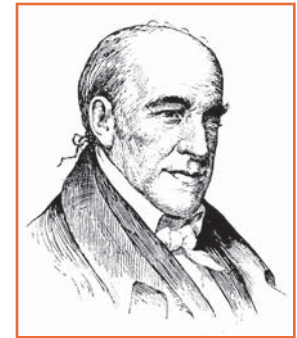
The Philadelphia Story: A Timeline of City Planning and Growth



1683: Philadelphia Plan
William Penn and Thomas Holme’s grid plan for Philadelphia is first published in London. Its framework of streets has guided the city’s growth for 325 years, allowing for an easy mix of uses between businesses and residences.

1822: This year marks the opening of Frederick Graff’s Fairmount Water Works, the first municipal waterworks in the country, designed to protect the city’s water supply and provide a refuge from the crowded metropolis. It soon becomes a beloved symbol of excellence in civic design.

1831: Delaware Avenue
In his will, shipping magnate Stephen Girard starts a trust that finances Delaware Avenue. The avenue becomes the first public road to link the docks of the central Delaware to one another.



1684: Seeing the clear economic value of the central Delaware, Penn allows development at the river’s edge as long as public riverfront access is retained at every block. The Wood Street Steps in Old City are the lone remaining vestige of this agreement.



Above: *The City & Port of Philadelphia, on the River Delaware from Kensington*, Thomas Birch, 1800

Right: *East Prospect of Philadelphia*, Nicholas Scull and Thomas Heap, 1756



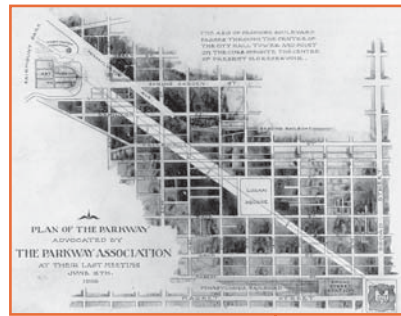
1700s: River Of Commerce
The city continues to develop, primarily north and south along the Delaware River. By the time of the American Revolution, the river has become a national center for commerce and manufacturing, and it remains so through World War II.

1854: Philadelphia is consolidated into a single city and county, giving local government new authority to acquire land for public good. The establishment of Fairmount Park follows in 1855.



1907-1917: The Parkway

With the help of plans created by Paul Cret and Jacques Gréber, the Fairmount Park Commission designs the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, a European-style boulevard that connects Philadelphia's downtown with Fairmount Park. This effort generates the first direct participation in city planning by local leaders (the Parkway Association) and helps make Philadelphia one of the most progressive cities for urban design in the United States.



Brownlee, *Building the City Beautiful*

1949-1970: Edmund Bacon

becomes a national figure as executive director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, implementing many large projects, such as the Society Hill revitalization, Penn's Landing, and the Gallery at Market East.



1929: Philadelphia City Planning Commission is created.

1970s-Present: Displacement

As many early projects of the Urban Renewal era caused widespread displacement, the federal government is focusing its projects on communities and neighborhood preservation. Philadelphia responds by decentralizing its planning processes to involve more community groups and citizens.

2003-2007: Mayor Street

launches the New River City initiative. This includes the creation of a civic vision for the central Delaware, a vision plan for the future of the central Delaware River.

1979: Elevated I-95

A mostly-elevated extension of Interstate 95 opens along the central Delaware, marking the beginning of the riverfront's identity as a regional auto thoroughfare.



1876: The Centennial International Exhibition, the first official world's fair in the United States, is held in Fairmount Park. The showcase introduces the United States as a new industrial force and Philadelphia as a center of American culture and industry.



1920s: Infrastructure Benjamin Franklin Bridge and the subway system are completed.

1956: CPDC

Central Philadelphia Development Corporation is founded, ushering in a new era in which planning is conducted by smaller, non-profit groups.



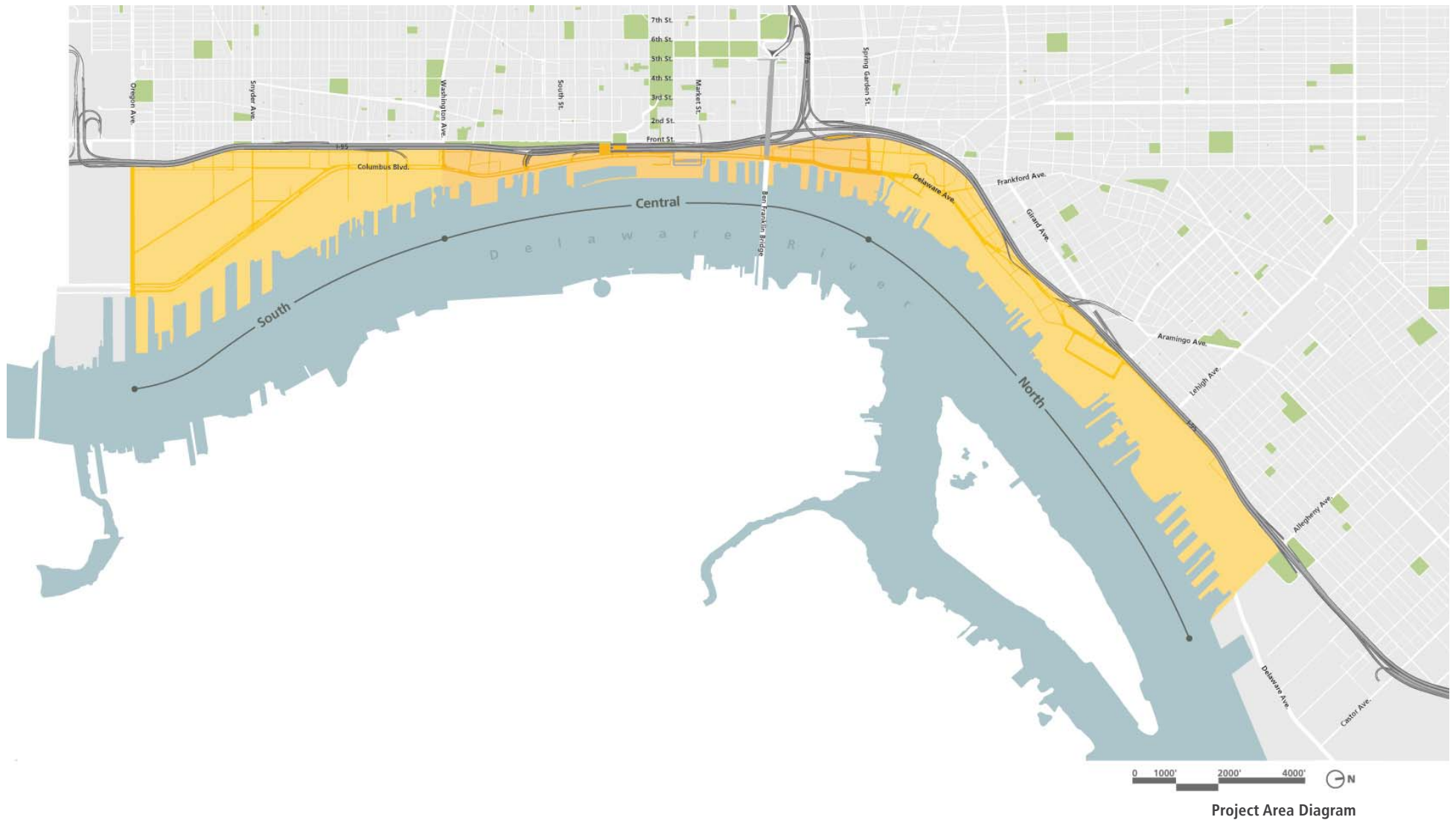
1952-1962: Reform

Philadelphia mayors Joseph Clark and Richardson Dilworth begin a post-WWII reform movement that significantly strengthens the local government's role in city planning. John Gallery calls this reform in urban redevelopment a "civic and political partnership."

1990: Center City District

CPDC helps establish Center City District, a business improvement district charged with implementing maintenance and marketing programs for downtown. Over the next seventeen years, the residential population of Center City grows to make it the third largest downtown in the nation.

The riverfront's large, post-industrial parcel size has yielded a suburban-style development pattern that has created a riverfront devoid of human-scale, urban form and with minimal public access.



Current Features of the Project Area

The civic vision covers 1,146 acres of land; these acres include seven miles along the river's edge. The project area's boundaries are Allegheny Avenue to the north, Oregon Avenue to the south, I-95 to the west and the Delaware River to the east. Currently, the area is comprised of piecemeal development that lacks a cohesive plan. As the following factors reveal, the situation is growing urgent.

- The riverfront is currently a fragmented collection of development, ranging from a working port and big-box retail in the southern area to high-rise, gated communities in the north. Among the unintended consequences of its unchecked development are traffic jams along Columbus Boulevard, reports of flooding in nearby basements during significant storm events and a virtual lack of public access to the water's edge.
- Development pressures are intense: along the central Delaware, twenty-two high-rise towers and two state-approved casinos are in various stages of proposal and approval.
- With I-95 and Columbus Boulevard cutting a 600-foot-wide swath through the corridor, the riverfront is an auto-dominated landscape that precludes public access to and enjoyment of the river.
- The area abuts Philadelphia's oldest, most historic and densest row-house communities, and the project area includes structures that highlight the city's former industrial primacy as the Workshop of the World.
- Only 8 acres of the project area are publicly accessible park space: Penn Treaty Park in Fishtown and Pulaski Park in Port Richmond.



- Penn's Landing remains a significantly underutilized public space in the center of the study area due in large part to the difficulty of accessing the site across I-95.
- Across the project area, a lack of openness and transparency characterizes both government oversight and the development process.
- Much of the land in the project area is privately owned, and large portions remain underutilized, most notably the 250-acre Port Richmond rail yards in the northern sector.
- About 60 percent of the project area has been certified as "blighted."
- The current and future health of the Delaware River is a significant concern, largely due to combined sewer outflows, proposed dredging and increased riverfront development.

Given the current development landscape along the central Delaware, it is time to create a sound framework for growth.

Left: Columbus Boulevard

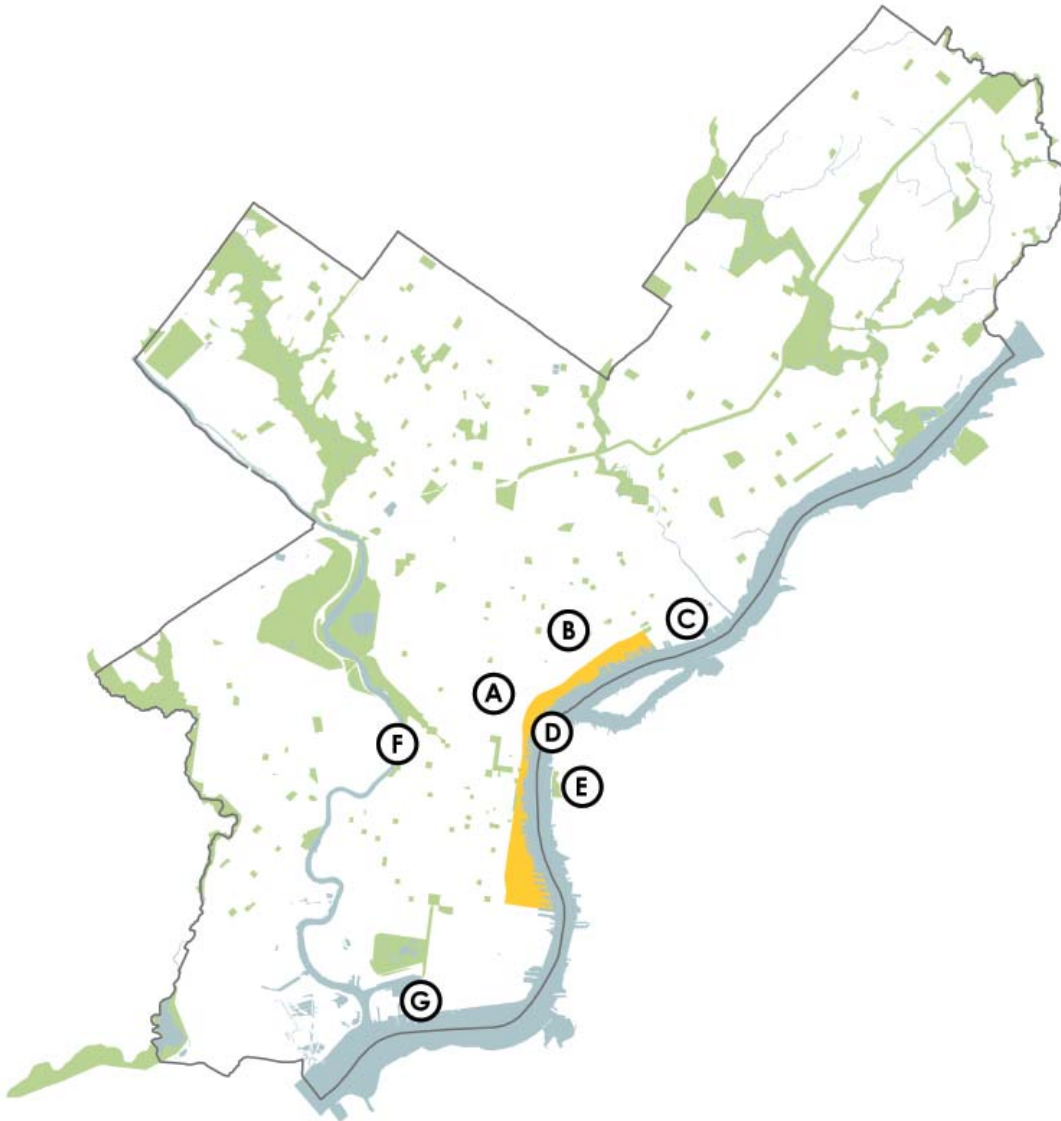
A chaotic convergence of land uses typifies the southern portion of the project area, which includes suburban-style big-box retail and a working port.

Center: No Access

The privatization of the riverfront without comprehensive planning has cut off public access to the river at key sites, including behind the Sheet Metal Workers' Union Hall at Washington Avenue.

Right: Looking South

The acute separation of dense and vibrant Philadelphia from the river by I-95 and Columbus Boulevard is clearly shown here, in the central portion of the project area.



Recent Planning Efforts along the Delaware Riverfront

A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware is the first planning initiative to cover such a large stretch of the Delaware riverfront in Philadelphia in twenty-five years. (Between 1981 and 1982, under Mayor Green's administration, Waterfront District Plans were completed by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission.) Throughout the planning process, we consulted with those involved in other riverfront planning efforts in the project area and throughout Philadelphia and worked to coordinate our efforts with theirs. Most of these planning initiatives began before our planning process, and each one represents an important community effort. *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* recognizes the work of these various neighborhood, city, state and regional entities and has incorporated many of their tenets into the civic vision from which it sprang. Key organizations include the following:



A



Northern Liberties Neighbors Association (NLNA): In April 2007, NLNA released the Northern Liberties Waterfront Plan, a community-based riverfront vision that will guide development from the Benjamin Franklin Bridge to Penn Treaty Park. Commissioned by NLNA and financed by local developers, it is the first community plan addressing land along the central Delaware. The plan focuses on ideas for narrowing the gap between the neighbors and the river, such as east-west “civic incisions” that reclaim important connector streets as public space, manicured parks under portions of I-95 and floating trail elements in the river as a way to allow people to travel along a continuous riverfront trail, despite private control of riparian land. The full plan can be viewed or downloaded from the NLNA website at www.nlna.org/images/NLNA_WaterfrontPlan_Web.pdf.

B



NKDC



NABR

New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKDC) and **Neighbors Allied for the Best Riverfront (NABR)** are working with **The Pennsylvania Environmental Council** to lead a community-driven greenway study that examines how to improve neighborhood connections to the river from Spring Garden Street to the Betsy Ross Bridge. More information can be found on NKDC’s website, www.nkdc.org.

NABR conducted a workshop in April 2007 that used the neighborhood principles identified during our planning process to envision alternate uses for the Foxwoods and SugarHouse Casino sites. More information can be found on its website, www.nabrhood.org.



Delaware River City Corporation is the non-profit implementing agency for the North Delaware Riverfront Greenway, an eight-mile trail and landscaped edge from Pulaski Park to Glen Foerd. The project grew out of a vision plan for the North Delaware prepared by Field Operations for the City Planning Commission in 2001. That plan called for increased public access and mixed-use development, primarily on brownfield sites. Several projects proposed by the plan are already underway, including the extension of Delaware Avenue north and the major expansion of trails and parks. More information can be found on the group's website, www.drcc-phila.org.



GreenPlan Philadelphia, the city's blueprint for sustainable open space, is Philadelphia's first comprehensive plan for parks, recreation and open space. This plan was created concurrently with our planning process. GreenPlan includes strategic recommendations for improving the city's open-space network and an implementation plan that includes first-action demonstration projects. Numerous sites along the central Delaware have been identified by both our project team and those who developed GreenPlan as potential early projects, such as Penn Treaty Park, the former city incinerator site and Festival Pier. More information can be found at www.greenplanphiladelphia.com.

E



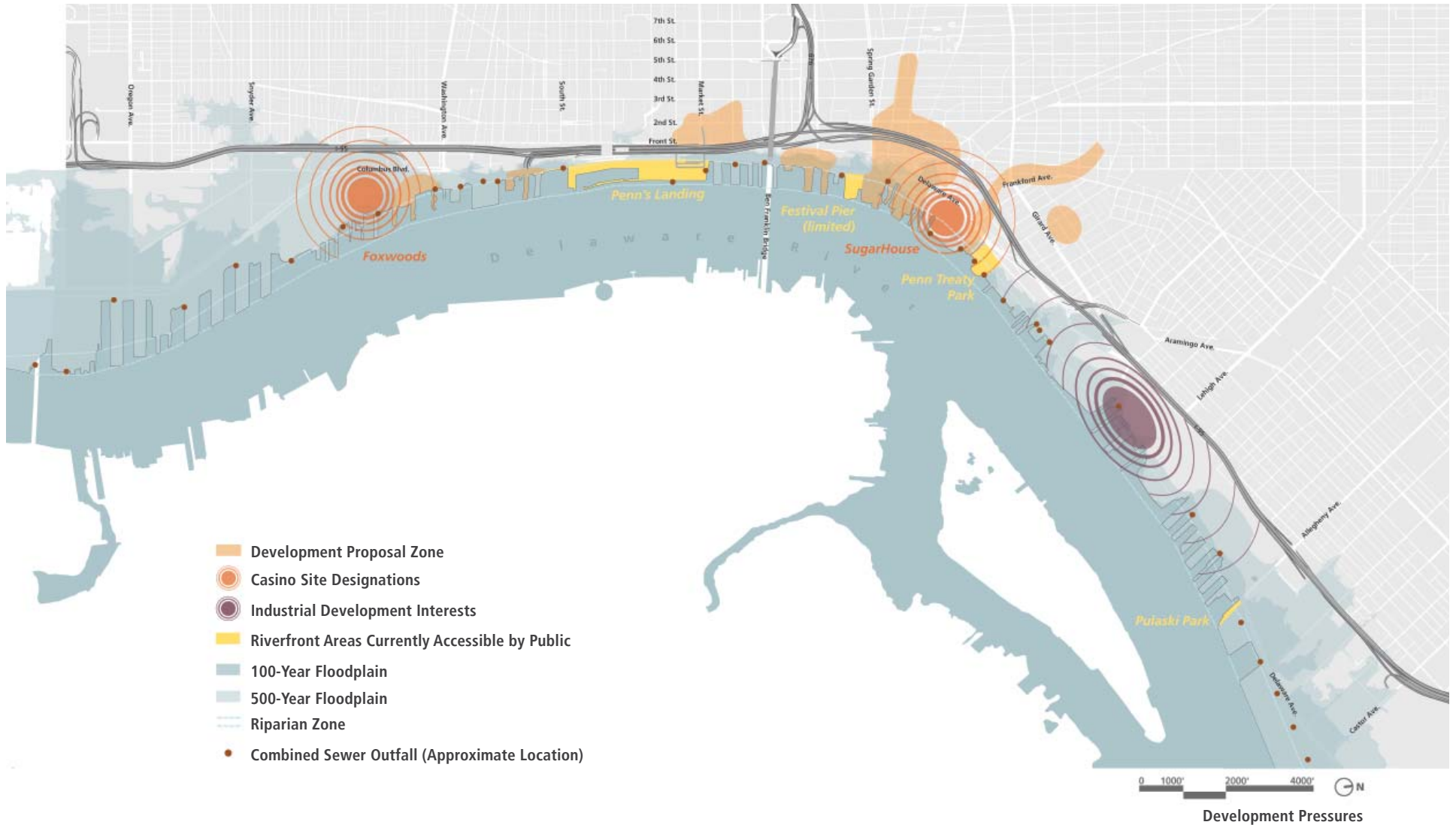
Cooper's Ferry Development Association: Founded in 1984, CFDA has leveraged more than \$500 million of public and private investment in the Camden riverfront, including financing for Tweeter Center, RiverLink Ferry, Campbell's Field and the New Jersey State Aquarium. The Camden riverfront currently draws two million visitors per year and contributes about \$4 million in annual taxes to the city of Camden, 18 percent of its overall collections. More information can be found on CFDA's website: www.camdenwaterfront.com.

F G



Though not on the Delaware River, other recent riverfront planning projects include the **Schuylkill River Development Corporation's** *Tidal Schuylkill River Master Plan: Creating a New Vision* in 2003 and the **Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation's** 2004 *Philadelphia Navy Yard Master Plan*. Plans can be found at www.schuylkillbanks.org and at www.navyyard.org.

The city's recent downtown housing boom, aided by the expansion of the ten-year property tax abatement for residential construction, has caused a dramatic rise in interest in vacant, post-industrial riverfront parcels.



Riverfront Development Pressures Reach New Heights

Intense development pressures in recent years along the central Delaware have demonstrated the need for a comprehensive vision for the riverfront. The city's recent downtown housing boom, aided by the expansion of the ten-year property tax abatement for residential construction, has caused a dramatic rise in interest in vacant, post-industrial riverfront parcels. Today, these vacant parcels are seen as prime sites for high-density living and retail establishments. As of 2007, plans for twenty-two new high-rises are proposed along the central Delaware riverfront, and many have received zoning approval. Additionally, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has licensed two casinos with five thousand slot machines each; these are also slated for development along the riverfront. If the casinos are built as approved, it is anticipated that each casino development will stimulate ancillary and supporting development on adjacent sites.

To date, the city's approach to riverfront development views any development as good for the economy. Thus, the city has spent little time strengthening the land-use controls needed to encourage high-quality design, a feature that would protect the area's value and appeal. In the absence of these controls, the existing physical landscape is one of isolated development, replete with traffic jams, flooding caused by poor stormwater management and a lack of public access to the river. A comprehensive approach to riverfront development that addresses economics, urban design, social equity and ecology has been lacking



SugarHouse

Some residents are concerned about the arrival of SugarHouse Casino, which is currently sited on the river near a neighborhood park and an inactive but majestic power station.

Front and Walnut Streets

The 101 Walnut luxury residential project in the central section of the project area as it nears completion.

from the conversation. This civic vision presents Philadelphia with the opportunity to manage development pressures along the riverfront, protect the public good, address long-term and sustainable design principles and adopt a framework that will ensure that the Delaware riverfront succeeds in becoming a major local and regional asset.

The Challenges Facing Riverfront Development, and the Potential for New Growth



The primary challenges to developing the central Delaware into a model twenty-first century, urban riverfront community are physical and governmental. However, many opportunities exist to create such a riverfront in what is currently an array of big-box shopping centers, super-block-scaled development, vacant land, an auto-dominated landscape and a largely inaccessible river's edge. Underutilized land can be the city's next great developed and public space, existing sprawl-type development can become urban infill, and neighborhood development pressures can spill over constructively onto the river's edge.

Challenges

- The physical and psychological barrier of I-95, which literally cuts the city off from the riverfront.
- Inadequate coordination between a plethora of governing and managing entities at both city and state levels.
- An automobile-dominated landscape that makes the riverfront a high-speed thoroughfare and not a destination.
- Large-scale, post-industrial brownfield sites that encourage suburban-style development with horizontal, big-box development and acres of surface parking.
- Development pressures that decrease opportunities for open space.

- A dearth of attractive, public green spaces.
- Gated communities that block public access to the river.
- Minimal road connectivity between the river and adjacent neighborhoods.
- An aging combined sewer infrastructure that contributes to riverfront pollution.
- A current lack of federal funds for transformational urban-redevelopment projects.
- An existing rail right-of-way ownership down the center of Columbus Boulevard that is incompatible with a pedestrian-friendly, urbane boulevard.
- A lack of coordination between the needs of the riverfront as a whole (traffic, open space, riverfront access) and community benefits agreements presented for Zoning Board of Adjustment approval that are negotiated by civic associations and individual developers without regard to comprehensive planning implications.
- Archaic zoning code practices that cause unintended development consequences, with the Zoning Board of Adjustment and City Council adjudicating zoning variances on a parcel-by-parcel basis.



From far left:

The *SS United States* is docked in the heart of the big-box district.

The Girard Avenue Interchange terminates streets before they reach the riverfront.

Unchecked riverfront development has caused a chaotic mix of uses.

New proposals call for high-rise residential towers near some of Philadelphia's oldest streets.

The Great Plaza at Penn's Landing is an opportunity for a continuous open-space network on the river.

Highway infrastructure is most tangled and disruptive at the Ben Franklin Bridge.

Richmond Street is a mixed-use corridor at the northern end of the project area.

The Sparks Shot Tower, built for munitions production in 1808, is still visible from Columbus Boulevard near the I-95 on-ramp.

- Largely private ownership of riverfront land.
- The ten-year property tax abatement which has stimulated development but is also a missed opportunity for capturing future property tax value for public infrastructure investment.
- The lack of a comprehensive civic vision that balances public good with quality urban development.

Potential

- Strong neighborhood communities bordering the central Delaware.
- An existing Philadelphia street framework that allows for potential "green" connective corridors to the river from adjoining communities.
- Development pressure that will spur neighborhood expansion to the river and provide the density necessary to support park space, retail, mass transportation and quality public investment in civic infrastructure.
- Future job growth in the working port, construction, riverfront hospitality and retail fields.
- Strategic public investment in infrastructure (street grid, boulevard, parks), yielding significant private investment returns and increased public revenues.
- Existing public access points (Penn's Landing, Penn Treaty Park, Pulaski Park) as starting points for new riverfront parks and open spaces.
- A historic legacy as the site of earliest Philadelphia settlements.
- An existing rail infrastructure as basis for future mass transportation infrastructure.
- The potential for creative funding sources for future infrastructure investment.
- A working port as a growing economic driver for the city.
- Large, undeveloped parcels as potential sites for new urban destinations.
- A planned I-95 rebuild and improved design during current rebuilding process.
- Developing partnerships between public, private and non-profit entities.



The Advisory Group's Work to Address Casinos on the Riverfront

The central Delaware riverfront planning process proceeded in parallel with other independent development proposals, the most controversial of which was the siting of two state-mandated and licensed casinos within the project area. In response to community concern, the Central Delaware Advisory Group voted to include a “no-build” scheme in this civic vision so that alternative site plans would be acknowledged.

Thriving riverfronts—indeed cities in general—incorporate a wide mix of uses. In some cities, mostly in Europe and Canada, this mix can include casinos if they are given urban form and properly contextualized. However, to achieve this, cities must be able to provide and enforce zoning regulations and design guidelines that manage building form and scale, provide public riverfront access and ensure that the automobile does not dominate the landscape. The controversial process that brought casinos to the Delaware did not allow for a thorough discussion of design and planning.

The proposed casino locations and no-build criteria are included in the following pages and demonstrate the effect of applying the central Delaware design guidelines (created with the advisory group as a part of this process) to the site and program of the proposed casinos.



The proposed Foxwoods site, located in the southern portion of the project area



The proposed SugarHouse site, located in the northern portion of the project area



Proposed Casino Site Map

Elements of the proposed no-build provision include the following:

- Extending the Philadelphia street grid over large development parcels to create a pedestrian-scale environment and improve riverfront access.
- Encouraging smaller buildings to allow for permeability at the river's edge.
- Providing a 100-foot minimum public easement along the riverfront for a multimodal riverfront trail and green space.
- Placing buildings at the building line on city streets.
- Requiring parking that is visually unobtrusive and has a minimal impact on pedestrians' riverfront experience.
- Exploring innovative remedies to the auto-dominated landscape, including remote parking, car sharing and automated garages.
- Requiring that buildings are constructed to ensure that massing, height, scale and form reflect their riverfront and neighborhood context.

The current designs for SugarHouse and Foxwoods do not meet many of the design standards established in the central Delaware planning process. However, it should be noted that the Philadelphia City Planning Commission worked to incorporate these standards into the city's casino review process.

Short-Term Recommendation

With the construction of the casinos, traffic is expected to increase in areas that already have persistent congestion problems. Although an independent study of traffic impacts approved by City Council was not completed by the time of the printing of this report, it is clear that the casinos will bring thousands of cars to the riverfront. Our recommendations for traffic mitigation are related to all large-scale development on the riverfront and include the creation of a riverfront-specific traffic and transportation policy that enhances and encourages mass transit, coordinated remote parking, shuttles, water taxis and other forms of traffic dispersion and management. Before long term improvements are made, short-term traffic congestion will worsen. Managing and facilitating this change will require collaboration between city and state agencies.



Long-Term Recommendations

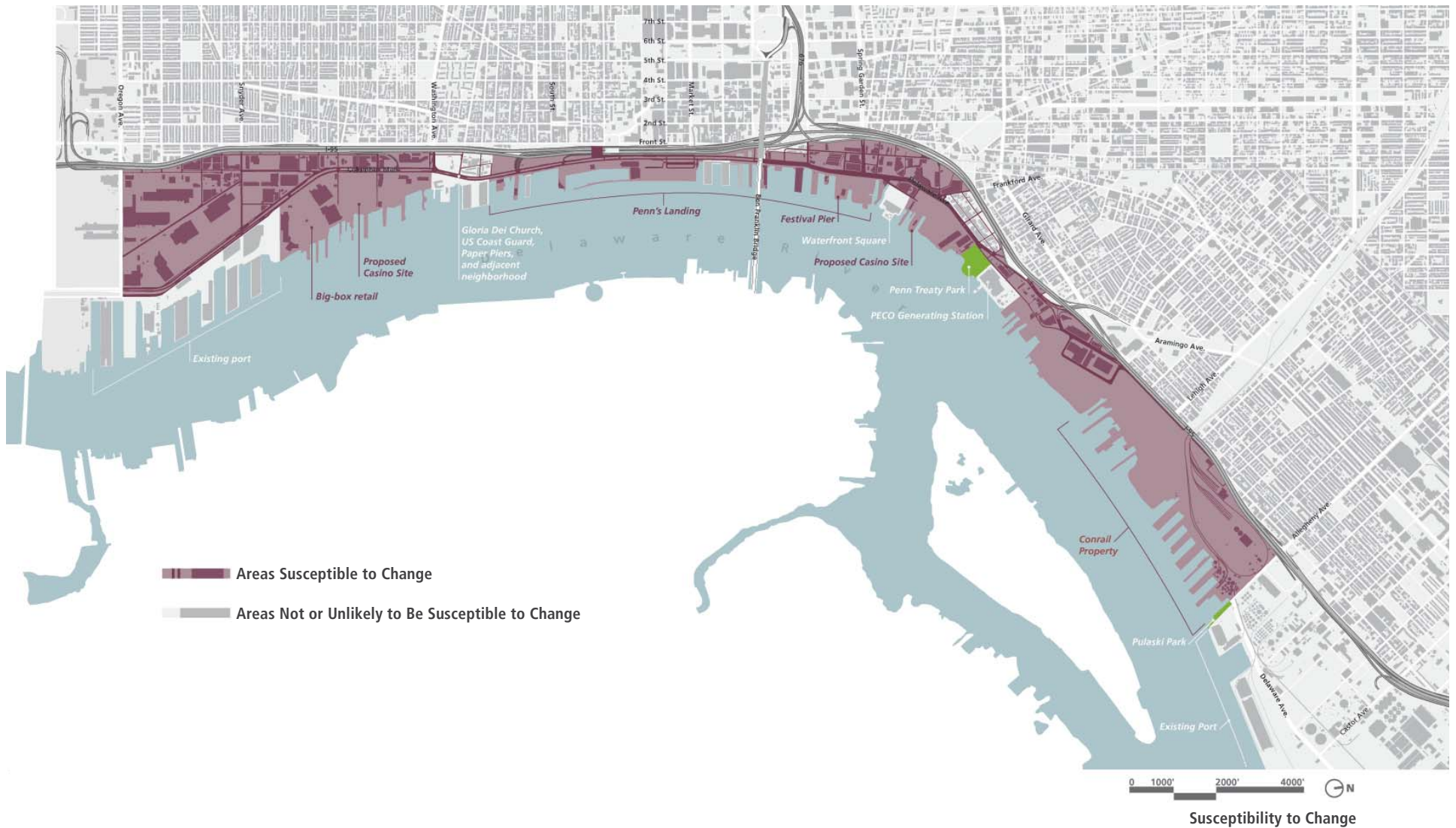
In the longer term, because this civic vision is concerned primarily with providing guidelines for good riverfront development, PennPraxis recommends that the casinos evolve to meet the design standards established through this vision. This is especially critical in future phases of growth to ensure the development of the mixed-use riverfront envisioned in this plan. Because casinos frequently renew their physical plants, future compliance with design guidelines should be a goal and an expectation of the casinos and the city. Recommendations for future changes include the following:

- Reduce or break down the scale of buildings and provide more permeability through the site in accordance with the 420 x 500 foot maximum riverfront parcel size recommended in the design guidelines. On the river's edge, buildings should not exceed 250 feet in length to ensure pedestrian access and viewsheds to the water.
- Provide active frontages to city streets, with buildings meeting the city street line with a variety of retail and commercial uses, stimulating a quality pedestrian-oriented series of sidewalks adjoining the casino development.
- Eliminate or reconfigure all exposed parking garages.
- Create an active pedestrian realm on Delaware Boulevard. Large driveways should be minimized to enhance walkability.

- If adjacent properties are acquired by the casinos, development standards should allow for the creation of city streets separating casinos from new development to allow for access to the river. The casinos should also work to avoid the construction of additional large-scale structures dominated by inactive parking structures and blank-walled buildings.
- Encourage and accommodate use of mass transit along the proposed Delaware Boulevard and to and from Center City. This use would be bolstered by the development of remote parking locations served by mass transit as a part of a comprehensive, regional traffic and transportation strategy.
- Encourage the use of water-taxi service from both the Pennsylvania and New Jersey sides of the Delaware.
- In community benefits agreements, accommodate for infrastructure improvement and long-term mitigation of impacts, and require compliance with the design guidelines established in this civic vision.
- Explore city-level ways to leverage the revenue-generating power of the casinos (further explored in Chapter Eight) making the casinos into partners in implementing the goals of the civic vision.

The current designs for SugarHouse and Foxwoods do not meet many of the design standards established in the central Delaware planning process.

It is imperative for the City of Philadelphia to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for the riverfront to ensure that high-quality urban development comes to the central Delaware.



Riverfront Susceptibility to Change

As our look at the planned casino development reveals, the project area faces a drastic transformation from its current state in coming years as private developers reimagine their riverfront land. The project area is composed of a series of post-industrial parcels that are transitioning from their former uses in ways that reflect a changing real-estate market. Here are some factors in the region that we anticipate will lead to significant changes, changes that call for the city's active guidance based on a comprehensive plan:

- The land south of Pier 70 that belongs to the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority is available for future port development. Port-related employment is of growing importance in Philadelphia, especially considering Pennsylvania's proposed investment in port expansion.
- The big-box retail center along South Columbus Boulevard is susceptible to change due to the short life spans of these types of buildings. With Foxwoods Casino just to the north, it is easy to imagine that this section could change into a denser district offering varied retail options within ten years.
- The holdings of the Penn's Landing Corporation (PLC) can be changed with approval by its board of directors; the proximity to Center City of these parcels makes them particularly attractive for development or long-term, ground-lease agreements with PLC.
- The area from the Ben Franklin Bridge to the PECO Delaware Generating Station will likely change quickly due to strong residential



development pressures from downtown, rapidly transforming adjacent neighborhoods such as Northern Liberties and Fishtown and their large number of underutilized parcels. With two Waterfront Square towers already built, SugarHouse Casino and Bridgeman's View Tower already approved by the city, and fifteen other high-rise proposals in the Northern Liberties and Fishtown stretch of the river alone, this area of the central Delaware riverfront is poised to become a dense, high-rise residential and commercial district.

- North of the PECO Delaware Generating Station are 250 acres of underutilized post-industrial land. This area does not have the same market pressures as parts directly to the south, but available parcels have received development interest, particularly due to their proximity to the reconfigured ramps created in the Girard Avenue Interchange rebuild, which is slated for completion in 2013.
- The two existing riverfront parks, Penn Treaty Park and Pulaski Park, are neighborhood assets that must be protected and that would benefit from expansion.

Pier 84

A scene of the working port from Pier 84, which is charged with receiving all of the cocoa used in Hershey's chocolate products.

Big-box Retail

Big-box stores such as Wal-Mart at Pier 70 are likely to change form in the long term.

The Central Delaware Advisory Group
Plan Philly
A Year of Civic Engagement
Values and Principles
Looking to the Future

AN OPEN AND TRANSPARENT PLANNING PROCESS



A crowd gathers at Penn Treaty Park on the third of three public riverfront walks on November 11, 2006.

An Open and Transparent Planning Process

A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware was created through a citizen-driven, open and transparent planning process. The public nature of the planning process attracted press coverage, enabling the conversation to remain public and vigorous and ensuring that special interests were not allowed to dominate the outcome. PennPraxis, together with the Penn Project on Civic Engagement, developed a process of creating a vision plan that married citizen values with professional knowledge. Since October 2006, the process has engaged more than four thousand Philadelphians in a robust civic dialogue that has included citizens, business leaders, elected officials, developers and design professionals.

The Central Delaware Advisory Group



The Central Delaware Advisory Group, chaired by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission's executive director, Janice Woodcock, began meeting monthly in November 2006. The group included forty-six appointed public officials, business leaders and community group members. The advisory group also selected a steering committee, which met as needed over the course of the process. Members of the advisory group visited New York City in November 2006 to meet with various planners and officials and learned about New York's diverse waterfront initiatives. Each representative served an important role in the advisory group, helping to guide the process to ensure that it remained thorough and embodied shared values.

PlanPhilly

The screenshot shows the PlanPhilly website with the following content:

- PLAN PHILLY** logo and tagline: "Planning Philadelphia's Future"
- Navigation menu: ABOUT | NEWS | IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD | ISSUES | PRAXIS PROJECTS | EVENTS | DESIGN MATTERS | PARTICIPATE
- NEWS** section:
 - Zoning commission's code conundrum** (Sept 12, 2007): Different takes on how to tackle reform. Comprehensive plan doings? Zoning workshops set for commissioners, public.
 - O'Brien and Keller take on casino process** (Sept 11, 2007): Gaming oversight committee hears two of its members challenge government, Foxwoods and SugarHouse on riparian rights, traffic, buffer zone.
 - Meet the new zoning reformers** (Sept 6, 2007): Q&As with members of the recently formed Zoning Code Commission. First meeting coverage. Why reform?
- IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD** section:
 - Cars and people can co-exist**: Parking problems and solutions resonate with residents on the Central Delaware Waterfront. Read Praxis guidelines. By Andrew Goodman for PlanPhilly.
- EVENTS** section:
 - September 13th, 2007**: Germantown-Wayne Junction Community Visioning Workshop
 - September 20th, 2007**: Central Delaware Advisory Group meeting (tentative)
 - September 20th, 2007**: Infill Philadelphia publication launch party
 - September 26th, 2007**: The Philadelphia Zoning Code: an overview
- PARTICIPATE** section:
 - Join the Conversation!**
 - Sign up to receive updates**
 - Voice your opinion**
 - Be a citizen journalist**
 - Letters**
- QUICK CONTENT** section:
 - PlanPhilly in the Press**:
 - The circle forms and breaks again
 - The Next Mayor: waterfront focus
 - Inquirer: Waterfront planning
 - Articles**:
 - Coming soon: a citywide comprehensive plan?
 - Low-down on high-rise hopes
 - Zoning Code primers scheduled
 - Commentary**:
 - Inga Saffron: sidewalk brawl in South Philadelphia
 - Steinberg: 10 steps to a better waterfront
 - Start by pondering the problem

In October 2006, PennPraxis launched www.planphilly.com, a portal for content on planning and urban-design issues in the Philadelphia area. Since January, the site has kept the public up to date on the status of the civic vision and helped to educate its visitors on riverfront issues through interactive applications that encourage local citizens to use the Web for civic engagement. PlanPhilly earned honorable mention on Planetizen's list of Top 10 Best Planning Websites of 2007 and had over eighty thousand unique visitors in its first nine months.

This active public involvement sends the message that Philadelphians want their city to abandon the traditional method of transactional, parcel-based development without regard to the greater public good.

A Year of Civic Engagement

Fall 2006, Riverfront Walks

PennPraxis led over three hundred citizens on three guided riverfront tours. During the tours, many participants shared their stories and knowledge of the central Delaware riverfront. The walks marked the beginning of a process in which neighbors, public officials and design professionals came together to envision a new future for the riverfront. As such, they sent the important signal that the process begins with the public at the water's edge.

December 2006, Community Forum: Value Sessions

The Penn Project on Civic Engagement facilitated three outreach sessions in Kensington, South Philadelphia and at Penn's Landing. The value sessions, organized around small-group discussions, encouraged citizens to describe valued aspects of their communities. Over 850 Philadelphians participated in creating a list of community-derived values.

February 2007, Community Forum: Best Practices Session

PennPraxis invited local and national experts to the Independence Seaport Museum to provide Philadelphia with a crash course in various aspects of waterfront planning. Through discussions focused on ecology, sustainable systems, challenges of large-scale urban design and models for waterfront planning implementation, over four hundred Philadelphians began to believe in the potential for the development of a twenty-first century riverfront and to understand the long-term effort necessary to achieve such a goal.

February 2007, Community Forum: Principles Sessions

Following the identification of community values and best practices, PennPraxis gathered over 450 residents of Society Hill, Kensington and Pennsport to develop a series of planning principles. These principles became the blueprint upon which the civic vision was based.

March 2007, Design Workshop

PennPraxis, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission and planning consultants Wallace Roberts & Todd organized and facilitated a design workshop at which participants imagined a new future for the Delaware riverfront. Five world-renowned designers led teams of local planning professionals, community members and design students through three days of collaborative brainstorming and intensive designing. Using the citizen-derived planning principles as their foundation, the teams imagined a fully transformed central Delaware riverfront. Over five hundred citizens attended the standing-room-only presentation at the Independence Seaport Museum to see the work of the design teams, and many of the ideas were published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the *Philadelphia Daily News* and presented on local television and radio stations. During the workshop, three essential planning networks were identified: movement systems, parks and open space, and land development. These three networks became the basis for this civic vision.



Spring and Summer 2007, Design and Community Feedback

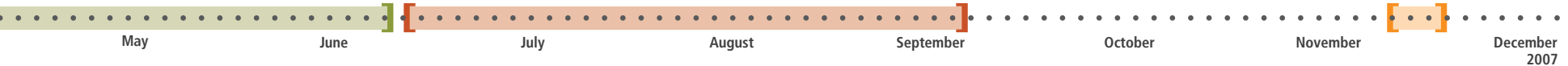
As PennPraxis, PCPC and WRT refined and tested the design strategy, many community and riverfront stakeholders played important roles in refining the citizen and expert recommendations for riverfront design and implementation. The Penn Project on Civic Engagement facilitated a series of citizen feedback sessions in Northern Liberties and Queen Village, as well as holding smaller community meetings in Washington Square, Port Richmond and New Kensington. Approximately four hundred local residents provided comments on many elements of the design and development guidelines. Their feedback served as a checkpoint, enabling the team to see if the evolving design conveyed the public's voice appropriately.

Summer 2007, Collaboration and Outreach

Recognizing that the civic vision requires cooperation at many levels (neighborhood, city, state and region), PennPraxis convened multiple focus groups to obtain specific information on the specialized disciplines, key projects and upcoming work of various public agencies. These included internal workshops and information-sharing sessions with historic preservation experts, parks groups and the broader development community. The team also consulted with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, the Philadelphia Water Department, the Center City District, the Design Advocacy Group, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority, the Delaware River Port Authority and the Penn's Landing Corporation, among others. In addition, the project team worked with local developers and local neighborhood groups, including the New Kensington Community Development Corporation, the Delaware River City Corporation and the Northern Liberties Neighbors Association.

November 2007, Public Presentation of the Civic Vision

PennPraxis hosted the public unveiling of the civic vision. The presentation offered local citizens and others an opportunity to see how the civic values and principles developed through public outreach have been translated into a long-term vision for the central Delaware riverfront.



Values and Principles

A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware relied upon the efforts of thousands of committee members, residents, business owners, community leaders and government officials to define the values and principles that best reflect Philadelphia's distinctive characteristics. The following values and principles form the core of the civic vision.

Values

The following list reveals neighborhood features that citizens told our team are important. We have sought to retain some of their language.

A safe place to live

We value a neighborhood in which children can play outside, one where adults and kids alike walk the neighborhood and feel safe because they know and trust one another, whether they live or work in the community.

A varied culture

We appreciate the economic, ethnic, racial, cultural, generational and physical (ecological and architectural) diversity in our neighborhoods.

A healthful environment

We value a clean and open environment—including the river, trees and air—and want access to that environment.

Economic sustainability

We recognize that quality jobs on the riverfront are an economic engine of the city. It is important that we sustain, if not expand, industrial and shipping jobs, as well as small, locally owned businesses. This will provide a strong economy for adults, as well as jobs for youth.

A rich history

We value Philadelphia's history as the birthplace of democracy in the United States and as a city to which different ethnic groups have immigrated and in which they have prospered. The traditions, buildings, cultural institutions and activities, educational institutions and other features that have grown from that history make Philadelphia unique.

Planning Principles Derived from Citizen Values

Reconnect the city to the river's edge

Build Philadelphia to the river. Split up the sprawling, super-block-style street layout that damages the character of the central Delaware, and link the waterfront physically and visually to adjacent neighborhoods. Reuse historic structures to hold on to traces of Philadelphia's past. Bring the narrow, neighborly grid of streets to the river's edge so that dense intimate communities can thrive, increasing the sense of safety and strengthening community pride. Remove barriers to waterfront access and make it safe to work, walk and play in this new district. Reduce car traffic on Columbus Boulevard/Delaware Avenue and Interstate 95 so the human-scale city can flow to the river. Use innovative mass transit, car sharing and automated-parking techniques so that people can visit the waterfront without having to drive.

Honor the river

Acknowledge the role the river has played in shaping Philadelphia, as well as its importance today. Support the needs of the shipping industry and Philadelphia's working port as a vital part of the city's current and future economic base. At the same time, think of the river as a series of interlocking systems—economic, recreational, transportation, residential, cultural and commercial—and work to manage the river's multiple uses and needs. Improve public access

for boating, recreation and leisure. Maintain the health of the river for future generations. Build on Philadelphia's relationship with Camden, its neighbor on the New Jersey side of the Delaware River, and create water-taxi and ferry services to enhance the connections.

Design with nature

Remember that the Delaware River is a giant watershed. Plan development along the river's edge carefully so that natural sites can coexist with residences, businesses and the working port. Practice effective water management to reduce stormwater runoff from new development, and create new streams and inlets where paved-over creeks once fed into the Delaware. Encourage new development that enhances the river's ecology and environment rather than degrading it. Promote "green" building technologies and remediate and develop vacant brownfields in ways that celebrate the industrial past while creating new uses for the twenty-first century. Offer good mass transit along the waterfront to reduce car pollution and congestion.

Strike the right balance

Create a livable and walkable community along the entire water's edge by encouraging a healthy mix of urban development and public improvements. Successful sites offer a blend of uses throughout the day and the year, so no single type of activity should dominate the central Delaware waterfront. Encourage a healthy public life along the water's edge with a careful balance of public spaces, shops, cafés

Promote dense, human-scale development that brings people and urban energy to the river.

Make the river a real place based on local values.

and residences. Design Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard to be one of the great boulevards of the world, one that manages traffic artfully, encourages a mix of uses with ground-level activity to keep streets populated and includes a variety of lively public spaces. Promote dense, human-scale development that brings people and urban energy to the river. Create a destination for local residents and visitors that adds to Philadelphian's sense of hometown pride. Beautify the public realm through signage, public art and landscaping.

Take the long view

Do not be seduced by short-term gains in developing the central Delaware. Think big and create bold plans for the future of I-95 at Penn's Landing, the connections between the river and the neighborhoods and the possibilities for creating a world-class waterfront. Seize the opportunity to create a visionary road map for large-scale public investment in Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard, mass transit and the creation of generous public spaces. Encourage high-quality private urban development and support it with urban-design excellence in the public realm. Aim high and put forward a vision that can be implemented in phases over the next fifty years. Cultivate farsighted civic and political leadership to put the plan into action.

Protect the public good

Connect city neighborhoods to the waterfront through a new and distinct network of public places that tells the story of Philadelphia

and the Delaware River. Reach out along the river to the north and the south—beyond the central Delaware—and link the central region with the public improvements planned for those other areas. Develop a waterfront that will bring different types of people together through shared experiences of public spaces. Establish the waterfront as a meeting place for all Philadelphia residents, and provide multiple access points for neighbors to use. Plan for a diverse built environment as well as a diverse community of residents. Develop public policies that encourage a variety of housing opportunities for citizens of mixed income levels and backgrounds and that protect the quality of life for local community members.

Make it real, Philadelphia

Honor Philadelphia's illustrious past and promising future through the design of the central Delaware. Make the riverfront a real place based on local values by ensuring that the implementation of the civic vision for the central Delaware is based on sustained citizen engagement. Tap into Philadelphia's vast wealth of design excellence for inspiration while making sure that the vision for the central Delaware is truly contemporary. Create a lasting legacy of urban-design excellence for generations to come through the thoughtful balance of public good and private development. Continue making citizen input a priority as the plan for the central Delaware takes shape so that this vital dialogue can continue to inform development.

Looking to the Future

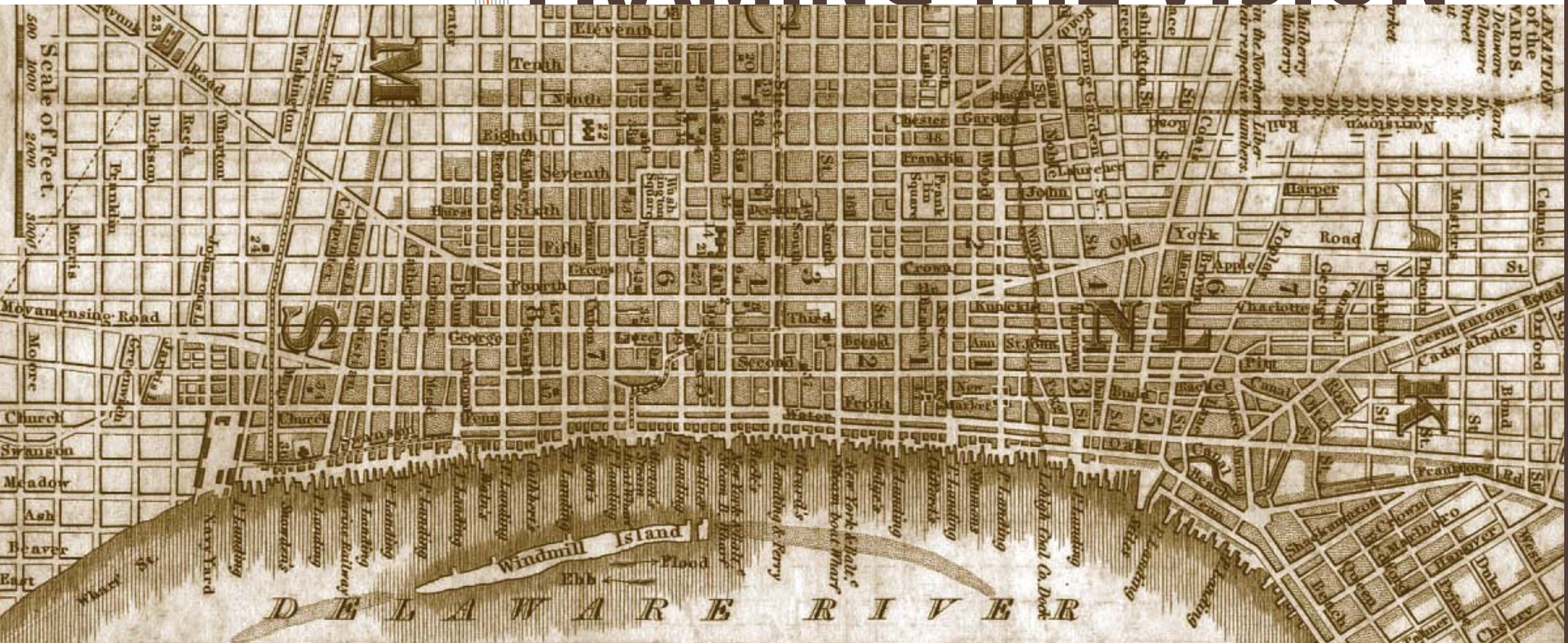
Through the process of civic engagement described above, local designers, elected officials and neighborhood stakeholders formed partnerships and began to collaborate in new and creative ways. These relationships are an early win for the civic vision. In addition, the active and sustained participation of the public reveals the community's eagerness to become involved in forming a comprehensive vision for the future of the riverfront that is based on shared civic values. This active public involvement sends the strong and clear message that Philadelphians want their city to abandon the traditional method of transactional, parcel-based planning and development without regard to the greater public good.

Philadelphia will benefit by continuing this sustained and active civic engagement at both neighborhood and city-wide levels. It is essential that community leaders continue to mobilize Philadelphians into action to ensure that public and private interests work together to identify common ground and set priorities for future growth and development along the central Delaware riverfront. Community members want development that places the public good at the forefront. They want progressive public policies to be created and implemented—policies that ensure that the look and feel of the central Delaware will be inviting and provide an example of sustainable development for generations to come.

It is essential that community leaders continue to mobilize Philadelphians into action to ensure that public and private interests work together to identify common ground and priorities for future growth and development along the central Delaware riverfront.

Movement Systems
Parks and Open Space
Land Development

FRAMING THE VISION



Philadelphia, 1842

A plan showing development at the river's edge, street layout, property expansion and two public squares. Artist unknown.



Framing the Vision

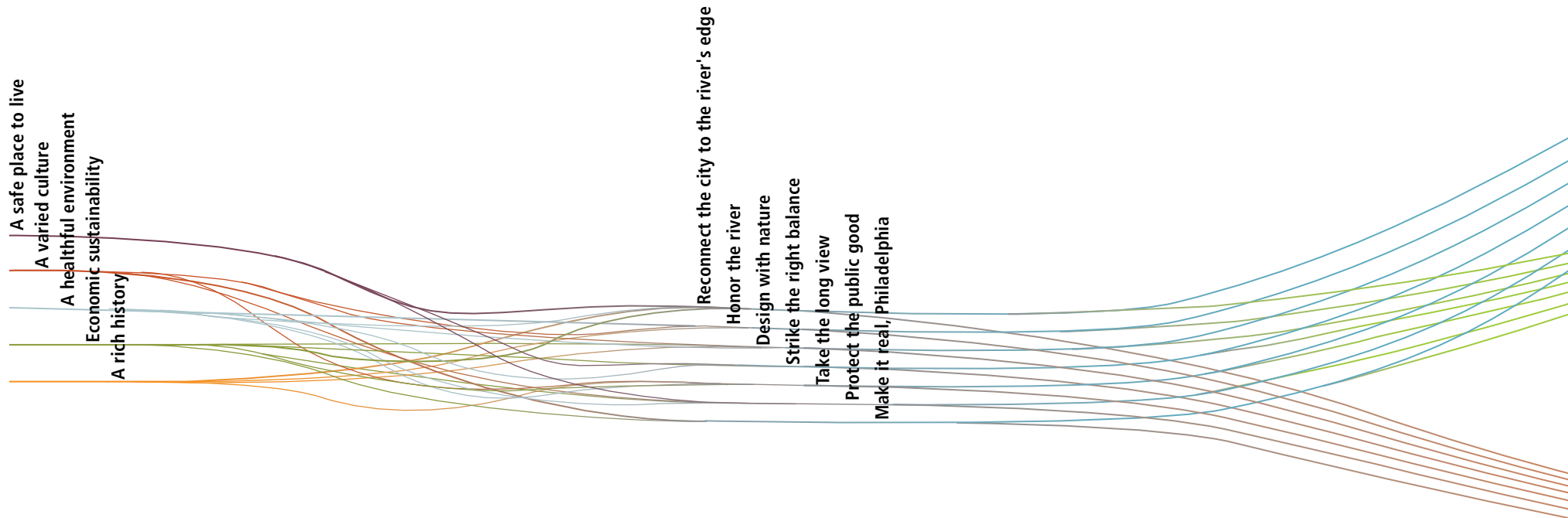
In 1683, William Penn and Thomas Holme created a plan to guide Philadelphia’s growth. The plan was sensible and reflected the fact that Philadelphia began partly as a business venture. First, their plan established a gridiron street network that facilitated connectivity and commerce; second, in a manner evocative of the European trend toward the “greene country towne,” the plan established a series of public squares; and third, the plan allowed for the subdivision of land, which set the stage for residential, commercial and industrial development. For the past 325 years, Penn and Holme’s flexible framework for building a community has served Philadelphia well, successfully guiding the city’s growth and allowing for an easy mix of uses between businesses and residences.

Yet today, because much of the central Delaware riverfront lacks this formative framework, riverfront development is occurring in a haphazard fashion. *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* seeks to inspire Philadelphia's citizens to aspire toward a higher-quality built environment. The plan presents the citizens of Philadelphia with a challenge: to transform the physical and regulatory landscape of the central Delaware at a critical juncture in the city's history. The plan seeks to enable developers, political leaders and citizens to establish the framework for a legacy of urban excellence for generations to come. *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* combines William Penn and Thomas Holme's timeless lessons with the aspirations of Philadelphia's residents to envision Philadelphia as a fresh, modern, premier riverfront city. The strength of this civic vision lies in the fact that its values and principles are citizen derived. As such, they reflect what is meaningful to Philadelphia—what matters about its past as well as what is valuable in its present and desired for its future.

A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware offers a comprehensive vision that translates citizen-driven values and principles into an integrated series of networks—networks that can create, support and sustain the civic vision for the central Delaware for generations to come. The three networks described in this vision—**movement systems, parks and open space, and land development**—represent both the planning principles outlined earlier and best planning practices. These principles and practices include ideas about urban growth and densities, ecological sustainability and effective transportation policies.

The plan presents the citizens of Philadelphia with a challenge: to transform the physical and regulatory landscape of the central Delaware at a critical juncture in the city's history.

A Framework for Urban Excellence

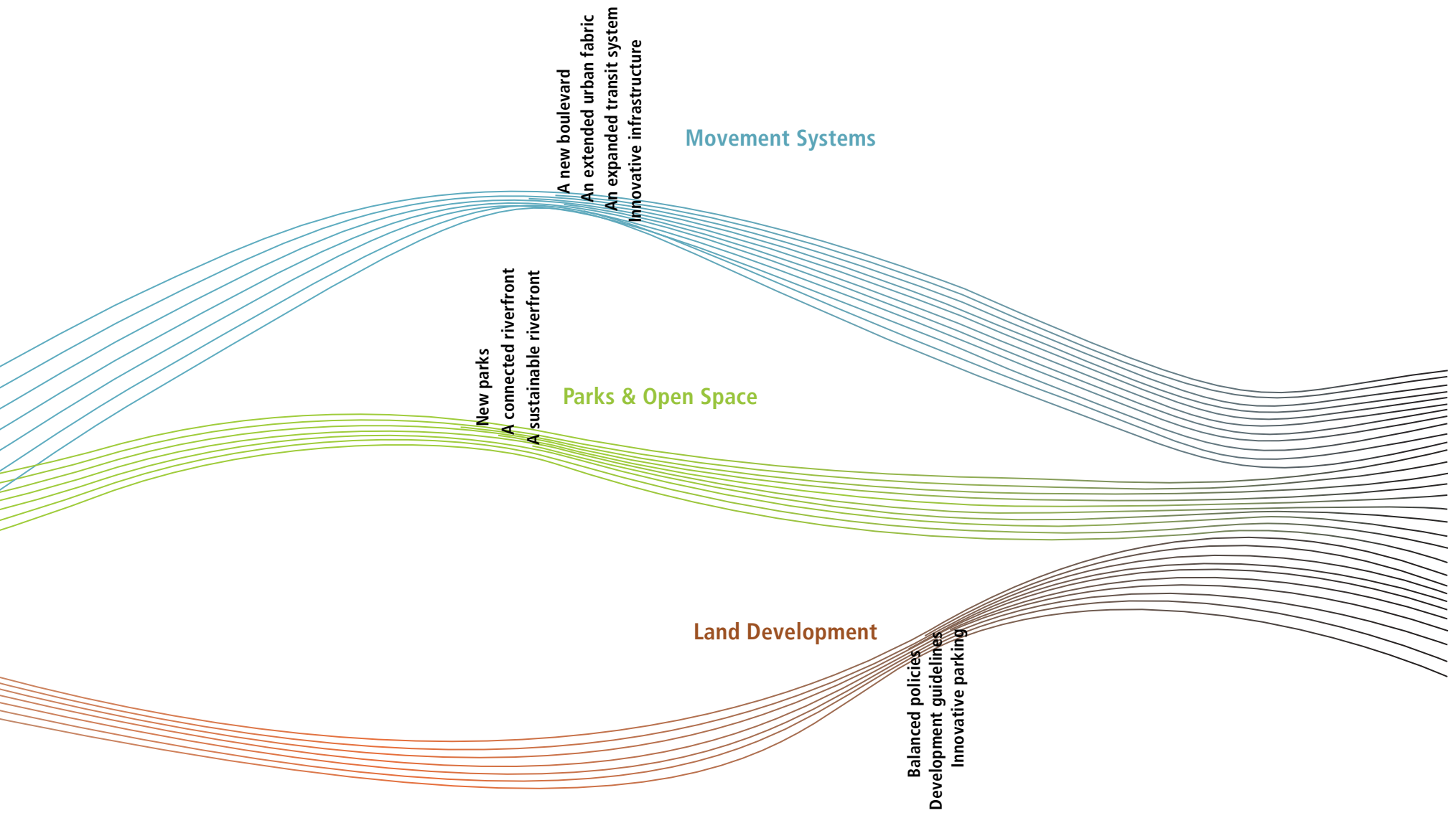


Citizen Values



Planning Principles





→ Three Frameworks

→ Framework Goals

→ A World-Class Riverfront

Below we offer an overview of the three networks, including the goals and recommendations formed during our extensive process of soliciting and integrating citizen voices and the input of local and international experts.

Movement Systems



This page, from left:

Public Transit

A light rail on previous surface in Lyon, France

Street Grid to the Edge

Mixed-use development meets the water's edge in Sweden.

Dive Park

In Den Haag, The Netherlands, a highway diving underground is decked over to become a park.

In order to extend Philadelphia to the river's edge, we will need to create new movement systems that will work together to serve as a template for riverfront growth. New streets will determine the size of development parcels and optimize public riverfront access; they will incorporate public transit for residents and tourists, a recreational trail and a right-of-way dedicated to biking. These movement systems will improve connectivity by increasing route options for all modes of transportation and shifting the focus of the central Delaware from the car to the pedestrian, cyclist and jogger.

Goal: To increase opportunities for public access to the riverfront and to help shape urban development through infrastructure investment and transportation policies that lessen auto congestion in the project area.

Increasing public access and improving transportation options are goals that directly express the concerns shared by thousands of Philadelphia citizens at public forums. These concerns include inadequate public access to the riverfront, the domination of the riverfront landscape by automobiles and a scarcity of transportation connections along the central Delaware.

Parks and Open Space



What makes a riverfront an asset to any city? The celebrated riverfronts of the world are defined by their park spaces, which function as links between major destinations within their cities. These public green spaces at the river's edge improve the health not only of nearby neighborhoods, but also of the city and its surrounding region.

Goals: To improve riverfront life and promote water quality by building a network of attractive, public open spaces. This sustainable system should serve local residents while increasing the area's economic and ecological viability.

The goals of improving the quality of life along the river and the quality of the river itself are responses to concerns that surfaced during the public forums. These concerns include a lack of safe public space along the riverfront, threatened river habitats and inadequate opportunities for river recreation, including boat-related activities.

This page, from left:

Riverfront Connectivity

Portland's South Waterfront provides continuous access and promotes a healthier edge.

Stormwater Park

In Beargrass Creek Preserve, KY, a stormwater runoff park offers refuge for people and urban wildlife alike.

Civic Scale

Millennium Park in Chicago is a civic destination that serves large gatherings and art installations.

Edge Vitality

Civic structures, open space and river recreation bring vitality to the river's edge in Chattanooga, TN.

Land Development



This page, from left:

Mixed-Use edge

Bell Street Pier in Seattle, WA, represents one of many mixed-use development projects along Seattle's waterfront.

Extending the Grid

Pier housing and marinas

Sustainable Design

Chicago's sustainability efforts include constructing green roofs atop its downtown buildings.

Celebrated urban riverfronts offer many types of activities to their visitors; they are not single-use destinations. Thus *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* does not outline a parcel-by-parcel program of land use; instead, it supplies a blueprint for development that, if followed, will turn the central Delaware into a vital extension of the vibrant urban life that already exists to the west of I-95.

Goal: To extend Philadelphia's urban neighborhoods to the river's edge in a way that is mixed-use, transit-oriented and supportive of changing market conditions.

As with the previous two network categories, this goal directly reflects the concerns expressed by citizens at public forums. Their concerns include the following: the ad hoc state of development approvals along the riverfront, the increase in non-waterfront-dependent uses along the river's edge and the apparent lack of concern for both social equity and sustainable design in development proposals.

The following chapters explore the three networks in greater detail and provide research and recommendations to guide Philadelphia toward the creation of an active, vibrant riverfront—a memorable place that will honor and serve the city for generations to come.

Purpose
General Findings
Goals
Early Actions
Envision a New Boulevard
Extend Philadelphia's Urban Fabric
Expand the Transit System
Embrace Innovative Infrastructure

MOVEMENT SYSTEMS



Penn's Landing at Market Street

A city park at the end of Market Street will have clear views of City Hall if I-95 is reconstructed at a lower elevation. A ferry terminal and connections to the city's transit system will make this "sixth square" a truly civic space.



Movement Systems

The central Delaware riverfront is host to a tangle of infrastructure that reflects centuries of development and large-scale projects. I-95 cuts a wide swath through the entire central Delaware, and in most cases it separates residential communities from the river. Sewer outfalls reach the river every few blocks, running directly under the I-95 viaduct where it depresses in Center City and under city streets throughout the project area. Remnants of the city's great railroad infrastructure along Delaware Avenue and Columbus Boulevard include remainder rail lines and rights-of-way. The scale of this infrastructure presents great challenges to the city, but it also presents opportunities to enhance the riverfront in the near term and to set up decision-making that could be transformative for the city in the future.

The central Delaware riverfront is generally dominated by automobiles and is difficult to traverse on foot and bike. This lack of balance is caused by land-use regulations that do not encourage urban forms of development, the tangle of I-95/676 and Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard serving as a high-volume arterial highway. The riverfront is also inadequately served by public transit, and sidewalks at riverfront destinations are often narrow, disconnected and sometimes lacking altogether. To create an active riverfront, the city should aim to balance land-use and transportation policies that support the creation of dense urban form.

Strategic decision-making will be important to achieving a multimodal, dense and walkable riverfront. With development expected to increase in the coming years, phasing will allow for increased car capacity while improving the pedestrian environment on a new boulevard. It is certain that the central Delaware will continue to have traffic congestion—all successful urban areas do—but it should be managed so that a balance exists between modes of transit, with forward-thinking policies and actions reflective of the goals of this vision. Most importantly, in the course of managing growth on the central Delaware, decision-makers should be sure to avoid short-term fixes that preclude long-term gain. One look at I-95 reveals the difficulty of changing large-scale infrastructure decisions once construction is complete.

Purpose

This civic vision offers Philadelphia the opportunity to improve movement systems along the central Delaware riverfront by increasing opportunities for public access to the riverfront and shaping urban development through infrastructure investment and land-use and transportation policies that allow for multiple transportation modes.

General Findings

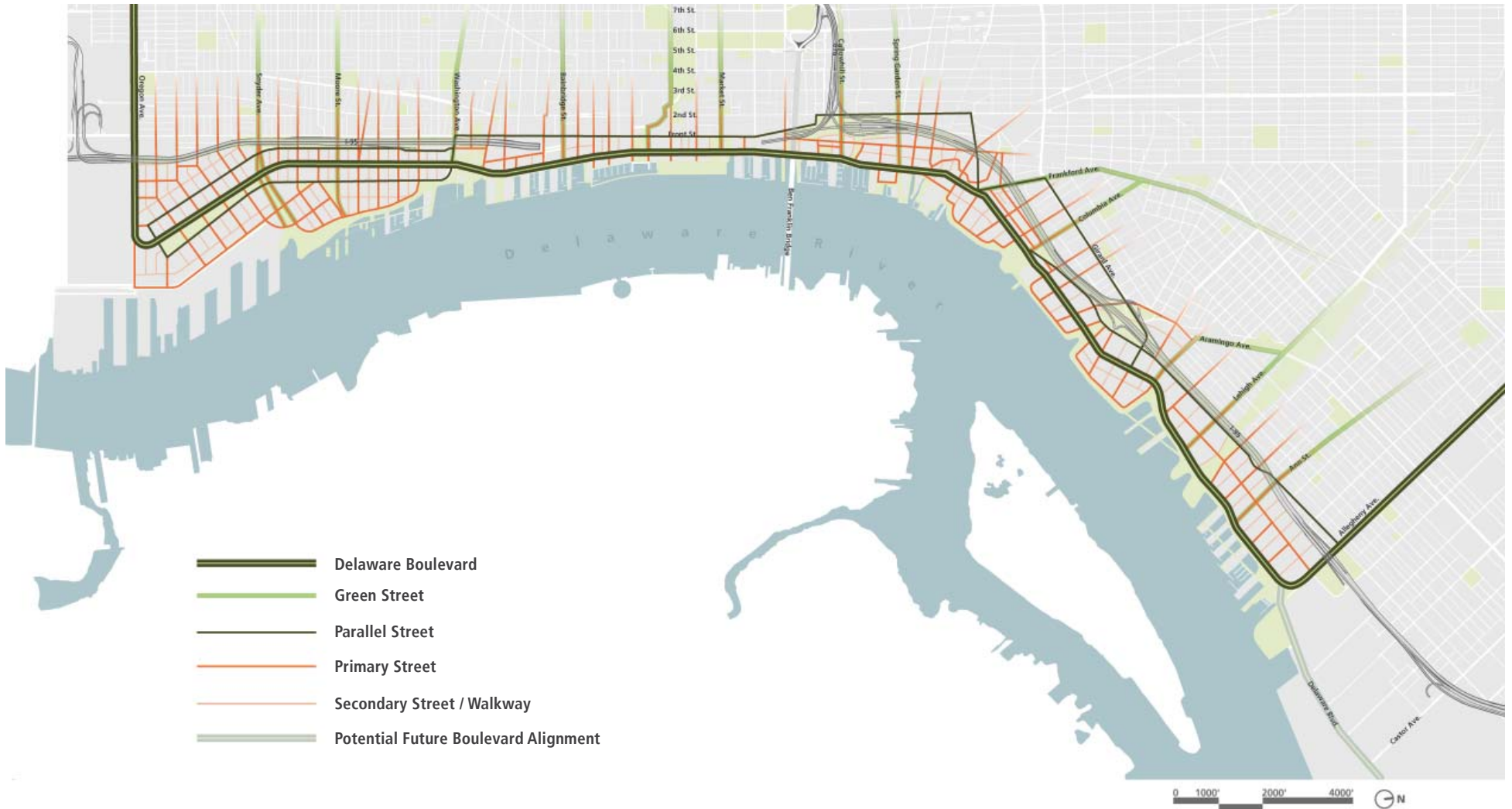
The project team compiled research to gain quantitative and qualitative support for various movement strategies. Research indicates that a well-connected street network with redundant paths, and intersections disperses traffic across a wide area, as it allows vehicles multiple ways to access the same destination. Areas with higher concentrations of intersections are areas with higher potentials for accessibility, which creates better riverfront access and improved traffic conditions.

Effective movement strategies also rely on public transit, including land and water transportation. The Urban Land Institute estimates that the minimum density needed to support light rail is twenty-three residents or 125 employees per acre. These density levels already exist in many places in the project area.

A new boulevard
An extended urban fabric
An expanded transit system
Innovative infrastructure

Illustrative Movement Network

The proposed circulation network calls for the gradual development of a parallel street system that increases connectivity and informs urban-scale development, with a multimodal Delaware Boulevard as its spine.

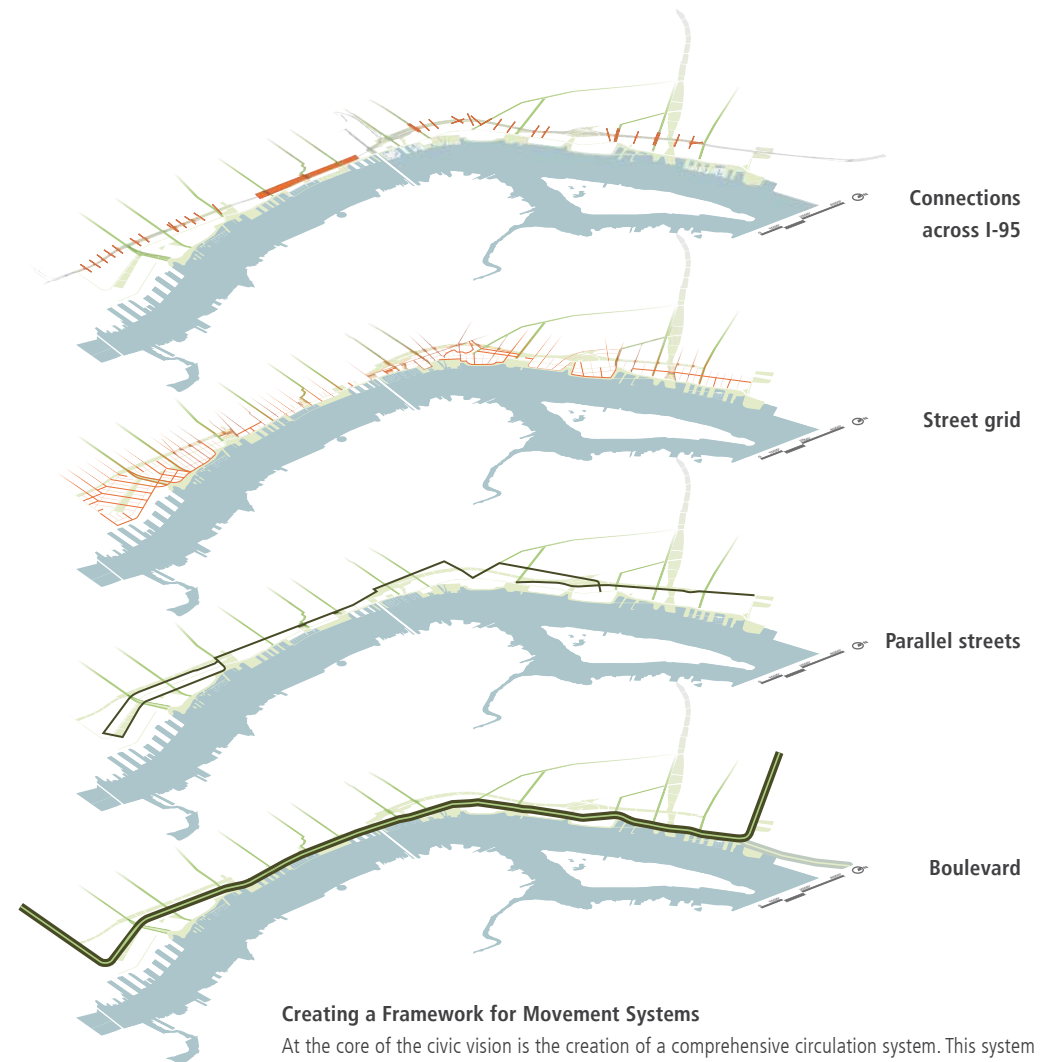


Movement Systems Goals

To create a framework for dense, urban development along the central Delaware riverfront that is pedestrian-scaled with ample public access, the following movement systems are recommended:

1. **Envision a New Boulevard:** Create a new Delaware Boulevard—a pedestrian-oriented, landscaped, multimodal boulevard along the riverfront.
2. **Extend Philadelphia’s Urban Fabric:** Create a street network that extends the city’s existing street grid on the west side of I-95 to the river, including a network of sidewalks and continuous riverfront access.
3. **Expand the Transit System:** Establish policies that minimize the impact of traffic and parking on the environment, support new riverfront activity and increase connections to neighborhoods and existing transit lines.
4. **Embrace Innovative Infrastructure:** Approach the reconstruction of I-95 as a transformative investment that will increase connectivity to the riverfront and stimulate significant economic growth.

Achieving these goals is possible in the long term, but it is important to remember that decisions can and will be made in the short term that will affect the long-term realization of the civic vision (as outlined in the “phasing” diagrams in Chapter Nine). Though we must not preclude long-term gain, these short-term steps can be taken by the city and the state to provide the initial framework of public access and urban development.



Creating a Framework for Movement Systems

At the core of the civic vision is the creation of a comprehensive circulation system. This system includes improved connections across I-95 to link neighborhoods to the riverfront, the addition of a well-connected grid of local and parallel streets to extend Philadelphia’s urban fabric to the riverfront, and a redesigned boulevard to link riverfront neighborhoods.





Delaware Riverfront Trail Early Action Project

The intent of the provisional trail alignment is to create a continuous waterfront trail that can be implemented immediately using available resources. Nodes such as this one at the Ben Franklin Bridge will provide starting points, rental stations and places to rest along the trail.

Early Actions

Movement networks create a framework that determines the form and density of riverfront development. In the short term, community and political leaders can help ensure the long-term stewardship of the goals of the civic vision with these early action projects that increase connectivity and serve to create a new way of thinking about transportation:

- Finalize the proposal by the Center City District for a two-mile, riverfront trail running from Pier 70 to the Ben Franklin Bridge at the river's edge.
- Prepare feasibility studies on the future transportation network to serve the riverfront, including short- and long-term mitigations of the impact of I-95 and the creation of Delaware Boulevard and a supporting street network.
- Plan for a street grid that extends key streets to the riverfront and begin the platting process to adopt these key streets on the official city plan.
- Establish an interim zoning overlay that codifies the goals of the civic vision by mandating minimum public-access requirements to ensure ample points of connection (both physical and visual) between the city and the river.

Goal 1: Envision a New Boulevard

Create a new Delaware Boulevard—a pedestrian-oriented, landscaped, multimodal boulevard along the riverfront.



From left:

Urban Spines

Landscaped urban boulevards with center transit are important spines for cities across the world, from Barcelona, Spain (shown), to New Orleans, LA.

Boulevard Is Better

San Francisco replaced its Embarcadero highway with a waterfront boulevard and a light-rail line, breathing new life into its waterfront.

The transformation of the central Delaware riverfront into a local landmark and a regional destination can be accomplished by the creation of Delaware Boulevard as the spine of all riverfront activity. This boulevard will connect all development at the river's edge and shape the identity of the reinvigorated central Delaware.

The proposed Delaware Boulevard offers multimodal transportation options as a part of a larger network that will emphasize the movement of goods and people and provide signature street frontage and access to high-quality urban development. Buildings with civic character will line the boulevard, creating new destinations east of the I-95 barrier and increasing street activity.

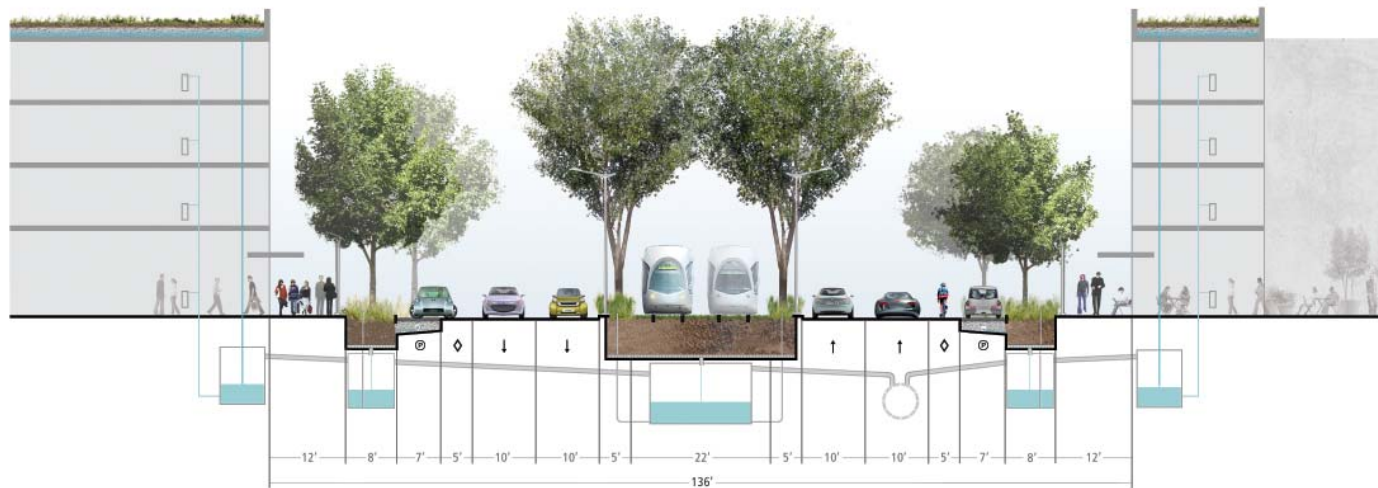
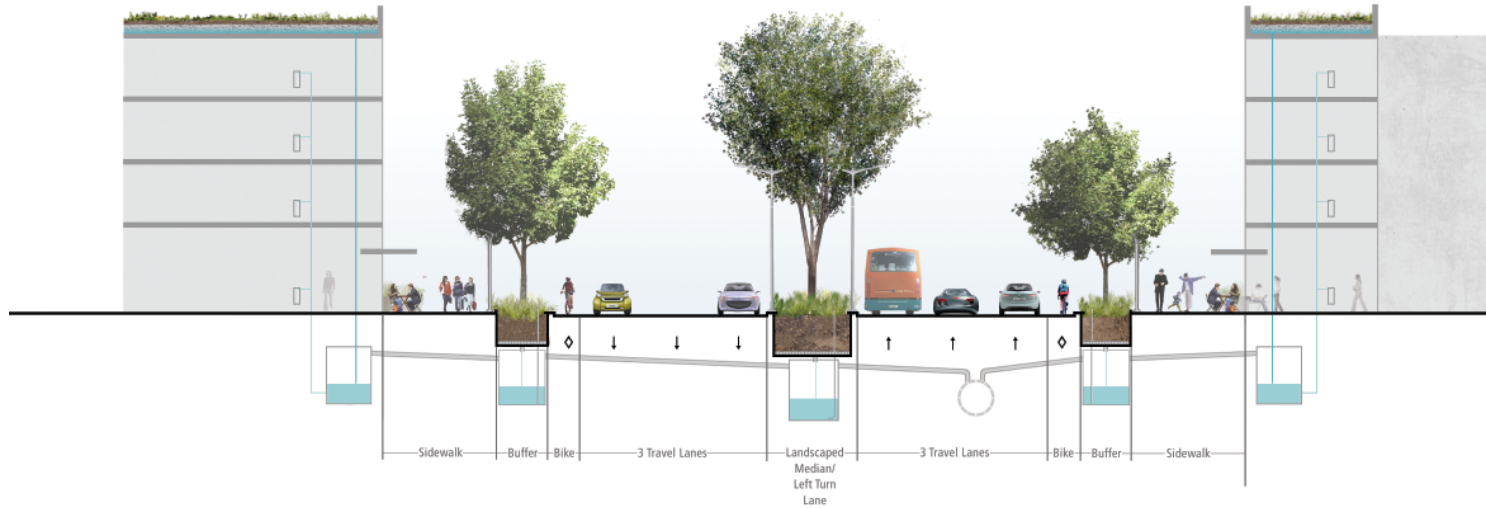
Discussion

The civic vision calls for the proposed Delaware Boulevard to become a part of an integrated transportation network that works in conjunction with secondary and tertiary streets to maximize access and disperse traffic. When combined with a more complete street network, mass transit, increased pedestrian and bicycle access, and transportation and parking policies that manage traffic flow, this plan may reduce the number of traffic lanes necessary on the boulevard.

In the short term, the boulevard will remain at its current size to support existing and proposed development. Traffic will undoubtedly increase in some areas along the central Delaware as development continues, and without a built-out street grid, congestion on the proposed Delaware Boulevard will worsen. But an examination of cities with connected riverfront networks can be instructive. For example, initial traffic counts following the two-week shutdown of Seattle's I-5 in the summer of 2007 showed that highway traffic was "diffused to other routes," causing no significant congestion incidents over the two-week period. Other cities have benefited as well from making auto corridors more pedestrian-friendly. The city of San Francisco, for instance, has replaced a section of its Central Freeway with the tree-lined Octavia Boulevard.

Delaware Boulevard Conversion

The current size of Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard is the result of managing traffic without an integrated network of streets connecting riverfront development to the boulevard and the network to the west. The street sections below illustrate the short-term, six-lane boulevard and the long-term, four-lane boulevard that will be possible when a street network is implemented. The longer-term conversion of the boulevard also accommodates transit in an expanded median.





Extension of the Boulevard to the North

By utilizing and expanding the existing Beach Street right-of-way and adopting new rights-of-way along the river to Lehigh Avenue, a short-term extension of the boulevard can occur to support development of the historic Cramps Shipyard and Port Richmond rail yard areas. This early action anticipates the PennDOT reconstruction of the Girard Avenue I-95 interchange that will connect to proposed boulevard at Schirra Drive.

Early Action

The creation of Delaware Boulevard should begin with a few key steps. Although these early actions may be difficult and will require political strength from the city and the state, the landscape must be altered in the short-term if the long-term vision is to be realized:

- Add key segments of the boulevard beyond existing rights-of-way to the official city plan. The diagram at the left illustrates initial actions that will allow for the extension of Delaware Boulevard to the north:

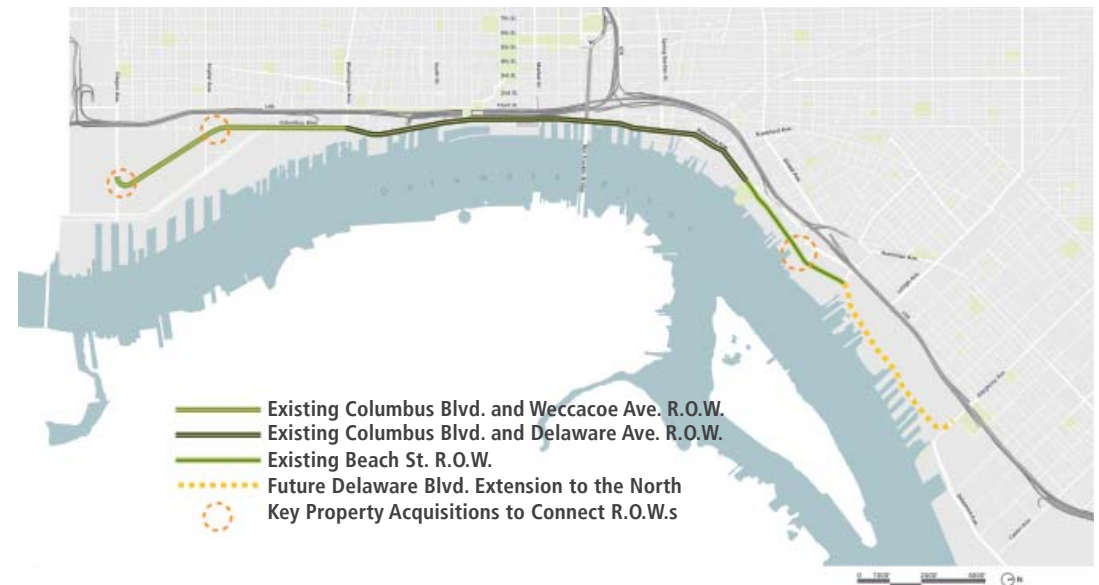
- Establish Delaware Boulevard on the alignment of Beach Street between Marlborough Street and Dyott Street and between Schirra Drive and Cumberland Street.
- Establish the right of way for Delaware Boulevard in alignment with Beach Street between Dyott Street and Schirra Drive, and between Cumberland Street and Lehigh Avenue.
- Create an extension of Lehigh Avenue from Richmond Street to Delaware Boulevard.

Recommendations

The civic vision recommends that the city establish the alignment for Delaware Boulevard using existing rights-of-way and key acquisitions to make connections. The following are short- and long-term recommendations for implementing the boulevard.

Short-Term Recommendations

- In the central-southern portions of the study area, establish the framework for Delaware Boulevard using existing right-of-way, including these:
 - In the central, Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard (Marlborough Street to Washington Avenue).
 - In the south, Columbus Boulevard (Washington Avenue to Oregon Avenue).
- Establish collaboration between city and state agencies to ensure the implementation of Delaware Boulevard.
- Identify where excess rights-of-way exist that can be used for widened sidewalks or additional bicycle lanes.



Delaware Boulevard Rights-of-Way (R.O.W)

More than three quarters of the rights-of-way necessary for implementing a new boulevard exists as current streets.

Long-Term Recommendations

- In the long term, make Delaware Boulevard two traffic lanes in each direction for most of the project area.
 - Keeping a two-way street along the riverfront will increase accessibility and visibility, supporting retail development.
 - Design and construct Delaware Boulevard for a desired operating speed of 25 to 30 miles per hour to promote pedestrian activity.
 - Provide a continuous landscaped median along its center that can accommodate future transit service.
 - Provide landscape treatments that can help with stormwater management along the boulevard.
 - Provide dedicated bicycle lanes on both sides of the boulevard and a multi-use riverfront trail to accommodate both recreational and commuter cyclists. The proposed trail is described further in Chapter Six, "Parks and Open Space."
 - Provide sidewalks of 10 to 24 feet wide on both sides of Delaware Boulevard to allow ample space for pedestrians. Where appropriate, the widened sidewalk will take the place of an on-street parking lane.
- From Lehigh Avenue to Allegheny Avenue, build the boulevard closer to the river's edge to maximize the redevelopment potential of the Port Richmond rail yards and to connect to the Delaware Avenue extension that is being developed along the north Delaware by the Philadelphia Department of Streets.
 - In the south, as the area redevelops, reconstruct the boulevard further inland to allow for separate cartways for passenger cars and trucks needing access to the working port.
 - Connect Delaware Boulevard westward into the city at key arterials, such as Allegheny Avenue in the north and Oregon Avenue in the south.

Boulevard at Festival Pier

As the civic vision is implemented and other spaces are created for large events, Penn's Landing Corporation's Festival Pier site can support mixed-use development, anchored at Spring Garden Street by a new park connecting to the water and a vibrant street life along Delaware Boulevard.

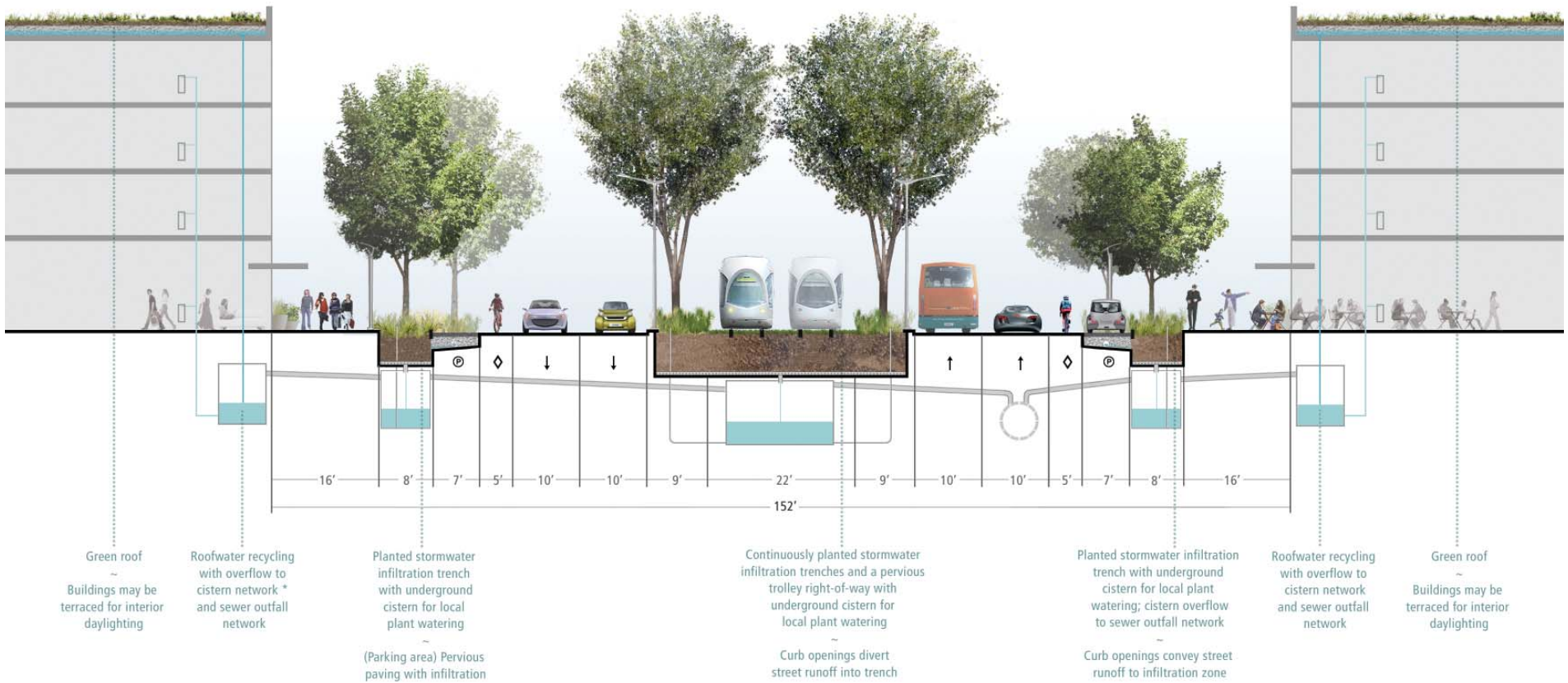


Existing conditions



Future 152-foot Boulevard

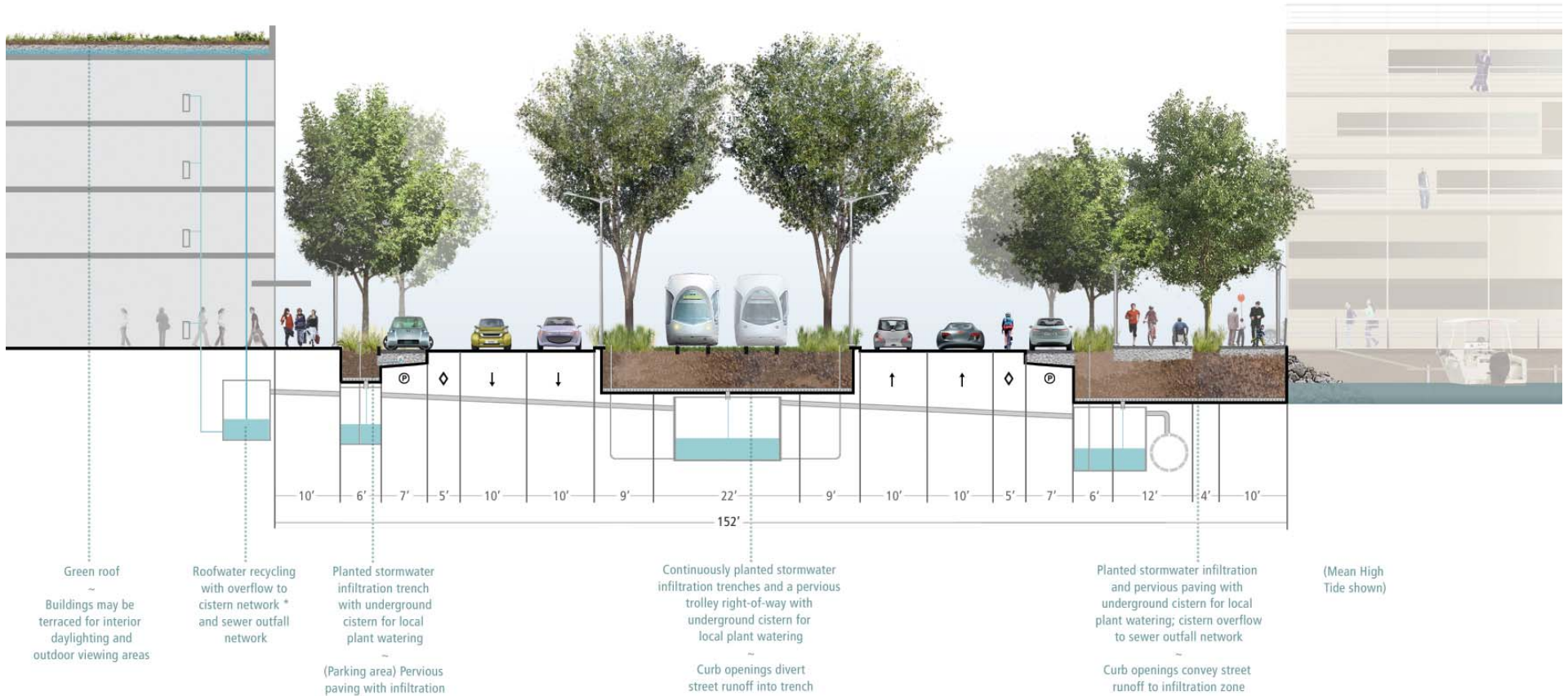
The future boulevard between Tasker Avenue and Bainbridge Street has a right-of-way of 152 feet, which accommodates a balance of pedestrian areas, transit, parking, bicycle lanes and a four-lane roadway with needed turn lanes for connections to I-95. With the street network in place, a six-lane boulevard roadway can be reduced to four lanes.





Future 152-foot Boulevard at River

The future 152-foot boulevard between Catherine and South Streets accommodates the riverfront trail along the river's bulkhead, with pier development on the river.



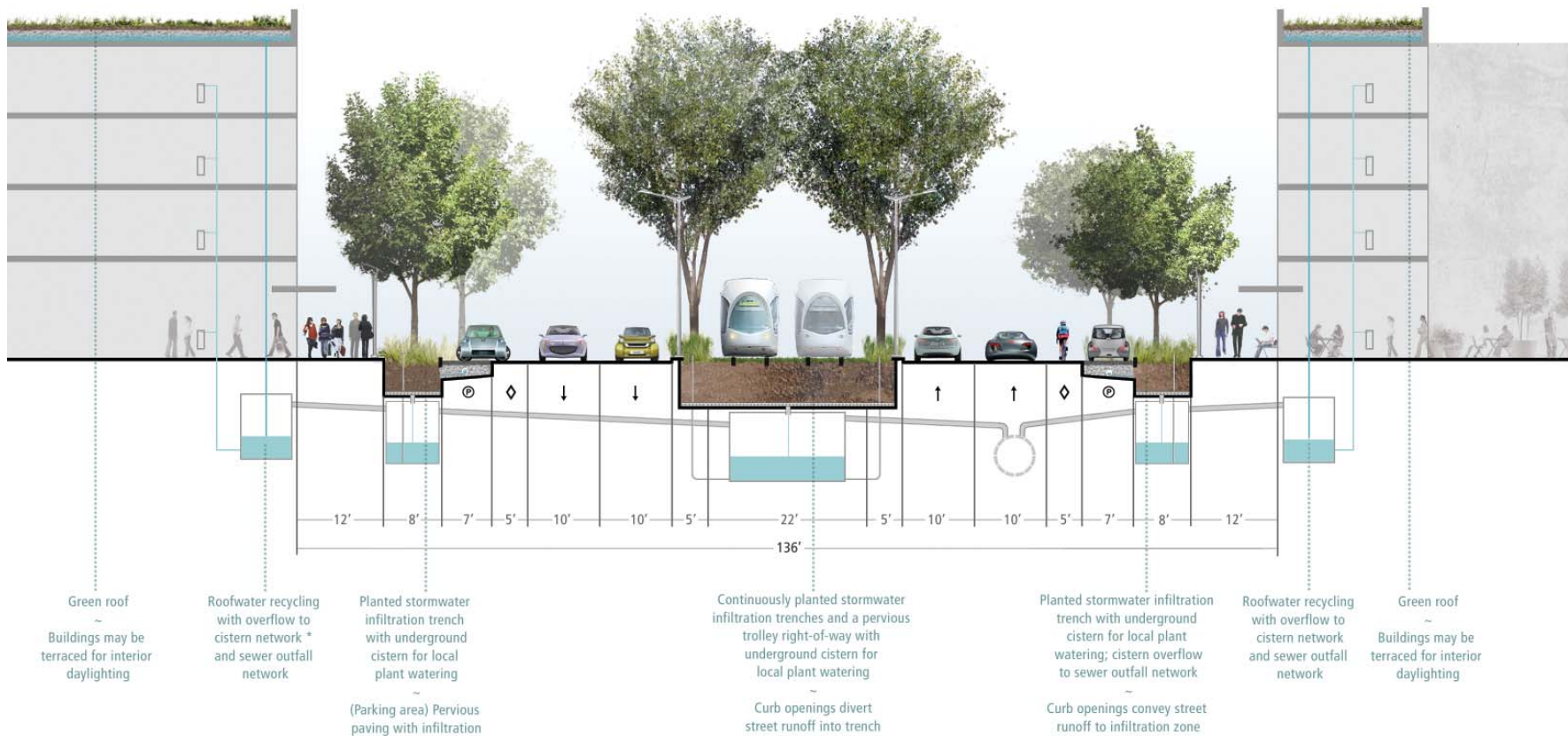
*Cistern placement and sizing for diagrammatic purposes only





Future 136-foot Boulevard

In areas where an integrated street network is possible, a 136-foot boulevard can accommodate all modes of transportation and an ample pedestrian realm.



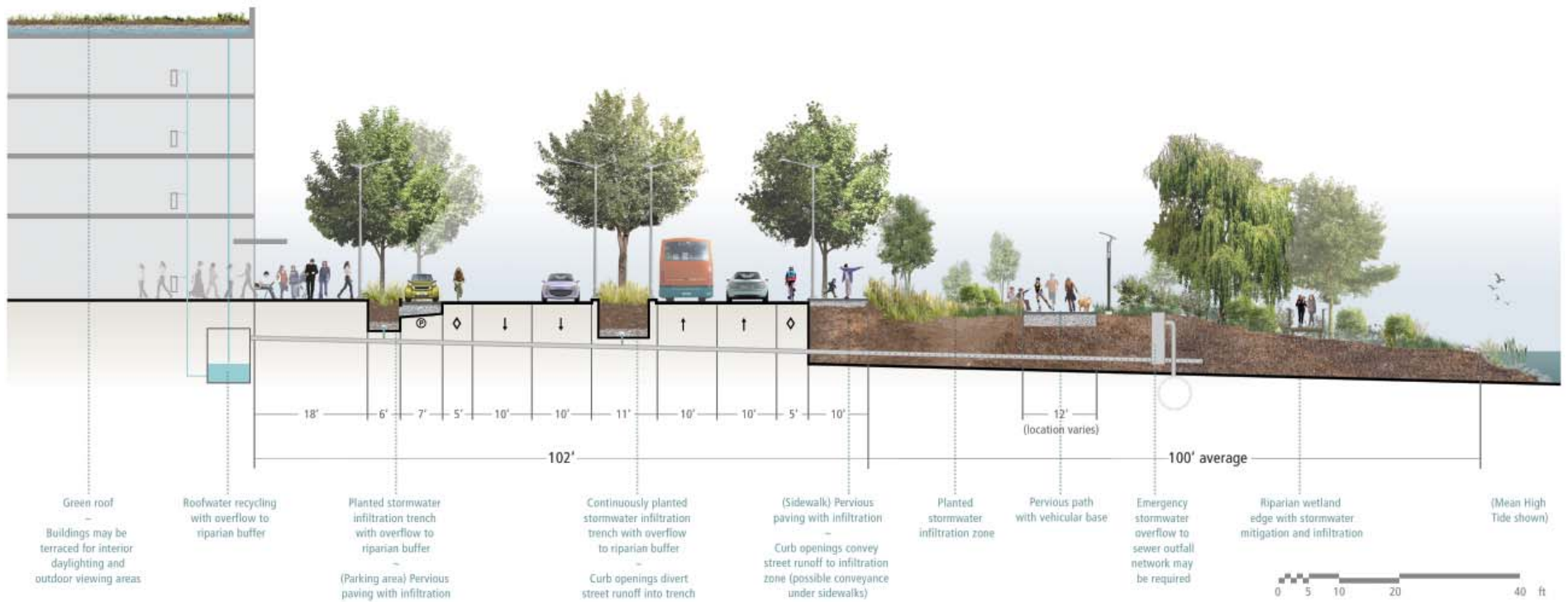
*Cistern placement and sizing for diagrammatic purposes only





Future 102-foot Boulevard with 100-foot Riparian Buffer

In the area north of Cumberland Street, the Conrail property at the Port Richmond rail yards provides an opportunity for a continuous riverfront boulevard with a riparian edge. This linear park along a narrower boulevard can add value to mixed-use development as well as provide ecological benefits, including stormwater management and wildlife habitat creation, at a critical point along the river.



A Vision of Allegheny Avenue

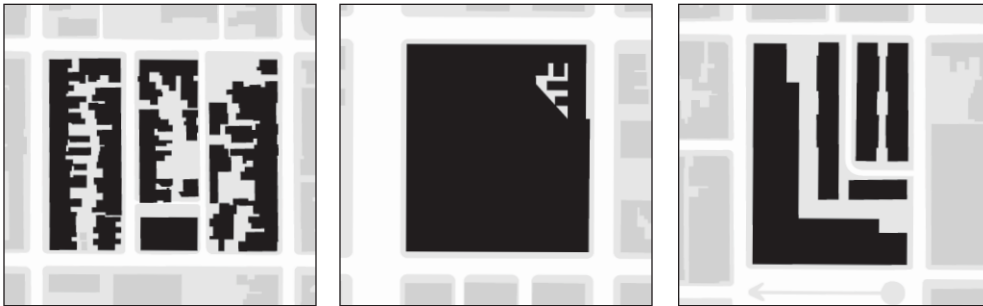
This civic vision recommends the long-term extension of Delaware Boulevard north along the Conrail property, connecting to Allegheny Avenue and an expanded Pulaski Park. This vision incorporates the Port Richmond neighborhood plan for transforming Allegheny Avenue to a “green,” pedestrian-friendly street that would connect its community parks to Pulaski Park at the river.





Goal 2: Extend Philadelphia's Urban Fabric

Create a street network that extends the city's existing street grid on the west side of I-95 to the river, including a network of sidewalks and continuous riverfront access.



Penn's Legacy of a Flexible Grid

As with William Penn's plan, the street network proposed by this civic vision forms urban blocks that can be adapted to serve different land uses. The figure-ground diagrams above show how mixes of uses have been adapted to the street grid over the past 300 years. The pattern of development shows mixed-use, fine-grain footprints on subdivided blocks from the colonial era, integration of industrial uses and worker housing from the 19th and early 20th centuries and current mixed-use redevelopment that accommodates parking structures, retail frontages and a mix of low- and mid-rise housing.

From left:

Colonial-era block

A subdivided block, north of Pine Street and west of 5th Street

Industrial-era block

Block north of Washington Avenue and west of 23rd Street

Modern-era block

Between South and Lombard Street, west of 2nd Street

A new street grid is essential for the creation of an integrated, multimodal transportation network. The street grid imagined in this civic vision is one logical continuation of the existing Philadelphia grid, which we extend to the river in order to increase connectivity, create continuous public access to the river and relieve traffic congestion.

Discussion

There are many advantages to applying the Philadelphia-scale street network to the riverfront. The movement network shown on page 78 would add 40 percent more vehicular capacity, offer over three times more east-west neighborhood connections to the river, and add numerous additional north-south streets. This type of network can also increase route choice for cars, bikes and pedestrians, as well as boasting mass-transit use, as more citizens use transit if walking in an area is easy and interesting. A smaller block size maximizes visibility

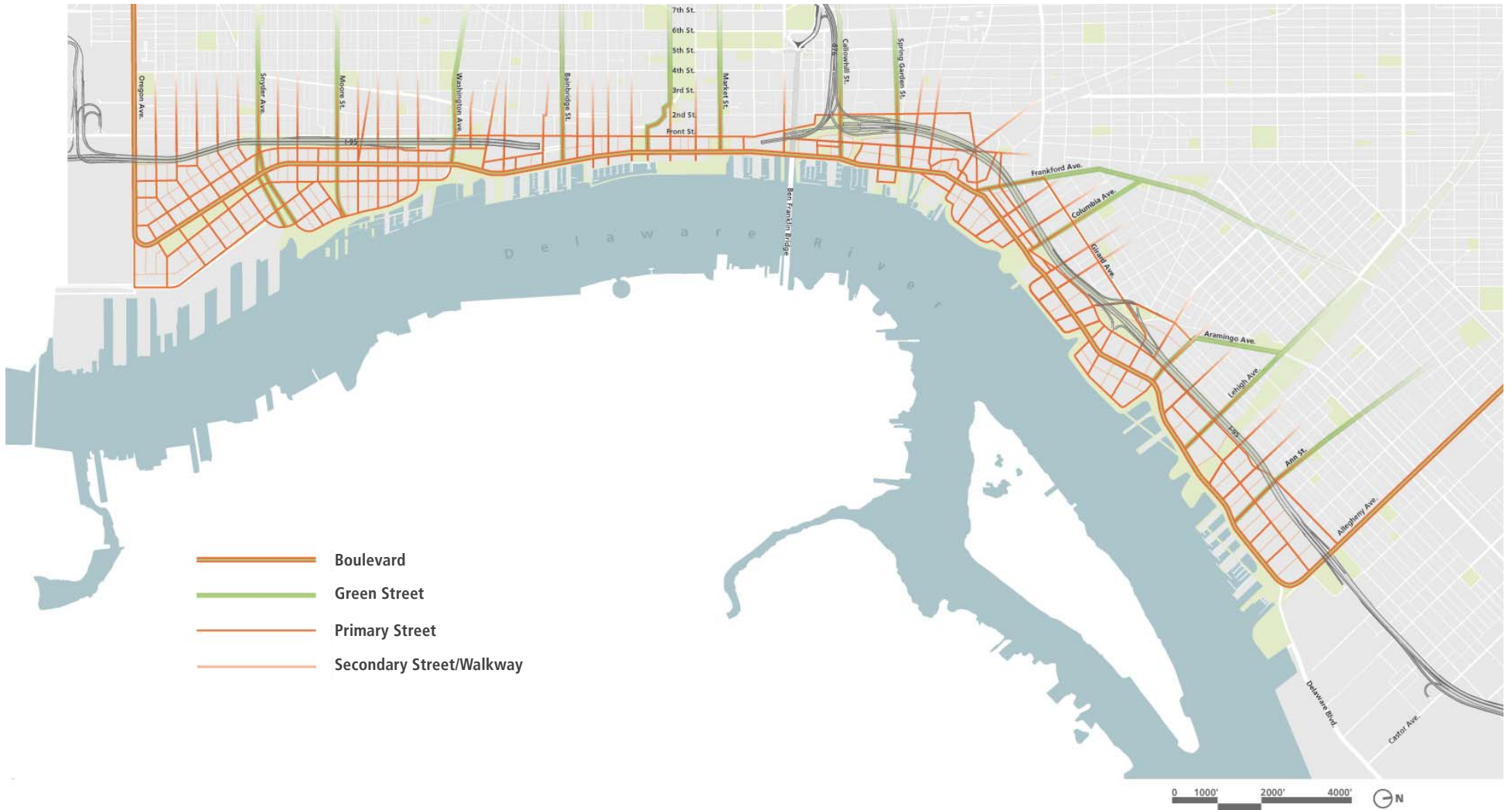
and access, which benefits developers and businesses. In 2003, Milwaukee introduced a new street grid, and it has since seen over \$600 million in nearby development.

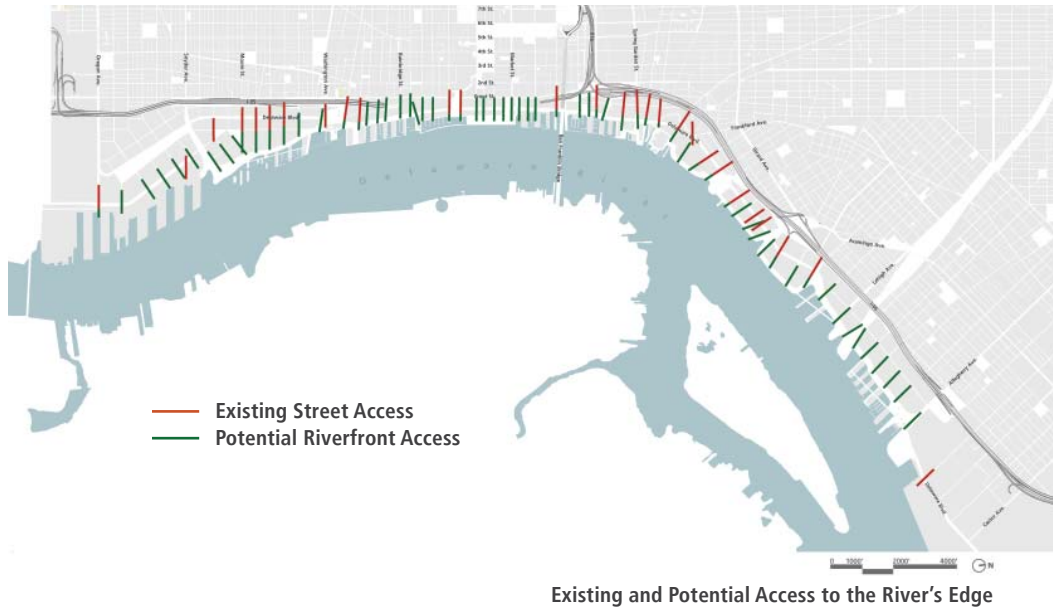
There are also public health and ecological benefits to a well-designed street grid. A 2003 Bay Area survey found that adding 25 percent more intersections to an area made people 45 percent more likely to walk. Center City Philadelphia exhibits this finding by leading the nation in residents who walk to work. Though more streets will increase the amount of impervious pavement, well-landscaped streets can mitigate negative effects. The civic vision identifies streets with generous rights-of-way as ideal green streets. The benefits of green streets go beyond aesthetics: a UC Davis study shows that New York City street trees are collectively worth \$122 million in annual energy savings, air-quality protection, stormwater-runoff treatment and real-estate values.

The civic vision also identifies the need for smaller, secondary streets that could be service routes or pedestrian walkways. It should be noted that the grid depicted in the vision plan is just one possible way for the city to adhere to the civic principle of connecting with the river. The sample plan on page 4 outlines the essential connector streets, cross streets and green corridors. Together with new zoning guidelines, these will ensure view corridors and human-scaled pedestrian access from the city to the river. These streets can be added to the official city plan by city government through a street-platting process (see "Spotlight" on page 96 for more detail).

Illustrative Street Hierarchies

The vision plan identifies streets with generous rights-of-way as ideal green streets. The plan also identifies the need for smaller, service-style streets that serve primarily as tertiary routes or pedestrian walkways.





SPOTLIGHT: STREET PLATTING

The city's legal authority to plat, or draw, streets by adding them to the official city plan is crucial to this vision's recommendation to develop an integrated road network that extends the city to the river's edge. Changing the city plan is a process that requires approvals by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, the Board of Surveyors and Regulators, the City Solicitor's Office, City Council and the Mayor's Office. Public hearings must occur before a plan change can be formally adopted, so that citizens and city agencies can respond to proposed changes.

New streets can be added to the city plan even if the current land configuration does not provide appropriate space for them. If these proposed streets receive all of the necessary approvals, they will be drawn on the city plan. A building permit will not be issued for any development encroaching on these new streets unless the landowner agrees not to seek compensation for the removal of the improvements should the city legally open the street. Merely drawing the streets on the city plan does not create an obligation on the part of an owner to create a street or a financial or ownership responsibility for the city. The street is only created when development occurs, and a financial responsibility is only created when the city legally opens the street. The process of legally opening a street is separate and distinct from the process of platting streets on the city plan. Compensation to land owners, made when a street is legally opened, does not include the value of any improvements added to a property after a street is drawn on the city plan.

Early Actions

Given the pattern of private land ownership in the study area, implementing a new street grid, sidewalks and greenway will be a long-term process. However, several important steps toward building the street network can begin shortly.

- Plan and adopt the key streets identified in this section and in Chapter Nine on the official city plan. These streets will form the initial development framework that, supported by an interim zoning overlay, will begin to define the scale and character of the central Delaware riverfront.
- Begin mapping the framework grid and meeting with the appropriate stakeholders, including the city, the state, the development community and civic leaders.
- Utilize existing rights-of-way in establishing improved roadway networks. For example, make the service road to the east of the WalMart site at Pier 70 into the southern stretch of River Road.
- Finalize the proposed two-mile, riverfront trail running from Pier 70 to the Benjamin Franklin Bridge at the river's edge. (This movement system is addressed in greater detail in Chapter Six).



- Key Street on Existing Right-of-Way
- Key Street on New Right-of-Way
- Framework Grid
- Riverfront Trail

Recommendations

The civic vision's connected network of streets, sidewalks and the continuous riverfront greenway helps increase auto and pedestrian connectivity, improve public access to the river, improve traffic capacity and, ultimately, form urban blocks that can be adopted to serve different uses as land economics change over time. The following recommendations are offered as ways to implement this crucial aspect of the civic vision. (More detailed recommendations can be found in Chapter Nine.)

Short-Term Recommendations

- Plan for a street grid with the city government that extends key streets and begins the platting process for the following streets across the project area:
 - Pier 70 Blvd. from Columbus Blvd. to the river.
 - River Rd., establish between Tasker St. and Pier 70 Blvd. and from Reed St. to Washington Ave.
 - Washington Ave., extend and realign from I-95 to the river.
 - New streets created at Penn's Landing south of Dock St. Beach St. wider between Columbia Ave. and Susquehanna Ave.
- Accommodate all modes of travel on appropriate city streets. Form a partnership with the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Task Force to finalize the "Complete Streets" policy, which provides adequate right-of-way for walking, bicycling and public transportation. This could include releasing a Request for Proposal for a bike sharing program.

- Prohibit curb cuts as entrances to garages or parking lots on through streets to the river so as to enhance the pedestrian experience. This entrance could be accommodated on smaller, tertiary streets.
- Work with property owners to ensure that proposed developments can be integrated into the new grid. This includes Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), which is considering the Conrail rail yards as a site for industrial growth, as well as big-box structures at the southern end of the project area, which will eventually become obsolete.

Long-Term Recommendations

- With the boulevard as the major spine of the grid, complete a network of two-lane secondary streets. This will include a hierarchy of streets similar to that of Center City, as well as a River Road. Many of these streets could be developed in combination with privately funded development projects.
- Design and landscape east-west "green streets" to provide attractive links from the neighborhoods to the river and stormwater-management benefits.
- Identify key roads that provide a break in the grid to create visual interest and variety—for example, those that suggest the character of creeks that once fed the Delaware (such as Cohocksink Creek).
- Complete an urban mobility study similar to the one conducted in Seattle (see "Spotlight" on page 109) that finds ways to boost local street connectivity and the functioning of regional thoroughfares.

Grid Orientation

The street and block orientation in the north and south will shift their orientation to be more perpendicular to the river's edge. The offset from the cardinal directions provides environmental benefits for development –boosting air flow, winter solar gain and summer shading. These factors will reduce energy costs. The illustrated grid is color-coded to indicate optimal orientations.



**Port Richmond Rail Yards and Lehigh Viaduct**

This civic vision recommends that the City Planning Commission and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) work together to ensure that sites considered for industrial growth can be integrated into the new grid. This perspective view of the Port Richmond rail yard site owned by Conrail shows a twenty-first century industrial business campus.

Washington Avenue

Washington Avenue can be redesigned to create a gateway to the riverfront and to reestablish this corridor as an important east-west connection between the river and South Philadelphia's neighborhoods. The realignment of the street at the foot of Washington creates a view corridor that opens up to the water's edge at a new green space, creating a community amenity.



Existing conditions



Goal 3: Expand the Transit System

Establish policies that minimize the impact of traffic and parking on the environment, support new riverfront activity and increase connections to neighborhoods and existing transit lines.



SEPTA Route 15 Trolley

Besides SEPTA buses, the only transit along the central riverfront is this trolley, which runs parallel to the Port Richmond rail yards before moving away from the riverfront.

Water Taxi

The Aquabus connects Vancouver, Canada's downtown to nearby Granville Island every five minutes.

D.C. Circulator

Early in development, the city should designate a cartway in the center of Delaware Boulevard for interim transit such as Bus Rapid Transit, with distinguishable features to attract ridership, as used for the D.C. Circulator loop.



Mass transit is a critical part of a transportation strategy that aims to mitigate the auto-dominated nature of the central Delaware riverfront. This civic vision calls for expanded land and waterborne public transportation. Elements would include a transit rail line that would run down the center of Delaware Boulevard throughout the project area (once density and activity levels can sustain it), as well as a system of water taxis and ferries running north-south along the river and east-west to New Jersey.

Like Philadelphia's street grid, the city's regional transit network should be extended to the river's edge in order to encourage and support higher levels of development density and activity on the riverfront.

Discussion

Currently, Philadelphia's riverfront is hard to reach by public transit. While the seven-mile corridor of the central Delaware riverfront is close to the Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) line and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority's (SEPTA) Market-Frankford line, the central Delaware could be far better connected through a regional transportation network.

To support the amount of development anticipated for the riverfront, the city and regional transit authorities should develop a comprehensive transit plan for the region, a plan that integrates the PATCO and SEPTA systems via a dedicated riverfront rail line. Coordination with the Delaware River Port Authority (which runs PATCO) and SEPTA to determine the best transit technology for the corridor is critical. One possible technology is light rail, which costs less to build and operate per service mile than a heavy-rail subway. It is also a faster, more sustainable and more attractive option than traditional buses.

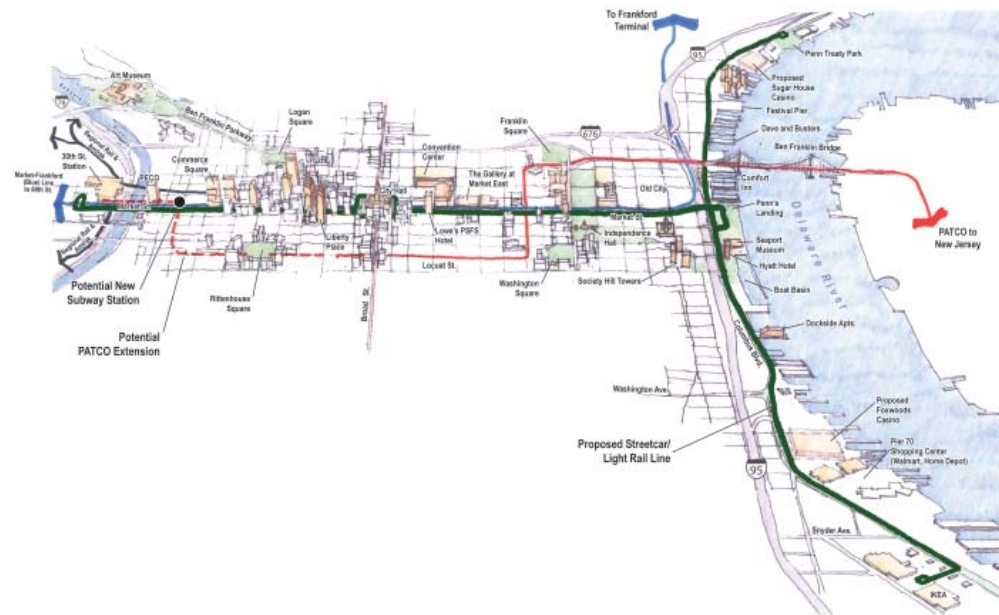
The possibility of sharing the existing freight rail line in the center of existing Columbus Boulevard with a new passenger rail service should be explored. Many passenger systems throughout the United States share the rail with freight uses (including Baltimore, San Diego, Seattle and Camden). Utilizing light rail presents opportunities for effective partnerships with local rail companies. A dedicated transit right-of-way

will be necessary along the central Delaware to ensure reliability and ridership, especially as development pressures persist. Light rail and streetcar systems have played key roles in revitalizing waterfronts in areas as diverse as Toronto, Ontario; Portland, Oregon; and Baltimore, Maryland. Local leaders have already shown that they understand the economic, social and environmental benefits of an integrated transit system by authorizing DRPA to conduct a \$2.1 million study on improving transit connections between South Jersey and Philadelphia. The Center City District has also recommended extending trolley access along Market Street from the Delaware River to Thirtieth Street Station. The findings of these studies must be evaluated in conjunction with the recommendations of this civic vision.

To be successful, a transportation network needs to offer variety. In Philadelphia, the RiverLink Ferry at Penn’s Landing serves an important but underutilized function as a local water taxi service, which this vision recommends expanding. Ferries and water taxis have succeeded in cities as small as Erie, Pennsylvania, and as large as New York City. The addition of smaller, more attractive and more frequent water taxis along the Delaware River would increase options for the region’s transit network.

SPOTLIGHT: CONNECTIONS TO CAMDEN

The redeveloped Camden riverfront features multiple attractions, including an aquarium, a minor-league baseball stadium, a large concert venue and a riverfront esplanade. To create an active riverfront, connectivity between the two riverfronts should be increased. The civic vision proposes investigating the potential to open the former trolley stop under the Ben Franklin Bridge to connect with PATCO, as well as launching a new fleet of water taxis. Potential stops include destinations along Camden’s riverfront, Petty’s Island—an important open-space development opportunity on the Delaware River—and the proposed casinos. Together, improved land transit and water taxis will increase access between the two riverfronts.



Center City District Trolley Concept

Early Actions

Developing a complete transit system is a long-term endeavor. However, important short-term applications can be implemented before the needed build-out population and employment densities are established.

- Coordinate with DRPA and SEPTA to ensure that the recommendations in this vision are incorporated into their riverfront-transit studies, including exploring the option of opening the Ben Franklin Bridge trolley stop to PATCO trains.
- Study opportunities for connections between the central Delaware riverfront's proposed transit additions and the existing transit lines beyond Penn's Landing. Focus sites could include SEPTA's Market-Frankford El at Spring Garden Street and the proposed Route 23 trolley at the Sports Complex.
- Begin discussions with representatives of CSX and the Philadelphia Belt Line Railroad about the possibility of sharing the line with passenger service.

Recommendations

Public transit is key to ensuring that the civic vision can be successful. Different forms of transit have specific demands (land use, density, urban design) that must be met to ensure their success, both in ridership and land use benefits. The following recommendations outline steps that will bring Philadelphia closer to having the high quality riverfront its citizens desire.

Short-Term Recommendations

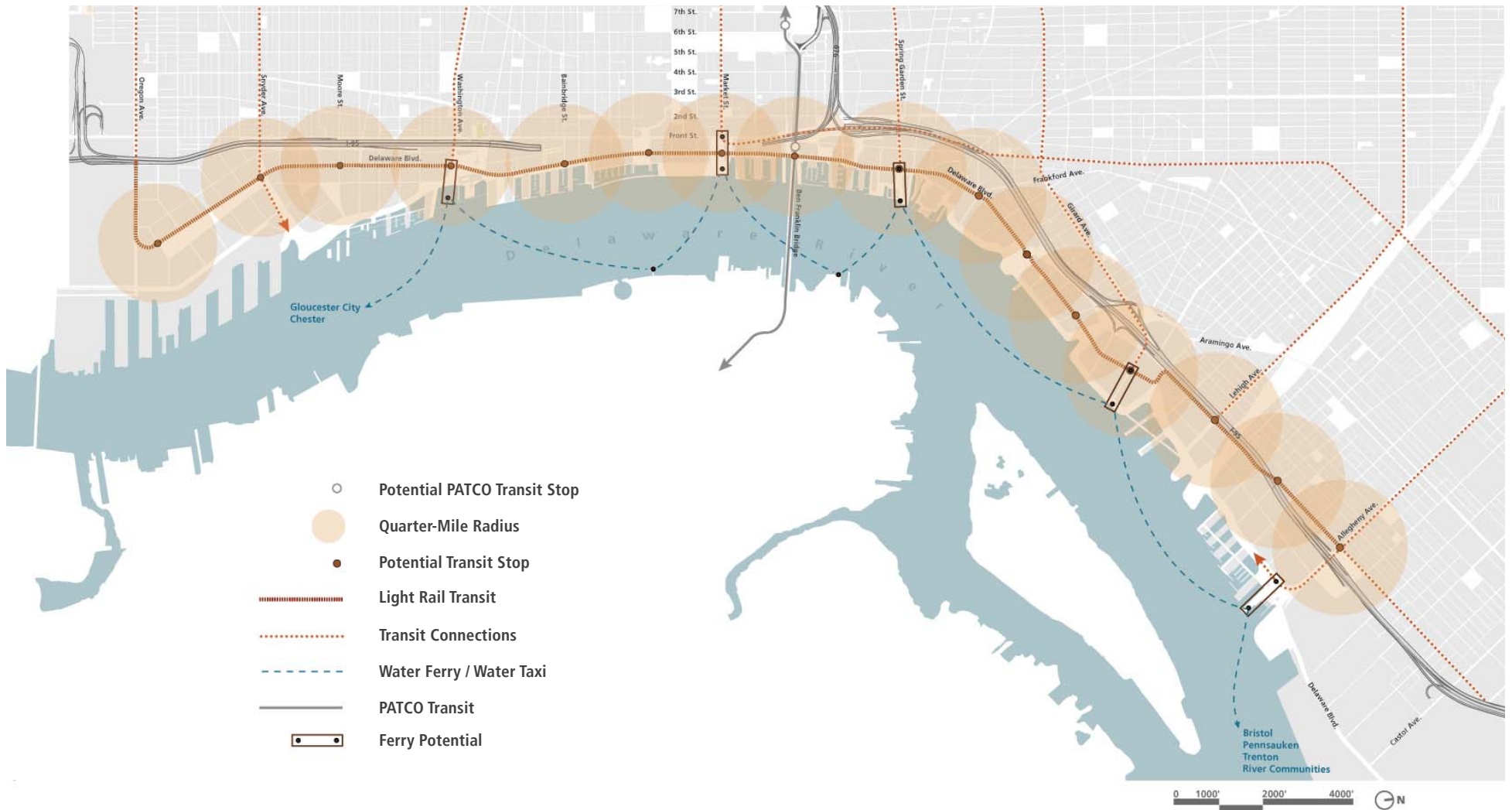
- Create phases for the implementation of this transit plan. In the initial stages, the city could utilize buses that run in mixed traffic. Then, once ridership can support it, the city could designate a cartway on Delaware Boulevard for interim transit, such as Bus Rapid Transit.
- Coordinate a study by DRPA and SEPTA to develop an implementation plan for mass transit on the riverfront. The study should explore possible connections to the Sports Complex, the Philadelphia Navy Yard, and existing and future subway stations along Broad Street.
- Establish a system of water taxis and ferries to support new riverfront activity and provide connections north-south along the river and east-west to Camden.

Long-Term Recommendations

- Build a rail transit line with dedicated rights-of-way to serve riverfront communities, and connect it with existing transit lines.
- Utilize the existing rail right-of-way along a portion of Columbus Boulevard and a portion of Weccacoe Avenue for transit.
- Use modern, sustainable technologies for vehicle and track design.
- Develop a transfer station at Penn's Landing. This location would offer connections to the Market Street surface trolley envisioned by the Center City District as well as to water taxis and ferries.
- Provide regional connections to PATCO by reopening the Franklin Square station, and investigate the feasibility of using the station located in the western abutment of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.

Mass-Transportation Networks

This map illustrates abundant opportunities for the creation of a complete transportation network that provides connections along the length of the Delaware River and east to New Jersey. This civic vision recommends that transit stops be located every quarter mile to provide service to each neighborhood along the riverfront.



Market Street Ferry Station

If a rail stop is combined with a signature ferry terminal, a free interchange at Penn's Landing could become Philadelphia's next great transit portal. A short third rail can be built at Penn's Landing to create a dual gauge track that would serve both the riverfront cars (standard gauge) and SEPTA cars (broad gauge).



Existing conditions

Integrated Transit Design

With transit integrated into the boulevard design, the seven miles along the central Delaware will offer improved connections to PATCO, the Market-Frankford line and the RiverLink ferry. The city will realize important economic, social and environmental benefits when an improved transit system is located along Delaware Boulevard.



Existing conditions



Goal 4: Embrace Innovative Infrastructure

Explore the reconstruction of I-95 in Center City as a transformative investment with that will increase connectivity to the riverfront and stimulate significant economic growth.



I-95 is elevated in the northern and southern sections of the project area and below grade in the central section due to the significant community concerns that delayed the completion of the road until 1980. Though original plans called for six blocks of the Center City highway to be covered, only two were constructed in this manner.

I-95 runs north and south through the central Delaware project area. It blocks movement from the city to the river, allowing for only two streets to cross to the riverfront at grade without the viaduct overhead: Spruce Street and Dock Street. In the near term, the creation of a multimodal boulevard, greater transit options, progressive urban land-use policy and quality development will lessen the barrier effect by invigorating the riverfront with residents and visitors. While ideas to bridge the divide created by I-95 at Center City have circulated for many years, the reimagining of I-95 is a collaborative effort that the city should undertake with state and federal partners to realize the central Delaware's full potential. The success of the central Delaware riverfront should not be contingent upon I-95 being buried. As noted in this vision, in

coming years the city and state will have opportunities to recreate Penn's Landing as a green space, provide greater development opportunities on surrounding parcels and enhance the riverfront north and south of Center City. And, the planned rebuilding of the entire Philadelphia segment of this federally funded highway in the coming years presents the city with an opportunity to transform the way Center City meets the riverfront. The section of I-95 that runs along the central Delaware riverfront project area will be reconstructed between 2008 and 2040.

Reconfiguring I-95 to connect Center City with the river would be a major project. Determination of economic feasibility is years away, but the city and state should begin the process of exploring options today to ensure that this type of transformative infrastructure improvement is not precluded.

Discussion

Construction of I-95 began in 1959, a time when abundant federal dollars financed highway construction. The highway design of that era featured functional, elevated structures located in commercial sections of downtowns and along industrial waterfronts. In today's Philadelphia, almost 200,000 cars per day move north and south on I-95 each day, travelling within Philadelphia and between neighboring states.

I-95 Reconstruction Options

The vision plan’s consultant team worked with PennDOT and city agencies to generate possible reconstruction options for further study when the Center City section of I-95 is in need of replacement, which will occur in the next twenty-five years. Options range from capping the highway in place, depressing the highway further, capping from Bainbridge to Race Streets and realigning I-95 under Delaware Boulevard.

- New Development
- New Open Space
- I-95 Alignment Below Grade



Option 1



Option 2



Option 3

SPOTLIGHT: SEATTLE

As its regional population increases, Seattle is developing a comprehensive traffic and transportation policy that addresses connectivity issues within the city. Its innovative traffic control program has constructed hundreds of speed humps, curb-bulbs and traffic circles and has helped community groups work with police to monitor local traffic. Seattle is also exploring alternatives to the Alaskan Way Viaduct, its double-decker highway that runs along its waterfront, in its Urban Mobility Plan. Its City Council charged the Seattle Department of Transportation to develop an alternative to its proposed new waterfront highway: new surface streets and increased public transit. Though eliminating I-95 altogether is not a viable option for Philadelphia, Seattle’s initiatives demonstrate a change from traditional thinking about regional connectivity that Philadelphia ought to consider.

The reconstruction of the highway presents us with the opportunity to enhance connections between the city's neighborhoods and the riverfront. PennDOT is in the process of rebuilding I-95 through a



Overpass Expansion

The I-95 overpass in the northern section would grow 30 feet wider after the new construction, further separating neighborhoods from the river, if at-grade treatments are not implemented.

Precedents

The presence of highway viaducts along the waterfronts in Toronto and Seattle shows that active waterfront destinations can thrive adjacent to these substantial barriers.

Hudson River Parkway

Plans for the West Side Highway in New York City were replaced by Hudson River Park, an at-grade roadway and a riverfront esplanade, after a long legal battle.



routine renewal cycle. It has already completed plans for the Girard Avenue Interchange, which will reconfigure the structure from Allegheny Avenue south to Race Street. Ground-level roadway construction is slated to begin in January 2008. PennDOT plans for the reconstruction of the portion of the interstate south of Christian Street to begin in 2020 and for reconstruction of the sunken section in Center City to begin in 2032.

This civic vision explores both short- and long-term measures to mitigate the impact of I-95 on the central Delaware. Short term initiatives include at-grade improvements around I-95 that increase connectivity. Recent designs for the Girard Avenue interchange can be used as a prototype for future interchange design. Further, capping the highway

for some portions of the central section should be investigated as a short term economic development strategy.

In the long term, the rebuilding of the Center City portion of I-95 has the greatest opportunity to transform the central Delaware as a regional destination. An initial civil-engineering analysis indicates that depressing I-95 to allow for street-level connections from the neighborhoods to the river is technically feasible. With the portion of I-95 that rises to pass over the Market-Frankford Line representing a significant physical, visual and psychological barrier between the oldest portions of the city and the river, it is crucial that further study be conducted in order to reestablish this important connection with the river at the foot of Market Street.

This vision plan also recommends that PennDOT further investigate the economic, environmental and engineering feasibility of depressing I-95 at Center City. While this section of the highway is not slated for reconstruction for another twenty-five years, now is the time to explore its feasibility and to plan for a rebuild that will support long-term connectivity between the river and the city.

I-95 is a vital regional transportation link, and traffic is an inevitable part of city life. Yet other cities have found ways to make urban highways function as one part of an urban cityscape. After an

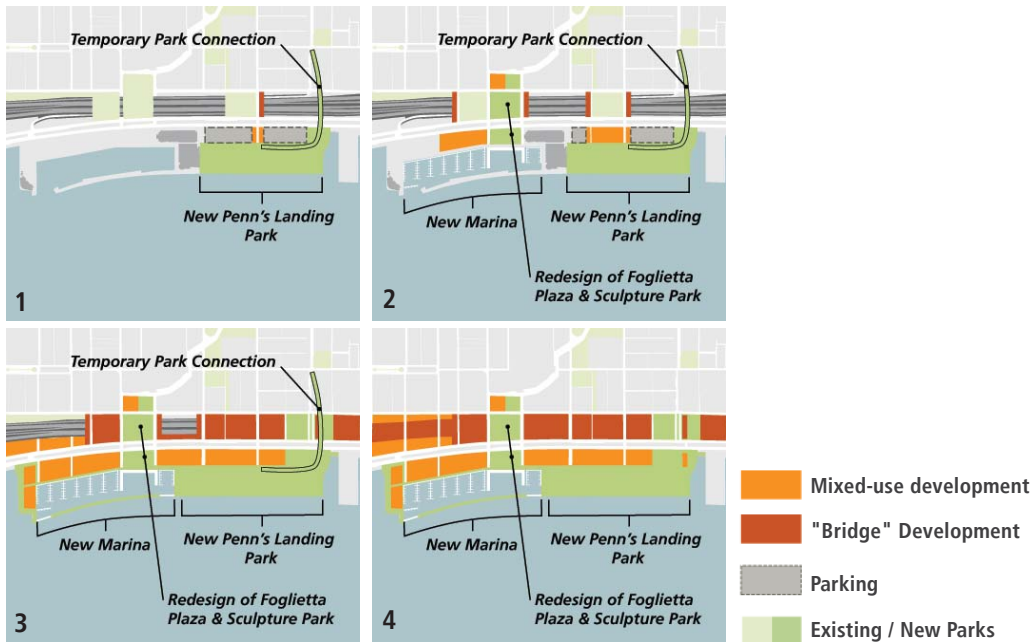
earthquake destroyed its waterfront highway, San Francisco replaced it with an urbane boulevard, while Portland and Providence removed stretches of their highways to gain riverfront access. Plans for decking highways with developable cover are also being widely accepted around the country, including in cities such as Dallas, Saint Louis, Cincinnati and San Diego.

Federal highway funding is beginning to be used to help cities manage congestion and improve their infrastructure. Cities such as New York, Seattle and Miami received federal funding this year to address their congestion challenges. Additionally, a new plan for New York City's F.D.R. Drive calls for the construction of new public spaces, new aesthetic treatments and a modern lighting scheme around the highway. Underneath the highway in Louisville, a 55-acre brownfield site was redeveloped into an expansive riverfront park that includes both passive and active spaces along the Ohio River. Though states currently struggle for funding, many believe that more federal funds will be available for urban infrastructure investments in the near future (see "Spotlight: Transformative Investments" on page 116).

Girard Avenue Interchange

PennDOT's design for the reconstruction of the Girard Avenue Interchange, which is scheduled to begin in January 2008.





1. Short-Term Scenario A

Due to the deterioration of the Great Plaza, Penn's Landing Corporation must consider whether to repair or replace this important public gathering space. Its efforts could include the enhancement of bridge connections and the creation of a park at the foot of Market and Chestnut Streets, with parking along the boulevard.

2. Short-Term Scenario B

Expanding on the ideas in Scenario A, redevelopment of Penn's Landing in the Dock Street areas could build on neighborhood plans to redevelop Foglietta Plaza and could develop the basin at Penn's Landing as a civic marina, with a redeveloped Sculpture Park and mixed-use development across from the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Early Actions

Infrastructure improvements happen on an incremental cycle.

Long- term decisions require near-term planning.

- Begin the next phase of a comprehensive planning study that examines the potential movement and transportation network for the study area, including the redesign of I-95 and the creation of Delaware Boulevard and the local street network. This study should involve both state and local agencies.
- Ensure that funding is allocated for at-grade improvements in the Girard Avenue Interchange redesign.
- Plan future stages of PennDOT's I-95 redesign to conform with the civic vision.
- Consider short-term solutions to soften the barrier of I-95—such as public art, lighting and landscaping—as reconstruction will not occur for decades.

3. Short-Term Scenario C

This scenario expands on the previous investments and assumes that the capping of I-95 in its current state is possible. Funding will be the critical driver for this short-term development scenario, which that can be expanded when I-95 is reconstructed, a project currently planned for 2032.

4. Long-Term Scenario

While none of these short-term scenarios precludes a comprehensive redevelopment of Penn's Landing, the replacement of the Center City section of I-95 in a lower elevation allows a full capping of the highway and reconnects the city streets to the river.

Recommendations

Currently I-95 acts as a psychological and physical barrier separating Philadelphia's neighborhoods from the riverfront. Through a series of infrastructure investments, this civic vision offers various methods of reducing this barrier. The following recommendations identify a variety of infrastructure investments that could contribute to the creation of a premier riverfront. These include short-term at-grade improvements as well as the long-term possibility of capping or tunneling the central portion of I-95.

Short-Term Recommendations

- Implement the following improvements to the current design for the Girard Avenue Interchange, as envisioned in collaborative workshops with PennDOT:
 - Narrow lane widths and widen sidewalks along the new portions of Richmond Street and Delaware Avenue that PennDOT will construct as a part of this project.
 - Provide landscaping and amenities that will promote the use of the area under I-95 for recreation and access and provide a pleasant connection to Penn Treaty Park and the river. The construction and maintenance of recreation facilities should be coordinated with the city, PennDOT, property owners and other stakeholders. Refer to page 143 for more detailed information.
 - Use newly available land on either side of Richmond Street for landscaping or park space.

- Conduct a feasibility study for the proposed transportation network along the central Delaware that considers these solutions:

- Reconstructing I-95 at Center City to address its barrier effect.
- Constructing Delaware Boulevard where right-of-way currently does not exist.
- Using technologies such as signal synchronization and lane control to make Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard more efficient as auto traffic increases.
- How traffic volumes can be maintained without widening existing roads.
- Exploring ways to address issues underneath and around the highway through at-grade improvements.
- Begin collaborative partnerships between city, state and federal agencies (such as PennDOT and the Philadelphia Water Department) that could result in new ways of thinking about infrastructure along the riverfront.

Long-Term Recommendations

- During the long-term reconstruction of I-95 from Spring Garden Street to Washington Avenue, consideration should be given to using one of the following alternatives:
 - Cap the central stretch of I-95 in the highway structure currently designed, or
 - Depress I-95 (with Callowhill Street as the northern boundary) in the current right-of-way, allowing urban-scale development above the interstate.

Currently, I-95 acts as a psychological and physical barrier separating Philadelphia's neighborhoods from the riverfront.

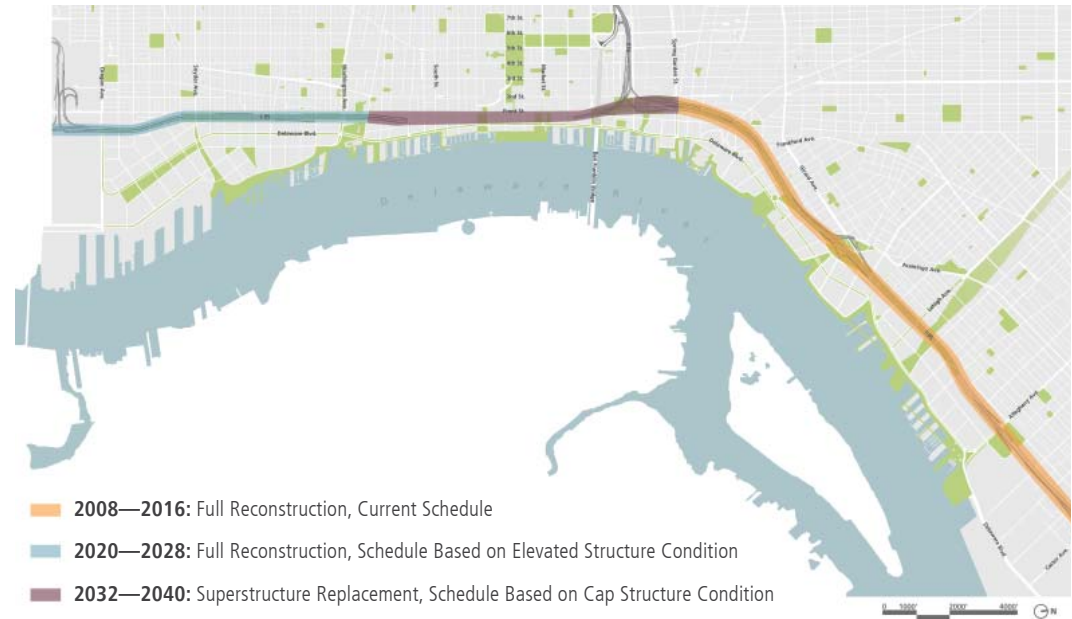
Frankford Avenue

Frankford Avenue is one of Fishtown's gateways to the riverfront. It is shown here with a reconstructed I-95 viaduct, including portal lighting, a linear park and community facilities. This civic vision recommends a comprehensive "green streets" system that incorporates stormwater best practices championed by the Philadelphia Water Department, the Complete Streets initiative for bicycles and the design of I-95 as a linear public space that opens neighborhoods to new riverfront development.



Existing conditions

- Realign I-95 beneath the current Columbus Boulevard in a tunnel, and use the old interstate right-of-way for development.
- Using the collaborative designs created for the Girard Avenue Interchange as a prototype, implement these and other ground-level improvements to reduce the divide created by the elevated highway:
 - Build the elevated highway on structure, not an embankment, thus preserving a view of the river from the neighborhoods allowing for physical access under the highway.
 - Extend dead-end streets under the highway to continue the street grid.
 - Design elements of I-95 at key through-streets to establish attractive civic portals that enhance pedestrian connections to the river and that use attractive lighting, public art and high-quality materials.
 - Line the highway structure with landscaped sound walls to create a more effective noise buffer and environmental treatment.
 - Provide high-quality, contemporary urban lighting underneath I-95.
 - Prohibit billboards on either side of I-95 in the project area.
- Eliminate redundancies in the I-95 ramp system in the project area between Race Street and Bainbridge Street in light of the proposed addition of a southbound exit ramp to serve Foxwoods Casino.



Anticipated I-95 Reconstruction Schedule

PennDOT’s planned schedule for the reconstruction of I-95 along the Delaware includes the reconstruction of the viaduct in the north and south and the complete replacement of the Center City section.

SPOTLIGHT: TRANSFORMATIVE INVESTMENTS

Though federal funding for urban infrastructure projects has been in decline in recent years (indeed, the federal highway trust fund is reported to be facing a deficit), recent events such as the 2007 failure of the Minnesota I-35W bridge have focused public attention on the nation's underinvestment in infrastructure. This vision recommends that attention be given to the potential for future federal funding of what the Brookings Institution calls "transformative investments" in urban-infrastructure projects—projects that restore the physical landscape and successfully stimulate economic growth. While the current economic and political climate does not support these kinds of projects, the civic vision recommends that Philadelphia position itself for "transformative investment" in the coming decades, when it is believed that Congress will again be investing in cities. Private investment can also be utilized in such a large-scale project as redesigning I-95. If developable cover is built over the Center City stretch of I-95, development air rights can be leveraged for infrastructure funding. Through a combination of traditional federal funding sources and new funding sources, cities and states can work together to address public infrastructure in a meaningful way. In order to maximize opportunities for future funding, it is important that Philadelphia begin preparing for the possibility of transformative investments today.

In addition, this civic vision recommends investigating coordination between PennDOT and the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD), which is under a federal mandate to address the city's aging sewer infrastructure. PWD is currently considering the use of high-tech tunneling equipment that could possibly be used in the highway reconstruction as well. Although any project of such magnitude would require significant political will and public investment, it is necessary that government entities coordinate efforts to make large-scale improvements possible.

Purpose
General Findings
Goals
Early Action
Create New Parks
Connect the City to the Riverfront
Invest in a Sustainable Riverfront

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



Port Richmond Riverfront Park

In coordination with GreenPlan Philadelphia the civic vision recommends a park system that connects across city neighborhoods and along the river's edge. A park at the end of Lehigh Avenue serves potential job centers to the north and south and is connected to Delaware Boulevard, a riverfront trail and a Lehigh Viaduct cross-city trail.

Parks and Open Space

The central Delaware riverfront is severely lacking in public open space, but it has the potential to host a world-class park system. Currently, there are only two public parks in the project area, Penn Treaty Park and Pulaski Park, and these occupy just eight of the area's 1,146 acres. Another possible park location would be Penn's Landing, a hard-surfaced, significantly underutilized public asset in need of revitalization.

A more extensive, contiguous and designed system of open spaces at the river's edge would improve quality of life for neighbors, increase the value of future development, preserve and support natural life and attract visitors from across the region.

Purpose

The purpose of the following recommendations on parks and open space is to improve the quality of life along the riverfront and the river itself by building a network of public open spaces that are ecologically productive and attractive. This sustainable system would serve local residents while improving the area's economic viability.


General Findings

In addition to engaging the community in defining its vision for the central Delaware riverfront, the project team researched the numerous benefits of a coordinated parks-and-open-space system. We found that the economic impact of open space on land development is significant. Examples from cities around the nation, including Boston, Chicago, San Diego and Philadelphia, show that the land within close proximity to a park is typically the most valuable downtown land in the city. Even smaller projects, such as the greening of nearby streets, were found to have a significant effect on property values.

Higher property values are not the only benefit of greening a city's spaces; parks and trail systems themselves generate significant tax revenue for the city, as they are relatively inexpensive public investments compared to road infrastructure and are a big draw for residents and visitors.

Parks and open spaces also have important health benefits for residents, as well as for the city as a whole. Having such recreational assets increases activity levels and therefore improves the health of neighbors and visitors. In addition, with issues of climate change and energy efficiency gaining international attention, parks must be considered for their ecological value.

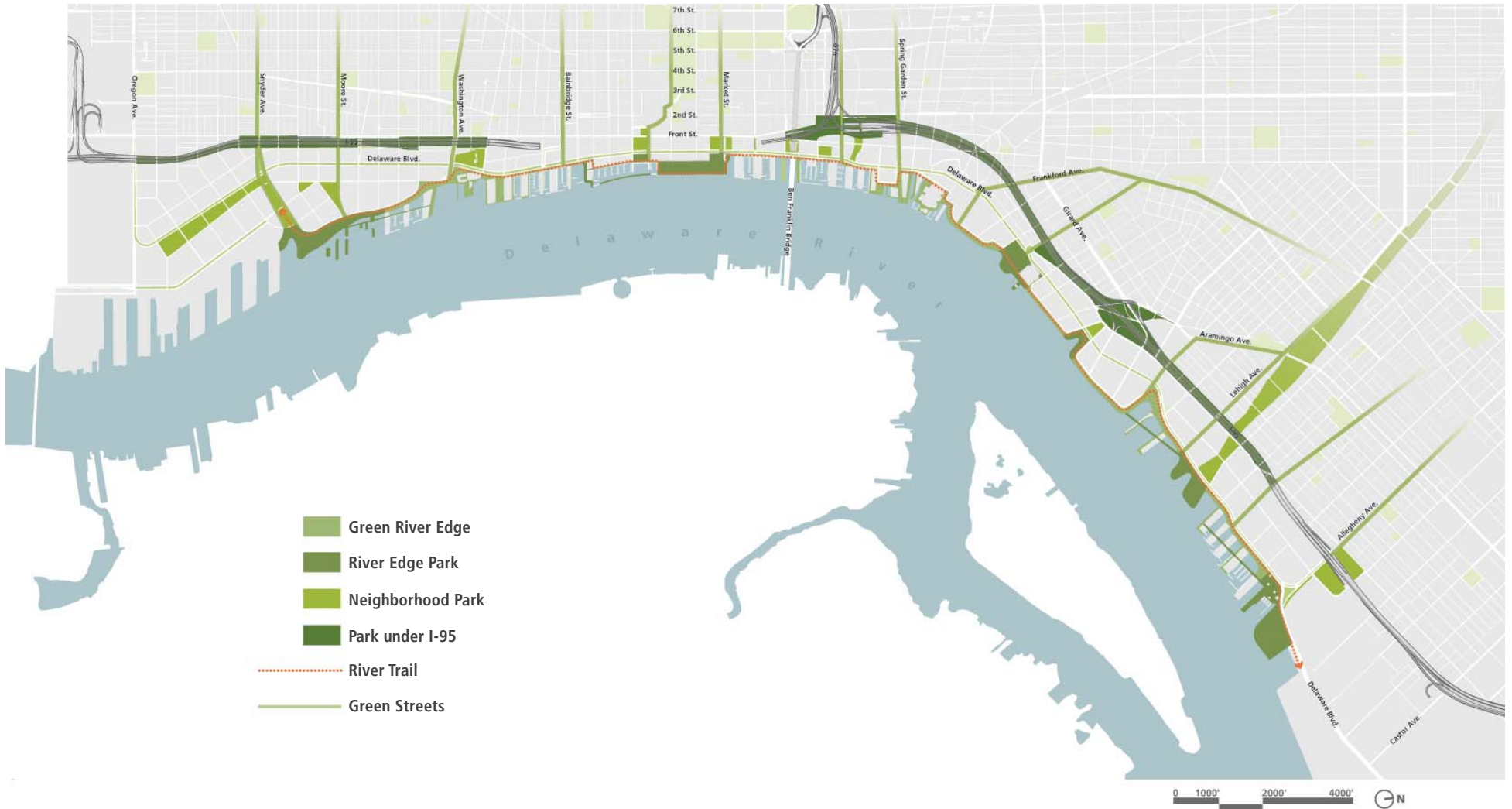
Along the central Delaware riverfront, parks can serve the productive purpose of minimizing the negative effects of pollution on the watershed. The proposed natural green spaces along the riverfront could contain stormwater runoff, trap sediments, provide natural habitats and mitigate flooding. Once they are removed, however, natural green spaces are difficult to replace.



New parks
A connected riverfront
A sustainable riverfront

Illustrative Parks and Open Space Network

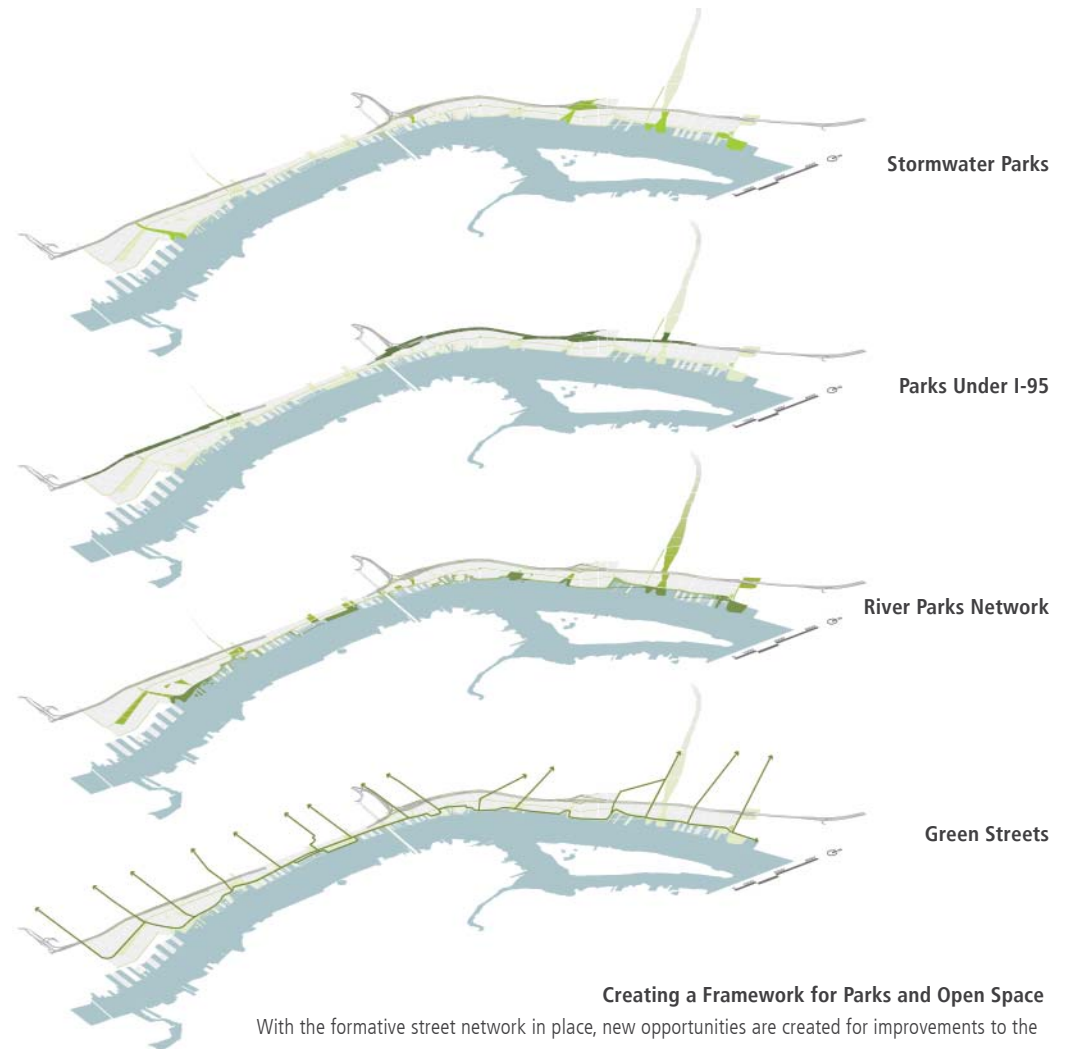
New parks will be connected by the greenway to create an extensive open-space resource along the central Delaware that provides passive and active recreational uses, fishing opportunities, open view corridors and productive ecology.



Parks and Open Space Goals

Based on the findings and input of citizens, planners and designers, the project team has developed the following strategic goals.

- 1. Create New Parks and Open Space:** Develop new parks throughout the central Delaware riverfront project area to give every riverfront neighborhood a green public space.
- 2. Connect the City to the Riverfront:** Connect public open spaces with a continuous riverfront trail that will link destinations and serve as a destination for walking, jogging and biking. Utilize city streets to create green corridors and provide valuable connections to the riverfront.
- 3. Invest in a Sustainable Riverfront:** Invest in ecologically productive parks and open spaces to ensure the long-term sustainability of the riverfront.



Creating a Framework for Parks and Open Space

With the formative street network in place, new opportunities are created for improvements to the natural environment. This includes the opportunity to create an open-space network that integrates new stormwater parks at the river's edge, parks under I-95 and small, neighborhood-focused parks. In addition, parks and open space systems extend into the community through green streets that link neighborhoods to the riverfront.

Pier 70 Early Action

This perspective of Pier 70, shown as it could be ten years from now, illustrates how riverfront access would offer an opportunity for an early greenway project that extends a trail through a tidal-wetland conversion.



Existing conditions

Early Actions

As is true along other urban riverfronts, an open-space network along the central Delaware riverfront improve quality of life and raise the development value of riverfront land. With the concurrent release of this report and GreenPlan Philadelphia, the city-sponsored comprehensive plan for parks and open spaces, regional decision-makers face a rare opportunity to begin park projects quickly to demonstrate the strength of civic-engagement processes. The team behind *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* recommends the following early actions:

- Implement the interim riverfront bike trail proposed by the Center City District. The trail would run from Pier 70 to the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.
- Create tidal wetlands, meadows and floodplain forest at Pier 70 in conjunction with the Philadelphia Water Department and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.
- Investigate strategies for open-space acquisition and consider potential sites for water recreation.
- Create and enforce a zoning ordinance for a 100-foot riparian public easement at the river's edge.



Recommended Early Actions

Goal 1: Create New Parks and Open Space

Develop new parks throughout the central Delaware riverfront project area to give every riverfront neighborhood a green public space.



From left:
Rittenhouse Square
San Antonio Riverwalk
Millennium Park, Chicago.

The key to creating an urban riverfront destination that attracts neighbors as well as visitors is a series of parks and open spaces that are well connected to surrounding communities, public transportation and major destinations along the Delaware River. This park system will build upon existing assets along the riverfront, connect existing neighborhoods with the river and support urban development.

Discussion

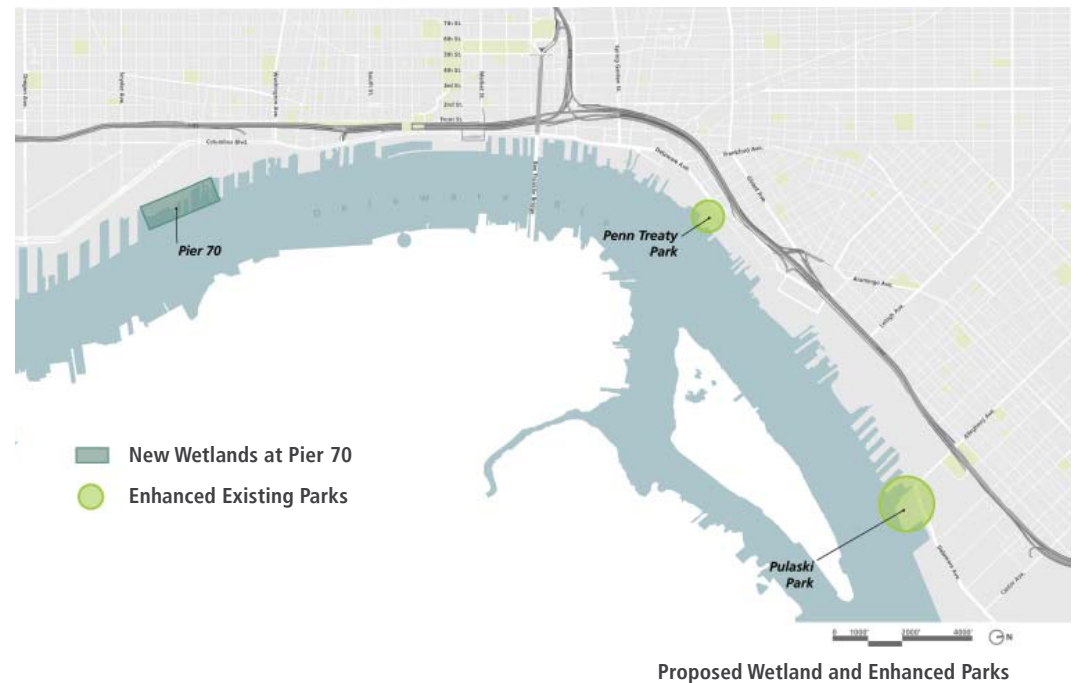
Research indicates that turning a parcel into open space gives it significant economic power, because open space catalyzes quality urban development around it. For example, San Antonio's Riverwalk was created for \$425,000 and is now the most popular attraction in a city with a \$3.5-billion tourist industry. University of Pennsylvania professor Susan Wachter reports a 30 percent increase in nearby property values due to the greening of vacant land. The high value of land close to beautiful park spaces is clearly shown in Philadelphia; in September 2007, a 0.83-acre lot sold for \$36.7 million (at a profit of \$31 million) because of its proximity to Rittenhouse Square. In 2005, Forbes Magazine named the Chicago zip code containing Millennium Park the "hottest" in the country, with a \$710,000 median residential sale price. Adjacent property owners are seeing an average bonus for their units of \$100 per square foot, as well as sales that are 30 to 50 percent faster than projects away from the park. Millennium Park is such a popular destination that it is projected to generate \$5 billion in tax revenue in its first ten years of operation.

More importantly, an integrated park system helps create a healthy city and improves the quality of life for residents and visitors. In a survey of U.S. adults, people with access to neighborhood parks were nearly twice as likely to be active as those without access.

Early Actions

Both the Schuylkill River and the Wissahickon Creek were once lined with industry, but today their banks have been transformed into recreational sites. The trails and green spaces along the river and creek serve to improve the city's health, offer refuge from urban life and foster economic development. Thus, these steps toward an integrated park system are important to improving the central Delaware riverfront. The following early actions can begin the process of creating a network of green spaces along the riverfront:

- Initiate the development of tidal wetlands, meadows and floodplain forest at Pier 70 and identify public funding sources for construction and maintenance of these new open spaces.
- Refurbish Penn Treaty Park.
- Refurbish Pulaski Park.



A Vision of Penn Treaty Park

Improvements to Penn Treaty Park will help to this green space retain its value as an important community asset and gathering space. Recommended enhancements include the creation of a naturalized edge and a connection to the proposed greenway. The restored riparian edge would stabilize the river/park edge, create a sustainable habitat for endemic species of plants and animals, and preserve the unimpeded view to the full span of the Ben Franklin Bridge and the new skyline of the city. The greenway and new paths will attract residents from Fishtown and the proposed waterfront developments to an enhanced neighborhood park.





Hudson River Park

New York City's Hudson River Park receives up to ten thousand visitors a day along its trail.



Olympic Sculpture Park

Proposed "cover parks" atop I-95 would soften the barrier effect. They are modeled after Seattle's Olympic Sculpture Park, which uses landscape design and public art to heal the rift created by a former brownfield site.

Recommendations

The addition of public open spaces throughout the riverfront will position the central Delaware as a collective asset for the city and region. In order to realize this vision, *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* recommends the following actions:

- Preserve land for public open space and include public art. The vision suggests that 27 percent of land in the project area be preserved as public open space. Here are some of the recommended parks:

- An expanded Pulaski Park.
- An expansive green space that filters stormwater for South Philadelphia neighborhoods, at the foot of Snyder Avenue.
- A habitat park at Pier 70 that incorporates tidal wetlands, upland meadows and floodplain forest.
- An inland park in South Philadelphia serving areas in which port activity prohibits river access.
- Public river access at the termination of Washington Avenue.
- A green space beneath the Ben Franklin Bridge.
- A public space at the foot of Spring Garden Street on the Festival Pier/incinerator site.
- A refurbished Penn Treaty Park.
- A stormwater management park under I-95 at the Girard Avenue Interchange, which could serve as a prototype for future infrastructure construction.
- A space at the terminus of the Lehigh Viaduct, including the Ore Pier on the Conrail site.
- A signature green space and civic marina at Penn's Landing.

- Ensure that open space relates to the river by managing stormwater and restoring river habitat through the integration of rainwater pools, native vegetation and new wetland areas.

- Create or enhance public sites along the river to land and rent boats.
- Establish incentives for conservation easements and private sector contributions to develop and maintain riverfront open space.
- Form partnerships with federal, regional, state and local agencies to improve efficiency and share limited resources, including these agencies:
 - Fairmount Park Commission and Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, to foster "Friends" organizations that will help neighborhood parks thrive;
 - Philadelphia Water Department, to redevelop sites on its Tidal Wetland Registry into naturalized public spaces; and
 - Pennsylvania Environmental Council, to extend the East Coast Greenway.
- Address ongoing maintenance. Coordinating the interagency management of park resources and recognizing and promoting opportunities for public-private partnerships are essential to the health of public open spaces.
- Develop a strategy for a land trust that can use city, federal and private funds to acquire land and preserve it for public open space.
- Build upon GreenPlan Philadelphia's comprehensive plan for parks, recreation and open space by developing partnerships with key federal, state and city agencies or departments to coordinate early and longer-term greening projects along the riverfront.

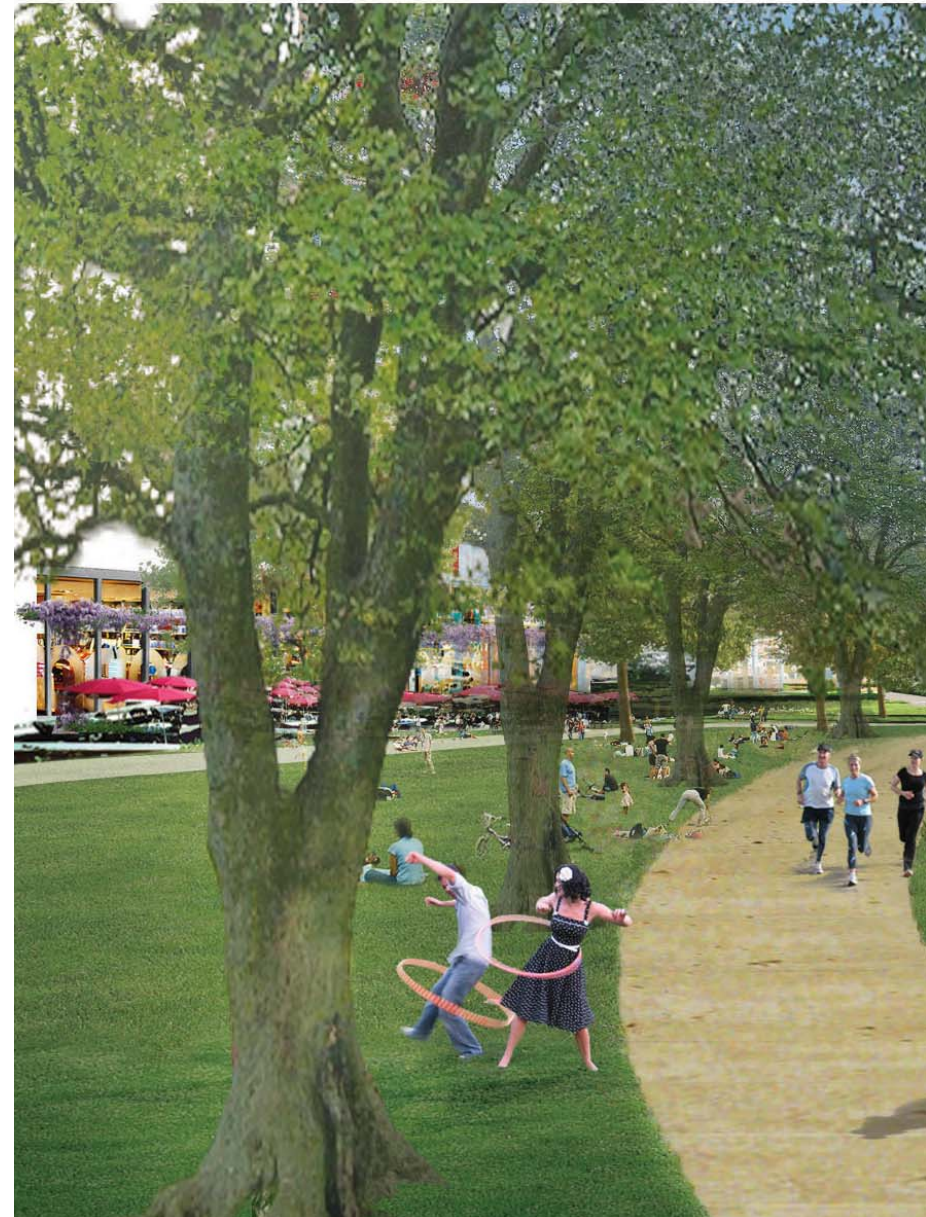


Penn's Landing and the Central Riverfront

The "greening" of Philadelphia's central riverfront and the creation of a civic marina will mirror Camden's riverfront park system and establish a symbolic connection between these two cities on the Delaware.

A Vision of a Great Lawn at Penn's Landing Park

A simple and flexible park design at Penn's Landing provides a gathering space for everyday enjoyment as well as events. As in the city's other great parks, a "great lawn" at Penn's Landing is in the tradition of William Penn's vision of a "greene country towne."





Goal 2: Connect the City to the Riverfront

Connect public open spaces with a continuous riverfront trail that will link destinations and serve as a destination for walking, jogging and biking. Utilize city streets to create green corridors and provide valuable connections to the riverfront.



Schuylkill Park

The immediate popularity of the Schuylkill River Trail demonstrates a strong demand in the region for riverfront access and recreation.

The centerpiece of the civic vision for public open space along the central Delaware riverfront is the development of a continuous greenway that will allow Philadelphians greater access to the river's edge. This greenway will function in numerous ways, including as a recreational trail, an ecological filter for stormwater and pollutants, a sanctuary for river wildlife and a supportive framework for economic development.

Discussion

Over three hundred years after William Penn permitted private development along the Delaware on the condition that public access was maintained at every block, most riverfront land in the project area is privately owned, and public riverfront access is minimal. The commonwealth holds the development rights to riparian land (see "Spotlight" on opposite page) at the river's edge in public trust. This presents us with an opportunity to create public green space that beautifies the project area, improves the health of residents, eases some burden on the city's aging sewer infrastructure and increases land value for owners of riverfront and adjacent properties.

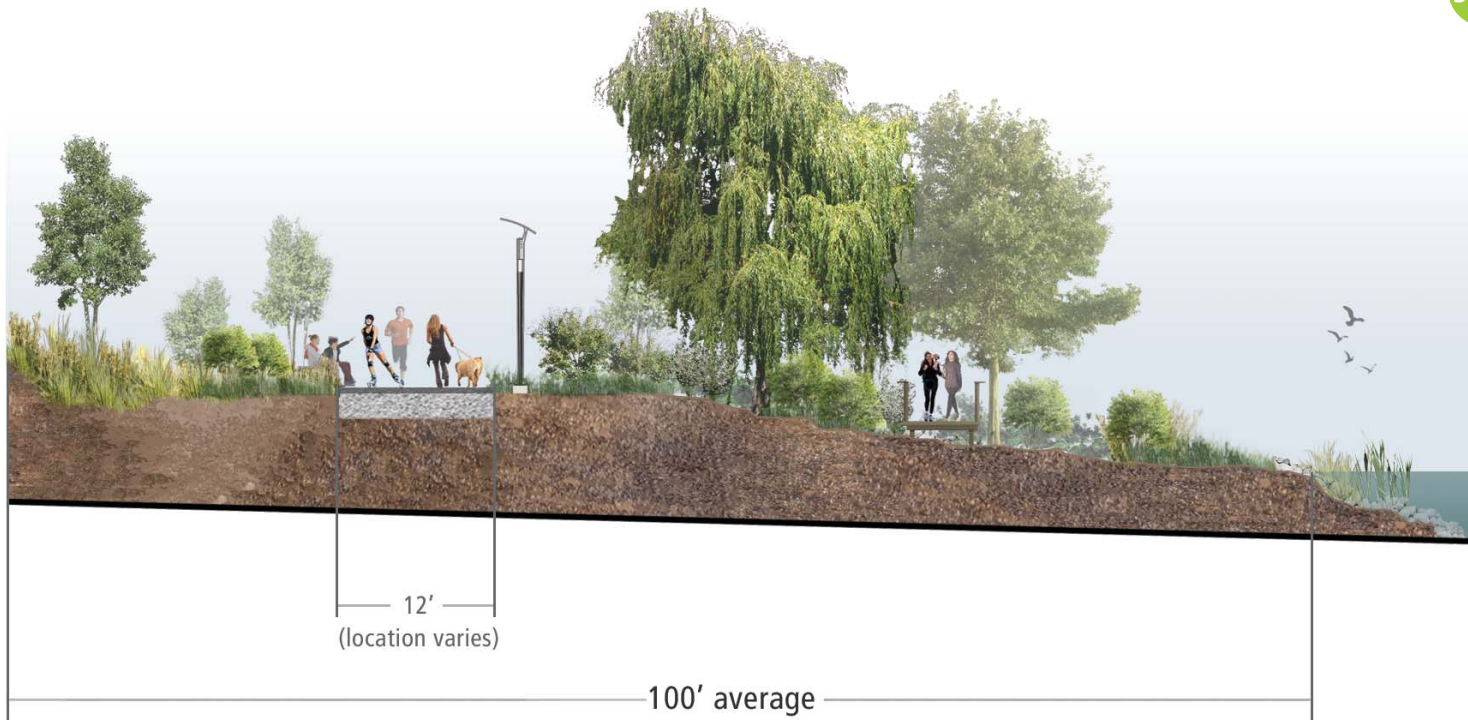
Today, cities around the country are creating public greenways on riverfront land. Riparian buffers increase property values and development capacity. Boston Harbor has seen over \$10 billion of private investment since new trails and parks were added to its waterfront; in fact, 60 percent of the city's population growth in the 1990s occurred in waterfront communities. Schuylkill River Development Corporation estimates that the \$170 million public-sector investment in the central portion of its trail will result in \$2.4 billion in private investment over the next five to ten years. Further, a riparian buffer reduces construction costs for adjacent properties by meeting some or all of their on-site stormwater-management needs. According to

SPOTLIGHT: RIPARIAN LAND

The system of designating and protecting riparian land has its origins in English common law. The phrase describes the land at the river's edge, which in Pennsylvania is held in trust by the commonwealth for public use, with the state approving riverbed leases on a case-by-case basis. This publicly owned land could be an asset in the creation of a new riverfront open-space network.

Riparian land is defined as the land that lies between the pierhead line (where a pier ends and the shipping channel begins) and the bulkhead line (the location of a retaining wall built along the riverbank). However, the shoreline of the central Delaware River has changed so much over time that there are differing opinions of where the bulkhead line lies. For this reason, few projects have been approved by the commonwealth in the past few years, even as pressure to develop riverfront land has risen.

The commonwealth has recently priced its riparian leases at \$5 per square foot (a one-time fee for a 99-year lease) and added public riverfront access as a provision for private development of the land. Further, any lease payments above \$250,000 can go toward public benefit, thus representing a possible funding source for the implementation of portions of the open-space and public-access infrastructure recommended in this civic vision.



Penn Future, 92 percent of Philadelphians surveyed believe that environmental and infrastructure improvements are necessary to improve the area's economic competitiveness and growth. A recent Chicago study showed that people are drawn to a river with clean water, vegetation and wildlife; a riparian greenway attracts and provides all three.

The civic vision recommends a 100-foot wide (on average) riparian edge as recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency. For urban rivers, this is the minimum buffer width required for trapping sediments and providing generalized habitats. Establishing this 100-

foot greenway is important, given the lessons learned through other local projects. The popular Schuylkill River trail, for example, now has limited space to expand in a 50-foot right-of-way, and its hard urban edge does not offer significant ecological protection. The north Delaware goes further by requiring that 30 feet of its 50-foot greenway be made into or left as a riparian edge, but this has also had limited environmental effects.

The proposed greenway buffer will also provide flood protection. Large portions of the hundred-year floodplain in the project area are impervious surface, so buffers are needed to lessen the physical and economic impacts of flood damage.

SPOTLIGHT:**WATER RECREATION**

At every public forum held in the creation of the civic vision, citizens listed water recreation as an exciting opportunity that has yet to be fully realized along the central Delaware. Therefore, the vision seeks to promote opportunities for water recreation. Water-based recreation can be an economic driver for a riverfront. In 2005, United States canoe and kayak sales exceeded \$200 million and in 2001 Americans spent a total of \$36 billion on fishing.

Some ways to boost water-recreation opportunities include opening multiple public marinas and boat basins throughout the entire project area; creating opportunities for more historic sailboat tours; establishing launching points for kayaks, motorboats and jet-skis; developing protected coves for paddle-boating; and creating protected swimming holes along the Delaware River (an idea currently being studied by the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area).

However, further study will be necessary before many forms of recreation can be recommended. According to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, south of the Ben Franklin Bridge, the river is unsafe for inexperienced kayakers due to strong currents and wakes from large industrial ships. Further, buoys do not currently mark the shipping channel, and no landings currently exist from which kayakers could leave the water.

Early Actions

Implementing a central Delaware greenway as an early action project would demonstrate the power of the civic vision. Dedicating land for public use and environmental protection benefits residents, the economic development community and the river itself. Here are some early action steps toward this goal.

- Assist the Center City District in the construction of a two-mile interim bike trail from Pier 70 to the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.
 - The trail will include stations for recreational-equipment rentals and refreshments.
- Implement a zoning ordinance to create the 100-foot-wide riparian buffer where practicable.
- Educate property owners, political leaders and the community about the economic, social and environmental benefits of extending the greenway along the length of the riverfront.

Recommendations

In order to create a comprehensive system of public open space, we should address the spaces between existing and proposed parks. Here are some recommendations for achieving this key objective:

- Work with City Council, riverfront communities and the newly appointed Philadelphia Zoning Code Commission to create an ordinance establishing a 100-foot natural riparian edge where practicable along the river. The proposed greenway amenities and plantings may be contained within this buffer.
- Buffer width can be increased in areas in which adjacent open space exists, or where acquisition of additional open space is possible.
- Connect the greenway to neighborhoods through a series of landscaped streets that provide green links to the river as well as stormwater drainage.
- Use the land under I-95 to create trail extensions and landscaped parking that maintains access to the greenway.
- Establish incentives for conservation easements and private-sector contributions to the development and maintenance of the riverfront greenway and green connector streets.
- Build upon the design guidelines developed for the north Delaware for riverfront trails in the central Delaware riverfront. The guidelines should ensure high-quality public art, furnishings, paving, light fixtures and landscaping.

Spring Garden Street

This perspective view of Spring Garden Street reimagines the street as a generous green corridor connecting the neighborhoods west of I-95 to the Delaware River and its emerging greenway system, accessible at Festival Pier. Improvements to Spring Garden Street will include continuous sidewalks lined with mixed-use buildings featuring ground floor retail, trees and plantings. Together, these improvements will create an attractive, landscaped corridor for pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles.

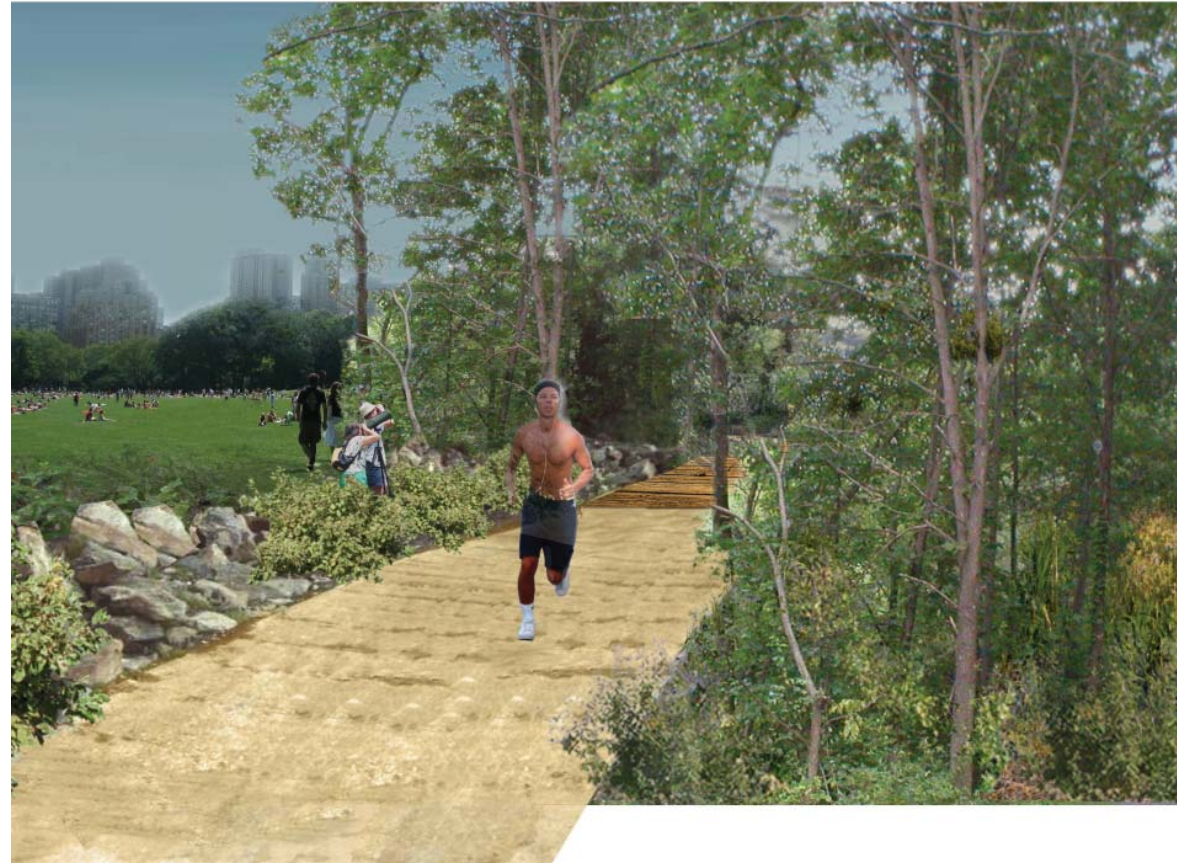


Existing conditions



A Vision of Pier 70's Constructed Habitat

In these depictions of a redeveloped area at Pier 70, the existing piers are detached from the bulkhead to facilitate a naturalized establishment of native species. Visitors to the riverfront trail will be able to experience this restorative process over time, as the islands become a viable habitat for birds and native plants. The combination of these industrial artifacts with the process of restoration expresses the evolving role of Philadelphia's central Delaware riverfront.







Port Richmond Rail Yard and Lehigh Viaduct

In this image, the Lehigh Viaduct is transformed into a major regional open-space connector, with an extensive green network enhanced by acknowledging historic streams and creeks. The area becomes a major watershed feature, absorbing runoff and filtering stormwater through infiltration. The realigned Delaware Boulevard and the continuous riverfront greenway link the park and its surrounding neighborhoods to other areas along the riverfront. New development extends the city to the river's edge.

Snyder Avenue Riverfront Park

As depicted, a riverfront park just north of the port provides an opportunity for a tidal wetland restoration project that connects to a stormwater management design helps combat a high level of impervious surface. The elevation of land below the 500-year flood plain between Washington and Snyder Avenues is a reminder of the historic creeks that crossed the riverfront neighborhood in the nineteenth Century.



Existing conditions



Goal 3: Invest in a Sustainable Riverfront

Invest in ecologically productive parks and open space to ensure the long-term sustainability of the riverfront.



From left:

Pier 70 Habitat Park
Washington Avenue Park
Snyder Avenue Park

The central Delaware riverfront presents Philadelphia with an opportunity to practice techniques for sustainable design on an unprecedented scale. River ecology is an increasingly important planning issue in light of Hurricane Katrina and concerns about climate change. Integrating ecology into development practices and public policy will benefit the riverfront and the region in the long term.

Plans for the Delaware have the potential to be ecological, equitable and profitable. This civic vision recommends that the city look beyond the short-term practices that drive current development. We can think of all our public spaces—streets, parks and others—as productive tools to ensure better water quality, air quality and public health. Even a series of small but cumulative strategies across the project area can benefit and position Philadelphia as a leader in sound planning and design.

Discussion

All citizens benefit from attention to ecological improvements. Three of the worst floods on record in the Delaware Basin have occurred in the past five years—all storm-related. The amount of tide-exacerbated flooding is projected to increase in coming years, and portions of the hundred-year floodplain vary from 50 to 2000 feet in width throughout the project area. All bulkheads in the central portion of the riverfront will likely be exceeded by water levels in hundred-year flood storms. And since much of the project area is already covered with impervious materials that prevent rainwater from infiltrating soils, the land is not able to properly mitigate the volume of water coming from the city.

This is why the riparian buffer and related plan elements are important. This vegetated buffer will help meet the city's stormwater-management requirements for some developments, acting as a treatment facility as well as a beautiful addition to the riverfront. It will have the capacity to filter 1 inch of stormwater runoff—the performance standard—from the proposed trail and Delaware Boulevard. Thus, the addition of pervious surfaces will help manage stormwater and support the civic principles of connectivity and sustainability.

It has been estimated that 95 percent of the once-contiguous freshwater tidal wetlands on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware have been destroyed. The decline of this habitat has had deleterious effects on

the health of wildlife populations and has severely reduced the river's ability to perform the critical functions of a healthy ecosystem. The Department of Environmental Protection now requires that the city restore or create more wetlands along its riverfronts. In addition, in its efforts to meet the federal mandate for water quality set by the Clean Water Act, the Philadelphia Water Department has identified many potential wetland sites in the project area. Two of these are the finger piers at Pier 70 and at the Girard Avenue Interchange at Dyott Street.

Other benefits of ecologically minded development are equally clear. Urban, vegetated and permeable surfaces are all effective ways to combat the urban heat-island effect because of their capacity to reflect sunlight. A Michigan State University study shows that buildings with trees planted at strategic locations around them use 50 percent less energy for cooling purposes than they did before the planting. Further, a UC Davis study showed that the street trees in New York City are worth \$122 million for the annual energy savings, air-quality improvement, stormwater-runoff treatment and real-estate sales they provide or encourage. "Green" infrastructure does far more than pay for itself over time, through these sorts of savings as well as through benefits for quality of life, public health and property value. A study by Penn professor Susan Wachter found that the simple greening of streets alone raised property values by 10 percent.

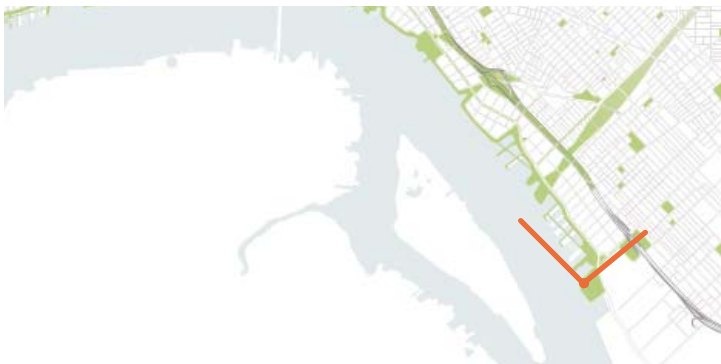


Potential Areas for Wetland Creation

The results of a study by the Philadelphia Water Department show numerous potential sites for wetland creation in the project area, including Pulaski Park, an area near Festival Pier and a long stretch of riverfront from Washington to Snyder Avenues. When exploring the potential for restoring or creating an intertidal wetland marsh in a particular area, these three factors must be explored: depth range, sediment character and the amount of waves/wakes. These three sites were found to have appropriate levels of these traits and are being studied further to assess their potential.

A Vision of Pulaski Park

In this depiction, an expanded Pulaski Park creates a naturalized edge along the river and provides a public landscape that grants access to the historic gantries that represent Port Richmond's identity as a former industrial powerhouse. A grid of rafts with experimental plantings provides habitat for birds and creates a rich aquatic ecosystem for fish and nesting birds. The restored gantries pier becomes an attraction for fishing and a visual platform that offers open views to the river, the adjacent pier housing and its park, New Jersey and the area abutting Pulaski Park.





Early Actions

Ecologically sound development marries natural processes and built systems to achieve balanced environmental, social and economic outcomes. The following early actions can serve as the foundation for a sustainable community:

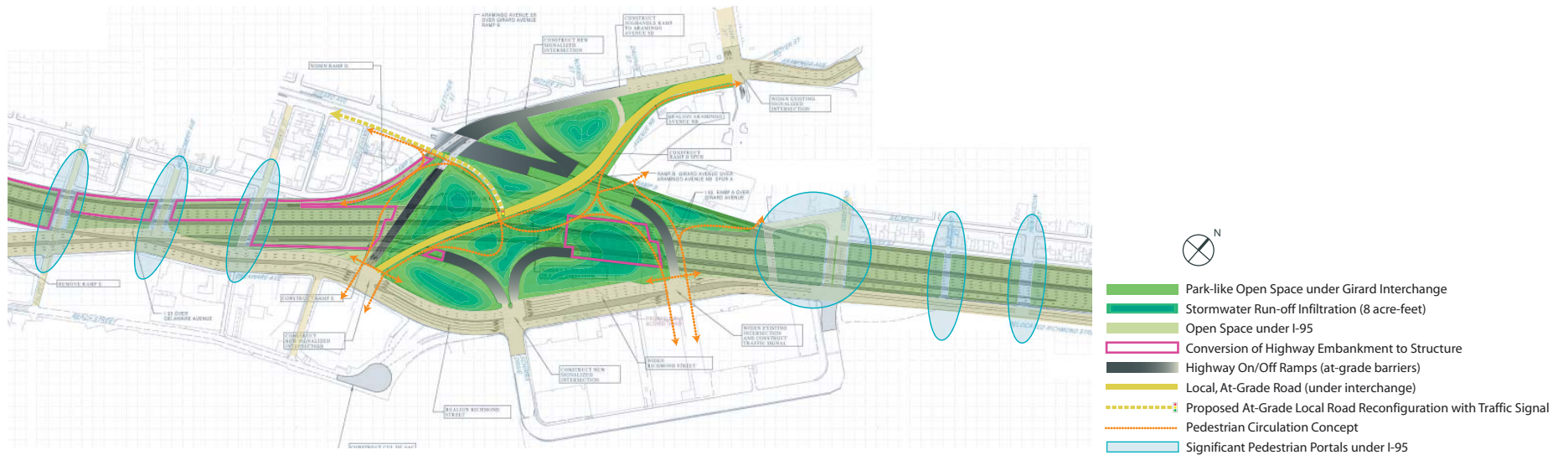
- Include provisions in a zoning overlay that ensure that riverfront development minimizes impact on the riverbed and river habitats.
- Support PennDOT in its construction of its stormwater park and trail extension under the new Girard Avenue Interchange, and consider it a prototype for future infrastructure construction.

Recommendations

Restoring nature is an essential component of Philadelphia's investments in the long-term health, development and management of its riverfront and the city as a whole. Realizing a healthy riverfront requires the following actions:

- Use federal mitigation requirements as an opportunity to create tidal wetlands along Philadelphia's central Delaware riverfront.
- Designate a continuous riparian buffer (minimum 100 feet wide on average) that allows for a rich diversity of plant and animal communities. This will help ensure that parks are ecologically productive and work to improve the health of the river and its habitats.
- Select native vegetation to support local and regional ecology and minimize maintenance.

- Utilize environmentally sensitive technologies, such as pervious paving and stormwater collection gardens that imitate natural processes and help solve environmental problems.
- Create design guidelines for riverfront greenway and connector streets to ensure that the park system is ecologically productive.
- When possible, take advantage of the bend in the Delaware River by orienting streets and buildings in order to optimize solar orientation and to receive passive cooling from summer winds, thus decreasing energy costs.
- Reconstruct failing bulkheads so that they can function as vegetated seawalls, diverse habitat zones and/or terraced wetlands.
- Mandate ecologically sound parking design techniques in parking policy, such as vegetated swales and pervious pavements.
- Establish incentives for the inclusion of green space on private parcels to create a network of open space that includes pervious parking and green roofs.
- Encourage the use of alternative energy sources and networks, such as decentralized power generation and communication networks.
- Reuse historic buildings and landscapes instead of building new structures.
- Standardize the commonwealth's process for the leasing of riparian rights to ensure that private developers include public open space in their site plans.



- Begin integrated planning between PennDOT and the Philadelphia Water Department to ensure collaboration on future infrastructure initiatives, such as the federally mandated reconstruction of I-95 and the combined sewer system.
- Conduct an in-depth ecological study that assesses the impact that large-scale projects such as redesigning I-95 and dredging will have on the Delaware watershed.
- Incorporate the findings of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association’s Upper Delaware Estuary Watershed Database and Mapping project into planning guidelines.

Girard Avenue Interchange as a Community Amenity

In January 2008, PennDOT will begin the reconstruction of the Girard Avenue Interchange. In conjunction with improvements to the interchange, PennDOT can construct a pedestrian-accessible stormwater park that will serve as a community amenity and manage stormwater run-off. See the following page for a vision of this park.





A Vision of the Girard Interchange Connection

The space beneath Interstate 95 at the newly designed Girard Avenue Interchange is imagined as an extension of the greenway to connect Penn Treaty Park and Richmond Street. Stormwater from the highway is filtered down into the park to reduce runoff. Planted sound walls mitigate both noise and air pollution. Innovative lighting beneath the structure creates a safer, more traversable portal between the riverfront and the surrounding neighborhoods. The spaces beneath the elevated structure may also be developed into recreational areas such as skate parks, as shown.



Existing conditions

Purpose
General Findings
Goals
Implement Balanced Economic Goals
Implement Development Guidelines for the Riverfront
Explore Innovative Approaches to Parking

LAND DEVELOPMENT



Taking the long view

Penn's plan for Philadelphia proved that a simple framework can accommodate all types of development. The imprint of Penn's plan is the inspiration for a long-term vision, illustrated here, as a new mixed-use neighborhood near the port and anchored by a new park with views of Center City.

7 Land Development

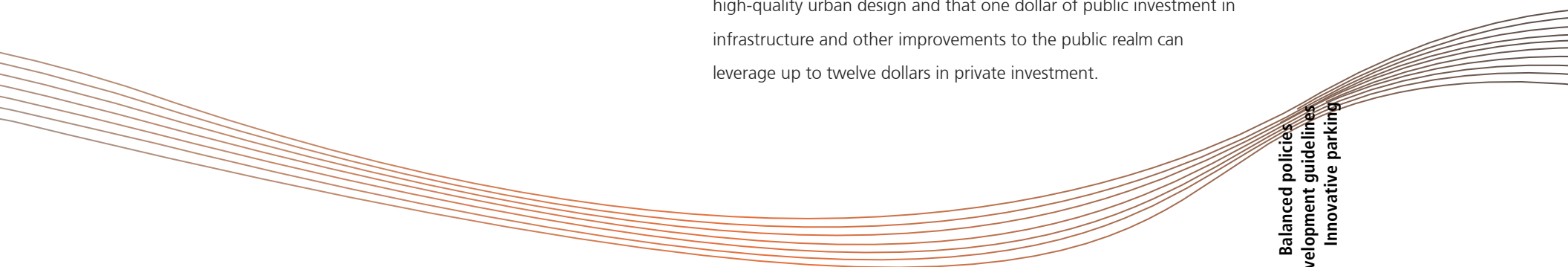
For nearly four decades, public sector attempts to develop the central Delaware have focused largely on Penn's Landing as the centerpiece for a revitalized riverfront. And while economic and political cycles (along with the physical and psychological divide of I-95) have deterred the development of Penn's Landing, market forces, aided by an antiquated zoning code, have begun to profoundly shape the physical form of the central Delaware. The results are best represented by the profusion of large-scale, single-use projects, such as the big-box retail district in South Philadelphia and a gated condominium community north of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge. Studies indicate that the development of a riverfront into a local and regional destination is more likely to achieve sustained success when plans accommodate a wide range of compatible uses. Development controls and land-use policies are essential to promote high-quality, mixed-use urban development.

Purpose

Like movement systems and open space, and development has overarching implications for the riverfront. The civic vision's purpose, then, is similar here: to redevelop the area adjacent to the river's edge in ways that are urban, human-scaled, ecologically sound and transit-oriented, ways that create economic opportunities for the private sector while affording public access to the river and its open space network.

General Findings

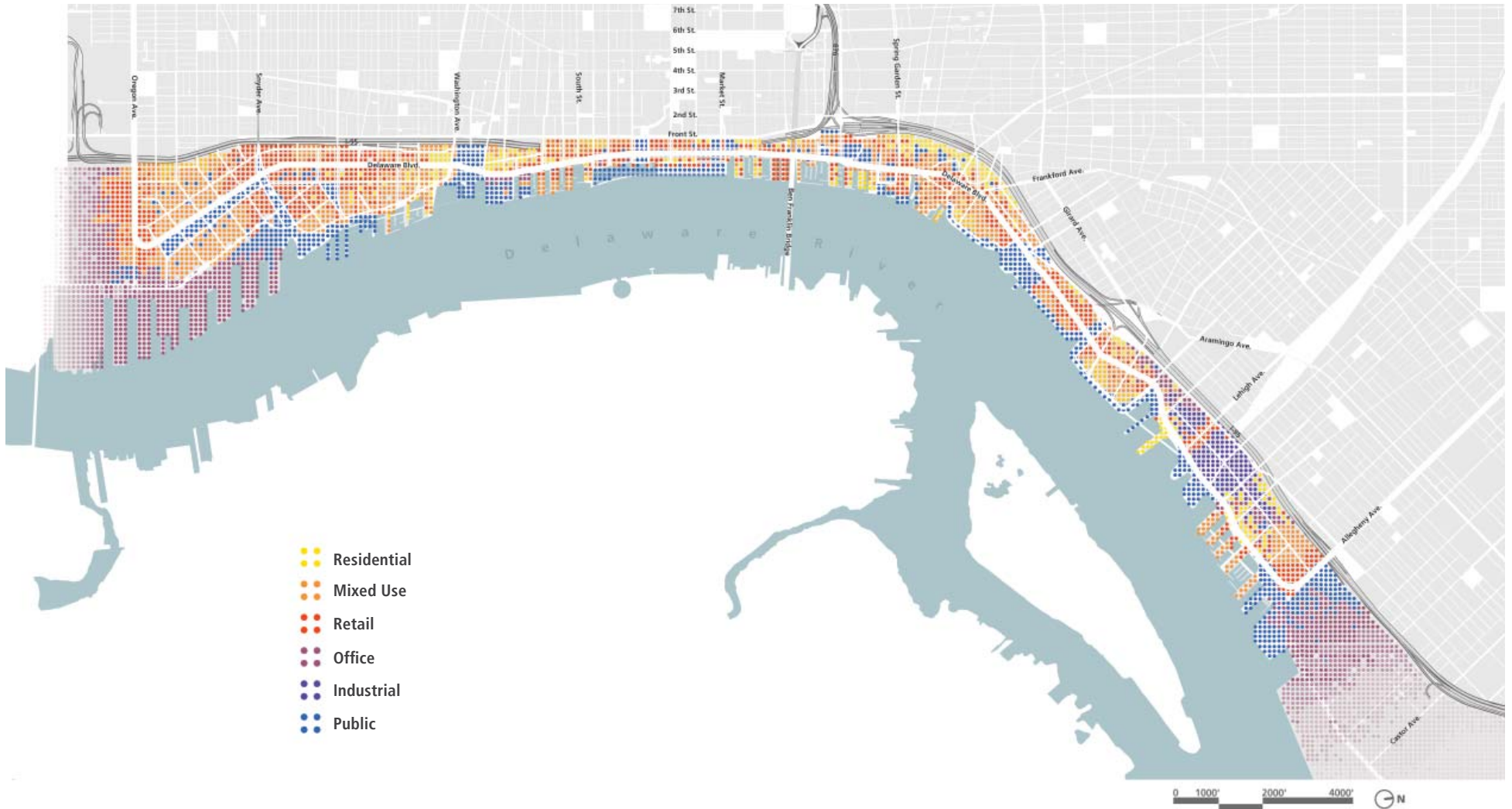
The project team found strong evidence that economic, social and environmental returns increase with sound urban design and planning. Quality urban design guidelines allow for the creation of site plans and buildings that reflect the civic values of public access and urban connectivity, employing a variety of regulatory tools (both physical and economic) to achieve a reasonable balance of buildings, public spaces and land uses. Quality urban design has the potential to increase sales and leasing revenues, increase public safety and contribute to the revitalization of adjacent and nearby areas. It can also generally reduce living costs through the inclusion of mass transit and mixed-income housing. Research indicates that an increase of up to 20 percent in rental and capitalized values can be created by high-quality urban design and that one dollar of public investment in infrastructure and other improvements to the public realm can leverage up to twelve dollars in private investment.



Balanced policies
Development guide lines
Innovative parking

Illustrative 50-Year Vision: One Possible Scenario

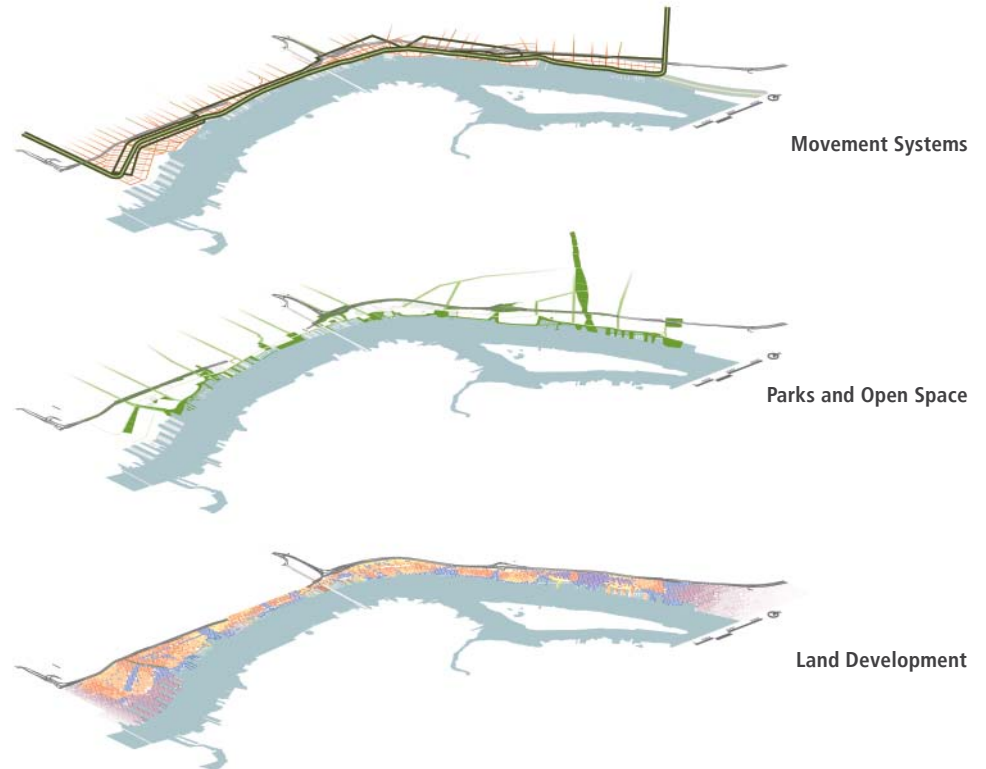
The civic vision recognizes that land use and intensity change over time. This land-use diagram illustrates a mix of uses in the south that responds to proposed regional water, rail and highway access. While residential uses will also extend neighborhoods to the river, jobs, retail and public amenities are the focus of the civic vision's recommendations.



Land-Development Goals

Together, street networks and openspace systems create a framework within which land development may occur. However, effective land-use policies are crucial to the achievement of a dense, pedestrian-scale urban environment. The following goals can serve to guide Philadelphia as it reevaluates its current land-use policies along the central Delaware:

- 1. Capitalize on Economic Potential.** Based on current economic trends and forecasts, the city has the opportunity to balance investment in public infrastructure with quality development.
- 2. Implement Development Guidelines for the Riverfront.** The city has the opportunity to provide responsible riverfront land-use guidelines for property owners and developers so that the development of the central Delaware riverfront can be realized in accordance with the civic values embodied in *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware*.
- 3. Explore Innovative Approaches to Parking.** Develop a parking policy that lessens parking's visual and operational impact on the streetscape and the pedestrian environment.



Creating a Framework for Land Development

In order to realize a built environment that is dense and pedestrian-oriented, the city must plan for streets and open space in a comprehensive manner. A street grid that extends to the riverfront is the most formative element of the plan and serves as the foundation of the civic vision. Then, within the extended grid, spaces are defined for natural systems, parks and open spaces. The street grid and natural-systems network form the framework for land development.

The city cannot cannot rely on the market alone to bring quality urban development to the riverfront.

Goal 1: Capitalize on Economic Potential

Based on current economic trends and forecasts, the city has the opportunity to balance investment in public infrastructure with quality development.

The central Delaware riverfront has the potential to be a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly series of mixed-use neighborhoods and development sectors that are also economically, socially and environmentally sound. Its location along one of the nation's great harbor rivers and its proximity to Center City afford the central Delaware substantial possibilities for residential, industrial and commercial growth. The civic vision can be realized if land development is based upon a long-term vision one grounded in an understanding of the city's economic potential.

Discussion

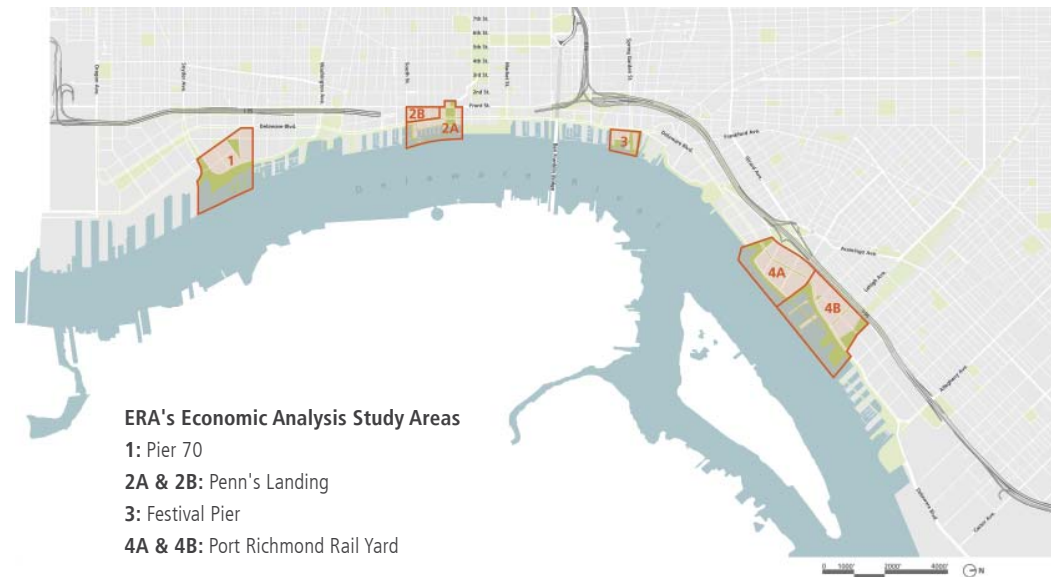
Philadelphia's economic health was seriously challenged by significant population and employment declines in the late twentieth century. While the city continues to struggle with poverty, job growth and the retaining college-educated young people, some recent economic trends and forecasts provide reason for optimism. For instance, recent population increases in Center City, along with an anticipated city-wide growth in employment over the next twenty years, are likely to improve Philadelphia's overall marketability and create new opportunities for residential, office, industrial and retail space. Recent trends and forecasts suggest the following:

- Patterns of population loss vary significantly by neighborhood. While neighborhoods such as West and North Philadelphia have lost population, redevelopment initiatives coupled with the residential property-tax abatement program have produced 11,586 new housing units in Center City since 1997, with an average increase of 1,390 units per year since 2000. In fact, 1,932 new housing units were constructed in 2006, and another 1,189 are under construction. A recent study named Center City one of five "fully developed downtowns" in the country, all of which are characterized by a large population, a high percentage of wealthy and college-educated residents and steady household growth since 1970. In addition, according to population forecasts prepared by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), the rate of population loss citywide is expected to slow by 2030, with continued growth in Center City, a stable population in South Philadelphia and slight gains in lower North Philadelphia.
- Philadelphia is projected to add approximately 52,000 new jobs citywide between 2010 and 2030, according to Woods & Poole, Inc., a demographic forecasting service based in Washington, D.C. (the only private source of long-term employment forecasts).
- An economic analysis completed by Economics Research Associates (ERA) examined four prototypical sites along the central Delaware River. These sites were Pier 70 in South Philadelphia, Festival Pier at the foot of Spring Garden Street, Penn's Landing and the Port

Richmond rail yards. They stated that four thousand new households could be added on these sites by 2030. ERA then conducted a preliminary retail-demand model using these four thousand new households and found that, assuming an average annual income of \$50,000, these new households would generate \$200 million in gross annual income, which could be expected to create roughly \$43.4 million in retail-spending potentials—a potential that may be dispersed across the city.

- ERA's analysis goes on to estimate that the total tax revenues for the four study sites could approach \$177 million on an annual basis. At buildout, these sites are estimated to have a combined 2,500 new housing units and 14,000 employees. It is important to note that these four sites serve as prototypes; the economic benefits associated with them could be applied more broadly to other redevelopment projects across the project area. See Chapter Eight for a more detailed discussion.

- Moreover, the addition of 52,000 new jobs citywide over the next twenty-five years could result in a series of positive consequences. If these new jobs materialize, they are expected to produce demand for roughly sixteen million square feet of commercial space citywide. Some employment growth can be accommodated in existing vacant space. But with the extensive amount of vacant and underutilized land available along the city's riverfront, it is reasonable to consider that a portion of these needs could be accommodated on the central Delaware. The addition of that many new jobs would also translates



into consumer spending, which in turn would increase demand for retail space. Despite the short-term public sector costs of subsidies, riverfront redevelopment will provide fiscal returns to the city of Philadelphia. As stated previously, one dollar in public investment in infrastructure (streets, boulevards, parks and trails) can yield up to twelve dollars in private investment. Achieving these outcomes will require proactive public policies, including clear and cohesive economic-development strategies, specific business retention and recruitment efforts and reductions in the business, wage and professional licensing taxes.

A View of the Northern Riverfront

The city's industrial economy grows and shifts to respond to current and future markets. This illustration shows the redevelopment of the Conrail property, with job centers and an extension of the Port Richmond neighborhood to the river's edge. Providing connections to the street and highway system and expanding park opportunities creates infrastructure amenities that will increase land values.





Early Action

The city should commit to building and maintaining high-quality public spaces. The first phase of this goal is the identification of catalytic projects. These projects can include infrastructure improvements (roadways, transit-station upgrades, parking structures, etc.) and civic amenities (public open spaces, event programming, community facilities, etc.). It is important that the city takes the initiative and invests in the public realm, as these investments will help induce and sustain growth. In doing this, the city will ensure that the riverfront is developed in a way that balances public and private goals and that demonstrates an ongoing commitment to the revitalization of the riverfront.

Recommendations

Comprehensive and equitable development policies require the judicious use of public dollars. Proactive investment initiatives are essential to inducing and sustaining growth and creating demand. The civic vision recommends that the city do the following:

- Explore tax increment financing (TIF) in a district-wide manner. Widely used across the United States, TIF is a form of financing incentive in which future tax revenues generated by new development (established during a baseline year) are guaranteed on bonds issued to fund up-front capital improvements, such as the upgrading of infrastructure and the inclusion of open space. A TIF's ultimate goal is to support future development. See Chapter Eight for additional details on the benefits of TIF districts.

Goal 2: Implement Development Guidelines for the Riverfront

The city has the opportunity to provide responsible riverfront land use guidelines for property owners and developers so that the development of the central Delaware riverfront can be realized in accordance with the civic values embodied in *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware*.



40th Street, Philadelphia

This supermarket in University City successfully integrates a large-scale development into the street grid framework.

Milwaukee

Milwaukee's waterfront is an example of successful mid-rise development.

Historic Preservation

The current docking of the majestic SS United States amid vast surface parking and empty lots would not be permitted under new development guidelines.



The current Philadelphia Zoning Code is outdated and provides little to guide the significant development pressures along the central Delaware. Nearly all new development in the project area requires a zoning variance in order to be realized, making most projects subject to review and negotiation by civic associations, the Zoning Board of Adjustment and City Council on a parcel-by-parcel basis, without regard to comprehensive planning or sound systems thinking. The result is a fragmented collection of uses along the riverfront, from big-box stores to gated communities built, without a cohesive public-space framework, independent traffic-impact studies or mitigation recommendations, or an understanding of the environmental impact

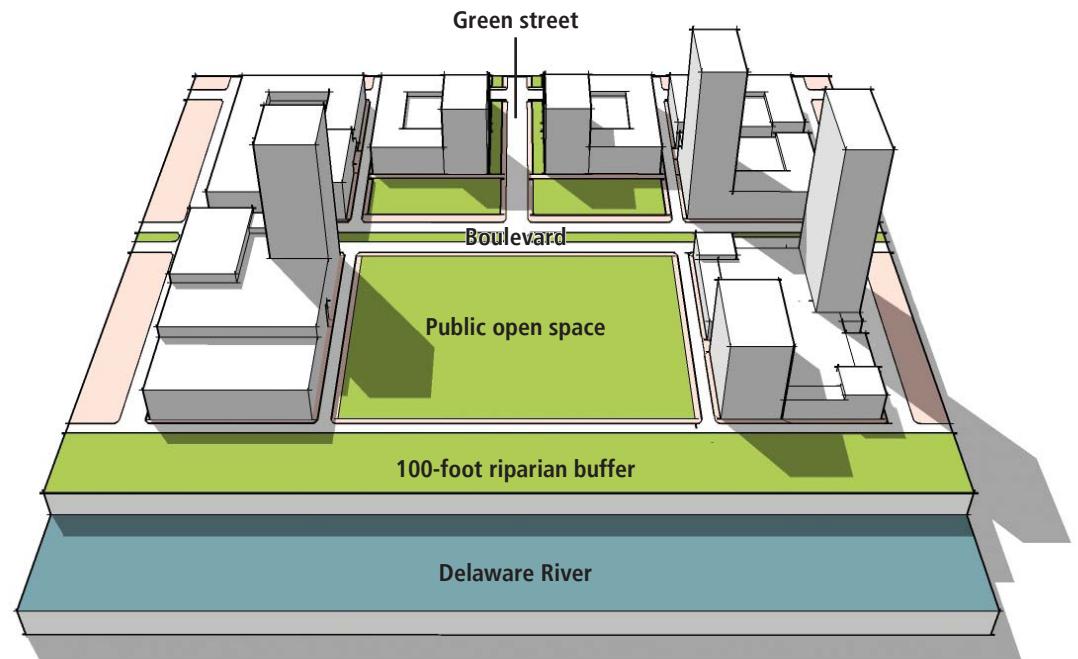
of the development on the river and the city's fraying infrastructure. Unaided by clear rules or a plan for appropriate riverfront development, most of the currently proposed residential and commercial development in the project area follows the current trend of suburban-style, automobile-dependent designs that separate the city from the river. Philadelphia must establish sound and responsible riverfront zoning that balances quality development with public-interest concerns about access and open space.

Discussion

Studies from around the world indicate that economic, social and environmental returns increase when urban design is of high quality. Center City Philadelphia is a local example; in recent years it has grown to become the third largest downtown in the nation, currently absorbing about two thousand new housing units per year, with 41 percent of new occupants moving from outside the city. Thanks to its pedestrian-scaled street network, it also has the largest population that walks to work of any downtown in the country. *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* envisions the central Delaware as an extension of the human-scaled street grid of Penn's original plan for the city. Implementing sound zoning will ensure that buildings and development fill in the grid in a manner that protects the public's right to have access to streets, sidewalks, parks and the river.

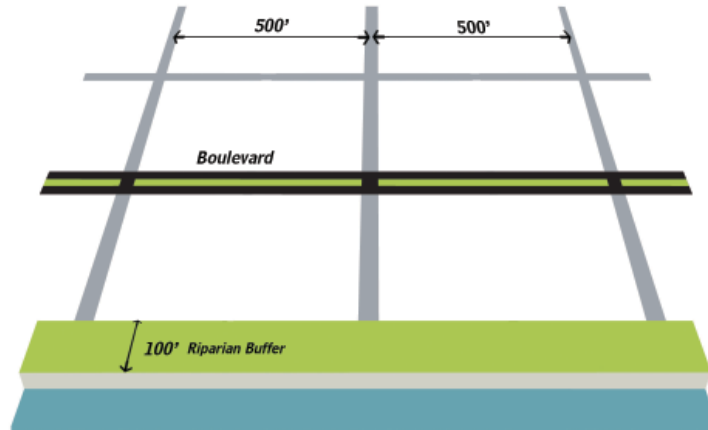
This civic vision's focus on serving neighborhoods, city residents and visitors by developing beautiful places for all citizens will make the central Delaware a world-class riverfront that everyone can enjoy.

To achieve this level of quality urban design, a new policy framework is necessary. The power of policy is already clear in Philadelphia, as neighborhoods such as Society Hill, Yorktown and Eastwick were the result of deliberate development and zoning efforts. Indeed, the work of the current Zoning Code Commission underscores the public's commitment to zoning reform. Some of the most popular waterfront destinations in North America are the product of numerous stages of planning, including Baltimore's Inner Harbor and Vancouver's Granville Island. New York's Battery Park City took decades and careful phasing before high-quality redevelopment occurred. Numerous cities around the country, including Denver, Chicago and Milwaukee, are instituting new zoning codes in order to encourage quality urban development.



Urban Design

The lessons of William Penn's original urban design are the basis for our recommended form-based regulations. The diagram above illustrates the basic infrastructure framework that provides connections from the city to the river and across the redevelopment efforts along the riverfront.



Land Subdivision Regulations

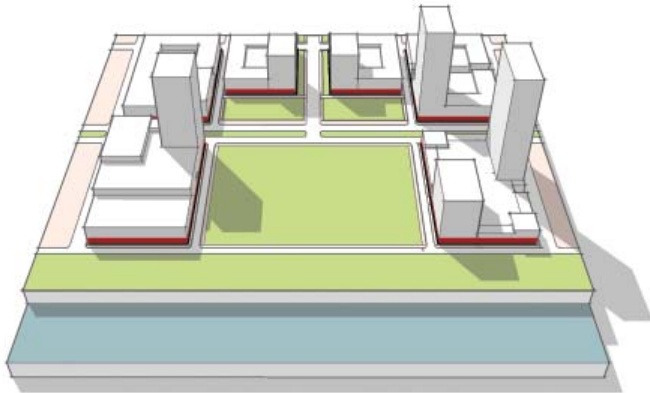
Subdivision regulations are the basis for development in both urban and suburban communities across the country. This civic vision recommends a simple framework for this land subdivision that provides access along the river within a riparian buffer and access to the river approximately every 500 feet that connects to the existing city grid.

Early Actions

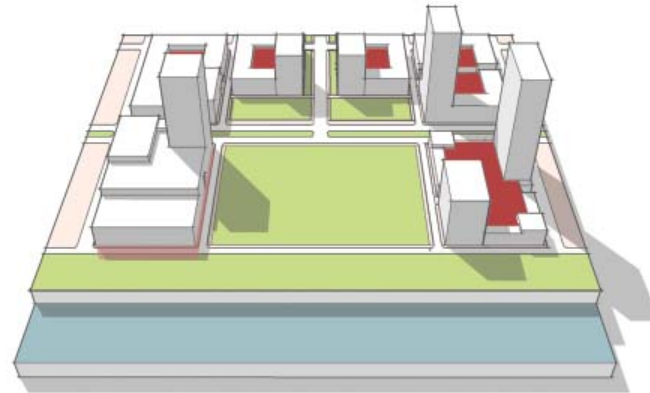
Writing and adopting an interim zoning overlay is the first action necessary to ensure that the values and principles embedded in the civic vision are protected. In the short term, the zoning overlay will provide communities with guidelines upon which to evaluate proposals. This civic vision also recommends a long-term zoning ordinance that ensures that civic values are fully realized. The following are suggested elements for new zoning regulations (both interim and long term):

- Require access to the river approximately every 500 feet that connects to the existing city grid. Based on the average Philadelphia block size, the proposed street-access grid ensures that buildings would be no wider than 500 feet, with streets and walkways granting public access and river views.

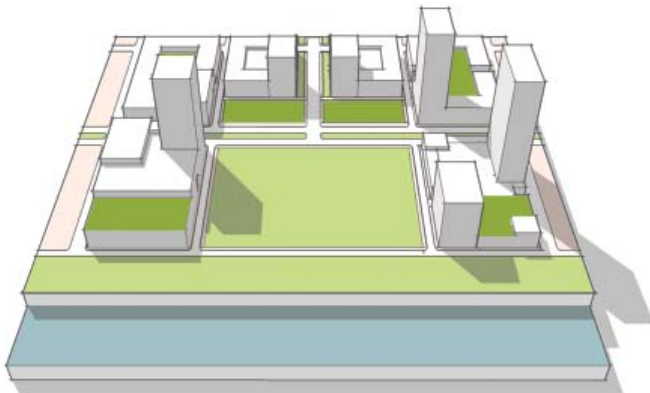
- On publicly controlled land, such as Penn's Landing and Festival Pier, public access shall exist every 250 feet.
- Provide for a 100-foot riparian buffer where possible for a riverfront trail, stormwater management and recreational use.
- Buildings should be built up to the sidewalk line, with active ground floors along the boulevard and primary streets. Ensure that there are no blank walls on primary streets.
- Integrate towers into low-rise building blocks by staggering them so as to ensure views from adjoining buildings. Ensure that tall buildings front open space, when possible, with the open space scaled to serve the density of the surrounding development. It should be noted that this team does not view building heights as a key determining factor in quality development in the short term.
- Do not allow parking and building-service requirements to dominate the riverfront. Limit visible surface-parking lots and freestanding-structure parking garages. Create service streets (like Sansom Street) for parking and service entrances to buildings and developments.
 - Consider increased-height and density incentives to developers making use of progressive parking solutions.
 - Ensure that sidewalks are pedestrian-friendly by limiting curb cuts and driveways.
- Protect and enhance the environment by requiring sustainable building practices such as green roofs, passive solar energy, car sharing and other environmentally friendly planning and building techniques.

**Urban Setbacks**

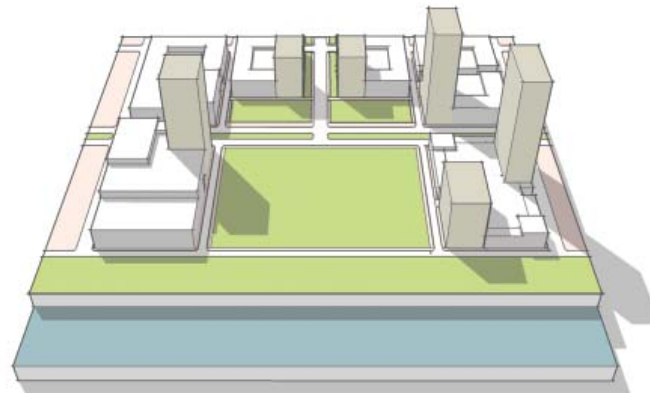
Buildings should be built up to the sidewalk line, with active ground floors along the boulevard and primary streets.

**Parking**

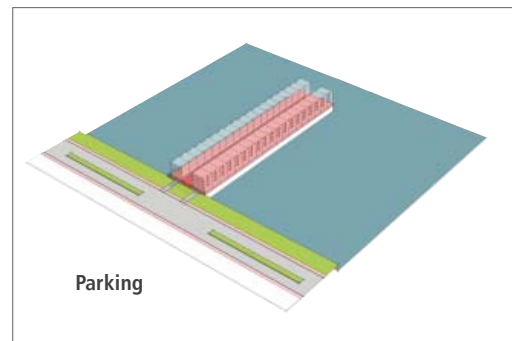
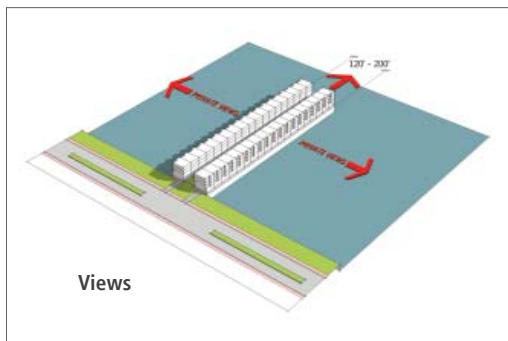
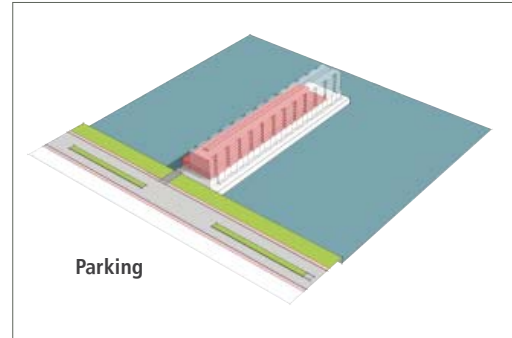
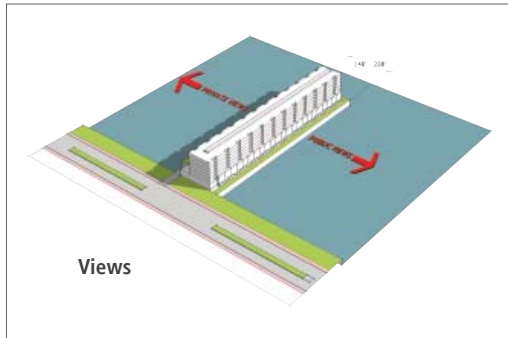
Consider incentives to developers that limit visible surface parking lots and freestanding structure parking garages.

**Green Infrastructure**

Sustainable building practices provide opportunities for privately developed open space and green roofs.

**High-Rise Development**

Integrate towers into low-rise blocks by staggering them so as to ensure views from adjoining buildings.



Pier Development

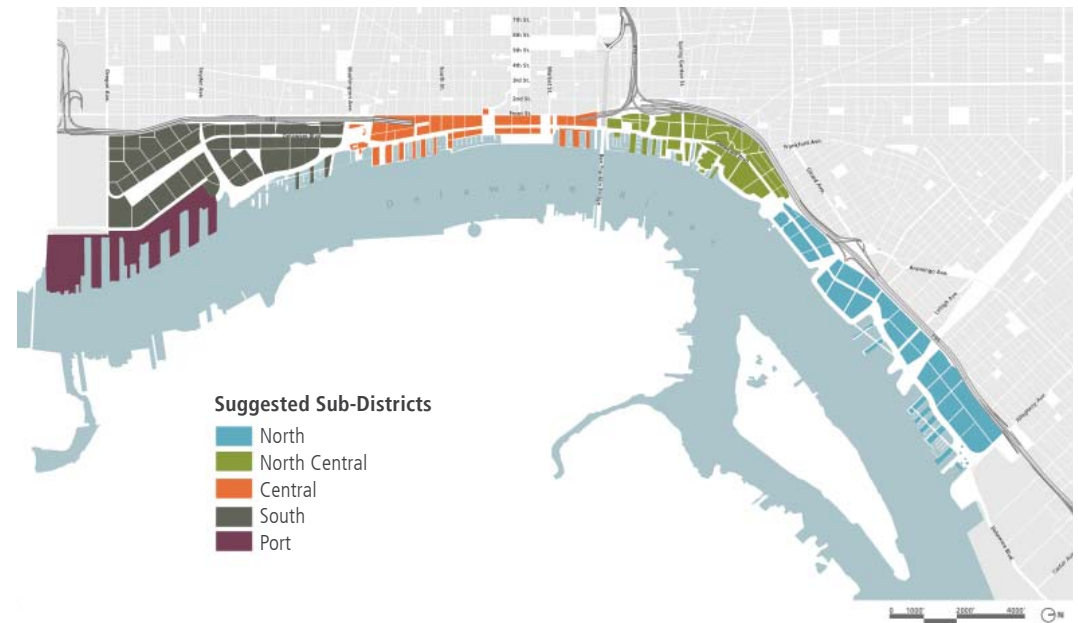
Develop guidelines for pier development that are based on the size and location of the piers. Parking should not dominate the piers and should comply with the proposed general parking guidelines. Piers less than 60 feet wide should be used as public space or as parts of tidal wetland remediation projects.

- Provide incentives for inclusionary zoning that enables mixed-income housing along the waterfront.
- Ensure that the riverfront retains a mixture of uses by not allowing single uses to dominate.
- Protect the past by ensuring that existing buildings are preserved, adapted and reused. Use the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Ordinance to protect the architectural, cultural and historic heritage of the colonial and industrial periods. Adaptive reuse of historic structures and sites should be pursued to enhance new development.
- Facilitate planning and policy-writing efforts with developers, land owners and citizens so that public and private goods are served in walkable, mixed-use riverfront communities. These efforts would include workshops and educational programs on the merits of sound urban design. These planning and policy-writing efforts would replace the current method in which stakeholders review preexisting proposals that are already moving through the zoning system.
- Incorporate public art into open-space and building designs.

Recommendations

Zoning initiatives establish a framework for future development. With these tools in place, the city will be able to realize the civic vision of enhanced riverfront access, new public open spaces and quality, mixed-use neighborhoods. In the longer term the city will also need to accomplish these zoning-related aims:

- Create a master plan for the central Delaware in conjunction with the work of the Zoning Code Commission. This master plan should address desirable densities along the riverfront (with a minimum Floor Area Ratio of 4 in most areas without existing residential fabric). Drawn from this master plan, a permanent zoning ordinance should determine density and intensity appropriate for districts of differing character on the central Delaware. We recommend that the Zoning Code Commission consider the following potential subdistricts:
 - North: Allegheny Avenue to Penn Treaty Park
 - North Central: Penn Treaty Park to the Benjamin Franklin Bridge
 - Central: Benjamin Franklin Bridge to Washington Avenue
 - South: Washington Avenue to Oregon Avenue
 - Port: The existing Port of Philadelphia, south of Snyder Avenue
- Adopt the extension of the street grid by adding it to the official city plan. The extension of the street grid across the central Delaware would result in an average block size of 400 feet by 500 feet, which





Significant Structures

These former industrial structures at Piers 3 and 5 at Penn's Landing are models of adaptive reuse.



Development and Open Space

Quality urban development can frame open space in numerous interesting ways. Shown here is the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Central Park.



Downtown Vancouver Heights

Due to increased development pressures, the city identified specific sites for taller buildings and allowed for a height increase of up to 600 feet.

would become the framework for future growth and development. This would ensure that the public has access (both physically and visually) to the river along connected streets every 400 or 500 feet—roughly the equivalent of one Center City block.

- Enact housing, tax and land-use policies that effectively manage neighborhood change in the project area.
- Coordinate long-term planning with the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority, the Philadelphia Commerce Department and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation to ensure that future riverfront development corresponds to positive growth of the working port and other job-producing uses.

- Encourage job creation and business incubation along the riverfront.
- Coordinate development of the riverfront with the growth of the Philadelphia Navy Yard as a commercial and industrial center.
- Design all public spaces, buildings, parks, roadways, trails, bridges and infrastructure along the central Delaware riverfront to the highest contemporary design standards. Coordinate design review, implementation, management and oversight to ensure excellence.
- Integrate contemporary public art into public works and open spaces.

A View of South Philadelphia

Water, highway, street and transit access provide the economic framework for denser, mixed-use growth that could accommodate projected population increases.



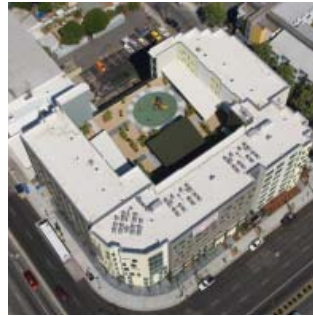
Goal 3: Explore Innovative Approaches to Parking.

Develop a parking policy that lessens parking's visual and operational impact on the streetscape and the pedestrian environment.



San Jose, CA

This mixed-use block by David Baker + Partners illustrates the concept of "embedded" parking. The civic vision recommends a policy that offers developers height and density bonuses when they use progressive parking solutions.



Large portions of the central Delaware riverfront are dedicated to parking lots, and many proposals for riverfront developments feature "podium" garage structures that block views and access to the river. The auto-dominated nature of the riverfront diminishes its potential for quality, human-scaled urban development and public space. The abundance of both underutilized land and development interest in the project area gives the city a rare opportunity to integrate parking into a well-designed urban context instead of allowing it to define the streetscape and detract from the pedestrian experience. The civic vision proposes policy initiatives that ensure that vehicles do not dominate the riverfront. Though parking is an essential component of any transportation system, a successful riverfront must actively promote a pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented development pattern that will balance pedestrian and auto-oriented uses.

Discussion

The city is in the midst of a shift in its traditional thinking about parking design and policy. Philadelphians are demanding a higher-quality urban environment in which parking facilities enhance the public realm. It is no longer enough simply to reduce the negative impacts of parking by regulating location and garage size. The city is developing requirements and incentive-based policies focused on improving parking-structure design, as well as incorporating an integrated transportation policy that encourages the use of transit. Elements of such policies could include encouraging PhillyCarShare, an expanding regional car sharing program; identifying locations for remote parking; and using innovative systems such as automated garages. Automated parking systems offer many benefits and are ideal for the urban environment. They feature lower maintenance costs than traditional structured parking and generally need 50 percent less space to handle the same number of vehicles.

Many cities have begun to experiment with innovative parking strategies. Chattanooga, Tennessee, has developed peripheral parking garages and a free shuttle service to its central business district, which intercepts commuters and visitors before they drive into the city center, thus reducing traffic problems. Copenhagen and Seattle have installed real-time, computerized parking systems that are designed to guide drivers to available garages and parking spaces.

Early Action

To be successful, a riverfront requires the right balance of pedestrian, transit and vehicular traffic. To achieve a desirable balance on the central Delaware riverfront, the city should create incentive-based policies that facilitate responsible parking strategies. We recommend that the city develop a coordinated transportation, traffic and parking policy for the region that encourages land and waterborne transit and mandates some combination of car sharing, remote parking and commuting allowances for riverfront employees, as well as other strategies that will lessen the effects of traffic and parking on riverfront land.

Recommendations

Parking should not be allowed to dominate the riverfront landscape in the form of visible surface lots, freestanding-structure parking or exposed parking podiums. Instead, parking should be built on service streets (as it is in Center City Philadelphia), embedded within the mass of a building or placed underground (when this is economically and environmentally feasible). Implementing the following parking initiatives will help the city realize a pedestrian-friendly riverfront:

- Institute new zoning regulations along the riverfront that limit the number of parking spaces per development and that require investment in the establishment or maintenance of transit stops, car share parking, bicycle parking and other car-reduction programs.

- Educate lending institutions on the economic benefits associated with developing a project that includes reduced parking and/or well-designed parking.
- Establish a policy that offers developers height and density bonuses to developers for projects that embed parking within their buildings, place parking underground, utilize remote or valet parking as appropriate and promote mass transit.
- Incorporate designated car share and bicycle parking spots into future development requirements for riverfront property.
- Form partnerships with Camden's Tweeter Center, the Camden River Sharks and the Philadelphia Sports Complex to use their underutilized parking areas on non-event days for remote parking.
- Incorporate sustainable-design standards into the design guidelines for surface or on-street parking. These may include the use of pervious surfaces, enhanced landscaping and other creative methods for stormwater capture and processing.
- Raise parking-meter rates in locations where spaces are at a premium, and enter into agreements with local developers to share parking revenues. These revenues could be used for providing public amenities or for the ongoing maintenance of public spaces.

SPOTLIGHT: PHILLYCARSHARE

PhillyCarShare has grown to more than twenty-five thousand members since its inception in 2002, making it the world's largest regional car-sharing organization. This flexible system has removed over eight thousand cars from Philadelphia streets, reduced pollution and saved each user an annual average of \$4000.

PhillyCarShare's popularity challenges the city's zoning requirement of one on-site space per new residential unit constructed. PhillyCarShare is forming partnerships with developers to assert that each PhillyCarShare parking space in an urban residential development reduces the need for up to twenty-five private parking spaces per development. Encouraging more PhillyCarShare pods in the project area (or encouraging developer-subsidized car sharing) will reduce construction costs for developers and provide positive environmental benefits for the general public.

Purpose
Goals
Establish Creative Strategies for Financing the Vision
Create a Strategy for Comprehensive Management and Oversight
Modernize Public Policy
Continue the Dialogue

IMPLEMENTATION



A vision of Penn Treaty Park that imagines a connected riverfront trail and a naturalized edge. State funding for such enhancements can be available as early as 2008.

Implementation

With major riverfront development on the horizon, an effective, open and transparent implementation strategy is crucial to ensure that the central Delaware riverfront is developed in accordance with citizen values. Civic groups are concerned about the impact of development on their communities, and the coordination of public and private investments will help to ensure that the riverfront becomes a public asset to the city of Philadelphia. While current public-sector efforts are in effect to oversee riverfront development, to date they have fallen short of the coordination needed to create a world-class riverfront.

Previous chapters and Chapter Nine (“Phasing”) offer numerous suggestions for short-term improvements that could constitute first steps toward the realization of the civic vision. However, larger choices about financing, management and oversight will also need to be made for the long-term revitalization of the riverfront. In other cities, major infrastructure improvements along riverfronts have been financed through innovative public-investment methods. These have included the creation of tax increment financing districts and special services districts and the use of dedicated sales tax revenue. These and other funding mechanisms would need to be established in conjunction with riverfront development strategies that include management, oversight and civic engagement.

Purpose

To develop a cohesive implementation strategy that will aid the city in making the vision presented in this report a reality.

Goals

The central Delaware riverfront is a large area, and development will occur over many years, requiring the ongoing commitment of both public and private stakeholders. To achieve the key objectives of the vision, the following goals must be addressed:

1. Establish Creative Strategies for Financing Public Improvements:

The city of Philadelphia should consider tax abatement districts and special services districts, but also look to other financing methods.

2. Create a Strategy for Comprehensive Implementation, Management and Oversight:

Build on existing governance along the riverfront and establish a set of required functions for agencies invested in the future of the riverfront.

3. Modernize Public Policy: Forward-thinking zoning regulations and land-use policy can catalyze quality development and promote sound urban-design practices. These changes will require new policy standards that incorporate community input.

4. Continue the Dialogue: The Central Delaware Advisory Group has called for sustained public input—a hallmark of this planning process—to continue through the implementation stage.

Each of the implementation goals is addressed in more detail in the following sections. Each section outlines overarching goals that could serve to inform stakeholders of the wide variety of tools available for implementation. There are no single recommendations for implementation; rather, we offer a set of recommended actions that Philadelphia can take to ensure that the goals of the civic vision guide the development along the central Delaware for generations to come.

In the spring of 2008, PennPraxis will present a citizen’s guide to implementation.

Goal 1: Establish Creative Strategies for Financing Public Improvements

The city of Philadelphia should consider tax abatement districts and special services districts, but also look to other financing methods.

The *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* will be realized through a combination of public and private investments. The long-term infrastructure improvements recommended in the plan include the creation of Delaware Boulevard (complete with a riverfront transit system), the creation of numerous new park spaces and a continuous trail, and the construction of a street grid that extends major streets to allow riverfront access. Taken together, these improvements offer a framework for further development. A closer look at unit costs for improvements is provided in the appendix.

The following are choices the city can make when developing its strategy for revitalizing the riverfront. They are not mutually exclusive, as each has distinct benefits that should be explored. Today, the city uses many mechanisms to attract private development and manage public improvements, including property-tax abatements, special services districts, Keystone Opportunity Zones, tax increment financing (TIF), and transit revitalization investment districts (TRID). Most of these programs could be used to fund some of the large-scale improvements to public space presented in this civic vision. However, achieving the vision will also require new financing strategies and partnerships.

Financing Options for the Implementation and Maintenance of Infrastructure

In order to create the infrastructure critical to enhancing the central Delaware riverfront, Philadelphia would have to supplement outside funding with its own funds, likely raised through the issuance of bonds and local taxes. The following financing programs are in use throughout Philadelphia:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

As is evident in major cities around the United States, tax increment financing can be a valuable public-finance tool for redevelopment projects. TIF funds are used to leverage public funds to promote private-sector activity in a targeted district or area. To date, Philadelphia has used TIFs sparingly, mostly on single development parcels. However, using the mechanism to establish one or more area-wide TIF districts along the central Delaware riverfront could provide Philadelphia with a near-term revenue stream to help fund some of the infrastructure and public-space improvements outlined in previous chapters.

TIF districts are typically established in areas with redevelopment potential. They enable municipalities to raise money to finance essential infrastructure improvements by leveraging public-sector bonds based on future tax gains. The city of Philadelphia continues to receive property-tax revenues generated by existing properties in TIF districts as of the “base year” (the year in which the TIF district begins). However, tax revenues generated by increases in real property values following the TIF’s establishment, referred to as the increment, are typically deposited into a trust fund and go to repay the bonds used to fund specific initiatives. Property-tax revenues collected by the local school district (as well as any other special taxing district) are not lowered by the tax increment financing process. Depending on a particular state’s enabling legislation, tax increment revenues can be used immediately, saved for a particular project or bonded to maximize available funds.

Establishing a TIF allows the city to invest selected new property-tax dollars into the neighborhood from which they came (instead of into the city’s General Fund) for a defined period (typically twenty years). Since it is assumed that significant increases in tax revenue will be generated as a result of redevelopment, this increase is used to



Tax Increment Financing District Studies

The Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) prepared an analysis of a prototypical TIF district from the Ben Franklin Bridge to the PECO station east of I-95. Their analysis illustrates the potential capture of \$300 million to finance public infrastructure. An economic analysis completed by Economic Research Associates (ERA) of Washington, D.C. illustrates the redevelopment potential of four sample sites for TIF financing:

1. Pier 70 in South Philadelphia,
2. Penn's Landing,
3. Festival Pier at the foot of Spring Garden Street, and
4. Portions of the Port Richmond rail yard.

ERA estimates that the four sites could leverage \$371 million in TIF bonding capacity, as well as non-TIF tax revenues of up to \$177 million per year.

| TIF Studies: Site-Specific Opportunities | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|--|---------------|
| | Pier 70 in South Philadelphia | Penn's Landing | Festival Pier at Spring Garden Terminus | Port Richmond Rail Yard at Lehigh Viaduct Terminus | Port Richmond Rail Yard at Conrail site | Total |
| Acreage | 50 | 29 | 13 | 59 | 75 | 226 |
| Developable Acreage | 20 | 11 | 5 | 32 | 30 | 98 |
| Program Square Feet | 3,469,900 | 1,920,912 | 908,740 | 5,641,716 | 5,145,440 | 17,086,708 |
| TIF Generation | \$58,600,000 | \$65,700,000 | \$32,200,000 | \$162,500,000 | \$52,300,000 | \$371,300,000 |
| TIF\$ per Acre | \$1,172,000 | \$2,265,517 | \$2,476,923 | \$2,754,237 | \$697,333 | \$1,642,920 |
| TIF\$ per Square Foot | \$17 | \$34 | \$35 | \$29 | \$10 | \$22 |
| Annual On-Site Tax Revenue | \$34,145,000 | \$19,069,000 | \$8,852,000 | \$47,733,000 | \$67,030,000 | \$176,829,000 |

Source: Economics Research Associates

leverage the issuance of bond funds that can be spent immediately on public-works projects that will further increase property values within the district. The widespread use of TIF reflects its success as a key tool to finance public improvements in cities across the United States. Chicago alone contains over 150 TIF districts. Millennium Park was financed in this fashion, and its \$340 million public investment is projected to yield \$5 billion in private investment in the surrounding area in its first ten years of operation. Similarly, Atlanta expects to earn a twenty-fold return on the \$1.66 billion bond that the city leveraged for its Beltline project.

Four Sample TIF Sites

An economic analysis completed by Economics Research Associates (ERA) of Washington, D.C. illustrates the potential of four sample sites for TIF financing along the central Delaware riverfront: Pier 70 in South Philadelphia, Penn's Landing, Festival Pier at the foot of Spring Garden Street, and portions of the Port Richmond rail yards (a total of approximately 243.5 acres). Assuming a market-supportable, prototypical redevelopment program on each of these four sites, ERA estimates that the four sites combined could leverage up to \$371 million in TIF bonding capacity, which could be made available for public improvements; redevelopment on these four candidate sites could also generate non-TIF tax revenues of up to \$177 million per year that could be used for citywide services.

A Sample TIF District

If implemented along the central Delaware, a TIF district would have the potential to leverage funding that could be used for district-wide infrastructure investment, such as constructing the greenway or portions of the new street grid or undertaking improvements to Delaware Boulevard. To test the potential of a large TIF district on the central Delaware, the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (the city's designated agent to handle the TIF program) analyzed anticipated yields from a sample TIF district drawn to encompass a portion of the riverfront facing high development pressure: the area from the Benjamin Franklin Bridge north to the PECO Delaware Generating Station (a total of approximately 120 acres). Taking into account \$1.9 billion in anticipated construction over the next twenty years (and a percentage of tax-abated properties), the study highlights the possibility of realizing up to \$300 million that could be dedicated to the early construction of parks, streets and the boulevard along the central Delaware. Further, this development could generate up to \$25 million in annual non-TIF tax revenues during the twenty-year TIF term, including wage, business and other taxes.

The analyses conducted by ERA and PIDC are meant to demonstrate the potential of TIF districts to capture significant funding to help the city finance much-needed public-infrastructure improvements along the riverfront (either site-specific or through the creation of a district).

| TIF Studies: District-Wide Benefits | |
|--|--|
| | Ben Franklin Bridge to PECO Plant |
| Acreage | 120 |
| Program Square Feet | 6,750,000 |
| TIF Generation | \$300,000,000 |
| TIF\$ per Acre | \$2,500,000 |
| TIF\$ per Square Foot | \$44 |
| Annual On-Site Tax Revenue | \$25,000,000 |

Source: Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation



Aker

Settled in 1999, the largest TIF district in Philadelphia to date is the Aker Shipyard at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, which received \$30.9 million in financing for \$489 million of development.

However, a detailed land plan and review process is necessary to establish a TIF district. In Philadelphia, the land within a TIF district must also be within a certified redevelopment district, as authorized by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (RDA). All land located south of Spring Garden Street in the project area is eligible for redevelopment according to the RDA; this section represents about 60 percent of the total project area's acreage. TIF districts could be established on land that is not yet certified if the district meets the stringent criteria for blight certification, which were updated by the state in 2006. Existing redevelopment areas do not need to be recertified under the new criteria until 2013. Further, the extent of the TIF capture may fluctuate in future years, as incentives like the ten-year tax abatement and Keystone Opportunity Zones may apply to properties within a proposed TIF district. See the "Market Incentives" on page 180 for more information.

In accordance with the civic values and principles, public participation should be an important part of the TIF designation process to ensure that this tax revenue is used specifically for public infrastructure

investment. The city's riverfront is emerging as an important location for new development, and the TIF could provide an opportunity for financing public amenities that secure the riverfront as a citywide asset and enhance its long-term redevelopment potential.

One of the key challenges of a TIF district is that actual TIF revenues may fall short of projections, since a TIF district generally has only incremental property taxes as its revenue source. Shortfalls could occur when the level of anticipated new development is not achieved, or when property-tax abatements or exemptions to induce development are implemented (such as the ten-year residential property-tax abatement program renewed by City Council in 2007). To reduce these risks, a municipality can designate a larger district that spreads the risks over a larger area, add other potential revenue sources such as parking into the mix, or allow joint financing of TIF districts that distributes the costs of improvements in one district across all of the city's TIF districts, thereby reducing the burden on any one district. Loan guarantees could also be provided by developers who would benefit from the public improvements made.

In conclusion, riverfront development will be an ongoing part of Philadelphia's future and should be considered a critical element of its overall economic-development strategy. The TIF analyses demonstrate the potential for the city to generate significant funds for infrastructure improvements that would create the physical framework to support future development. While a TIF district does not freeze property taxes as the ten-year tax abatement does, the return-on-investment for the private sector can be substantial. The bond funds leveraged by projected tax revenues can be reinvested within the TIF district immediately to finance public amenities that would not otherwise be possible. This can be expected to improve quality of life and in turn increase property values and demand for riverfront development. While the preliminary analysis demonstrates the opportunities on four sites and one potential district (covering only 31 percent of the study area), it is likely that even greater opportunities exist to leverage the future tax revenues generated by other parcels, including SugarHouse and Foxwoods Casinos, should they be built. This is just one financing option that the city could use to develop the central Delaware.

Links to the full report by ERA can be found in the appendix.

SPOTLIGHT: APPLYING TIF DISTRICTS TO CASINOS

Given the prospect of gaming on the central Delaware, Philadelphia should consider the multitude of financing options that could be used to finance infrastructure improvements along the riverfront. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) provides an opportunity for the city to receive an up-front payment bonded against future tax revenues, helping to accelerate development of important capital improvements. If the city created TIF districts on the two proposed casino sites, the revenue generated would exceed what the city would receive through negotiated tax payments or Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs). These TIF dollars could be used to fund essential elements of the civic vision, including these:

- Development of a riverfront trail,
- Development of a mass transportation system,
- Development of Penn's Landing as a signature green space,
- Connections to and amenities for adjacent neighborhoods, and
- Arts and cultural amenities.

The city may have missed an opportunity by not already establishing a TIF district between the casino sites.



Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID)

Enacted in 2005 by the Pennsylvania legislature, the Transit Revitalization Investment District Act encourages city officials, transit agencies and the development community to plan for and implement transit-oriented development. Like TIF districts, TRIDs leverage future real-estate tax revenues to support transit-related capital projects, site development and maintenance within the defined district. While this program is still in its infancy, there is the potential to utilize this financing mechanism along the riverfront—particularly along Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard. Philadelphia would first finalize a community-driven TRID planning study. Then, in cooperation with SEPTA, the city would form a management entity to administer continued implementation. The amount of the share of the new tax revenues to be reinvested in TRID-area improvements needs to be finalized with the school district and the city.

(Top) Dedicated Tax

In 2000, 68 percent of voters in St. Louis counties approved a one-tenth of one-cent sales tax to fund a Clean Water, Safe Parks and Community Trails Initiative. The dedicated tax generates about \$10 million per year and has funded the development of interconnected greenways, parks and trails.

(Bottom) Taxes to Parks

Chattanooga increased its hotel tax and solicited private donations to fund Coolidge Park along its waterfront. St. Louis has instituted a small sales tax increase that yields \$10 million per year to finance its greenway. Minneapolis has the highest per-capita spending on parks in the country because of its funding stream of dedicated property taxes.

Dedicated Tax

Revenues from dedicated taxes can help provide funds to pay off debt incurred from the issuing of bonds. Pairing debt and taxation measures can help assure that a dedicated funding stream will be available to help fund implementation programs. This technique is often used for open-space acquisition, and Pennsylvania has demonstrated leadership in utilizing innovative public-financing strategies to fund land conservation. In fact, Radnor Township in Delaware County increased its real-estate transfer tax from 0.75 percent to 1 percent and dedicated the additional revenues to open space.

Capital Expenditures

Many cities support public investments through the annual allocation of funding as earmarked within the budget for capital improvements. The downside of relying solely on this funding source is that the annual revenues are often small, and it is difficult to sustain the funding when leadership and administration priorities change. However, budgeted public-sector investments are often important in providing the startup capital costs for implementation, management and oversight.

State and Federal Grants

While cities must supplement outside funding sources, federal and state funding programs provide opportunities for significant riverfront improvement. Some of the most promising state and federal funding sources include these:

- Open-space grants are available from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), which receives about \$56 million per year from the Keystone Fund for community recreation, park and conservation projects across the state.
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) provides over \$1 billion for pedestrian and cycling trails through its Transportation Enhancements Grants. These could be used to finance early portions of trail development, such as the reconstruction of Pier 11 and the terminus of Spring Garden Street.
- The federal Surface Transportation Program has many funding programs available for roads other than highways, as well as for road-safety improvements.
- The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program offers funding for projects that reduce congestion and/or vehicular emissions to help achieve the goals of the Clean Air Act. Transit-oriented development would be eligible to receive such funding.
- Pennsylvania Coastal Zone Management Program (managed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection) has coordinated over \$50 million for projects that protect and enhance fragile coastal resources.

Private-Sector Financing and Public-Space Development

When developing riverfront policy, many cities have incorporated provisions into their legislation requiring private developers to finance certain elements of public infrastructure in order to develop at the river's edge. This is primarily accomplished in two different ways: development impact fees and mandated public-space development, which is required in the permitting process. Impact fees are one-time charges applied to offset the additional public-service costs that come with large-scale development. New residents and users boost infrastructure needs, and impact fees pass those costs on to the private sector. Fees must address local and regional impacts while ensuring that development is not deterred. Some states do not allow cities to enact impact fees, but they are legal in Pennsylvania.

Additionally, many cities have written zoning or permitting legislation that requires developers to provide capital improvements accessible to the public in order to build. Numerous municipalities have required that proposed riverfront developments include the construction of park and trail space in order to receive permits; they include Hoboken, Jersey City and Greenpoint/Williamsburg in Brooklyn. Such a mandate would mean that public spaces would be developed piecemeal over time, but this method can be effective in areas with rising market value and a public sector with little funding for capital improvements.



Greenpoint Williamsburg

Because of zoning mandates for open space and affordable housing, the Edge development in the Greenpoint Williamsburg neighborhood of New York City will feature 21,000 square feet of public space, and 20 percent of its units will be priced for lower-income residents.

SPOTLIGHT:

PARKING REVENUE

Cities around the nation are starting to find creative ways to use revenue from parking garages and metered fees to finance public-space projects. Earlier sections of this report cite the use of waterfront and city parking funds to maintain parks and trails in cities such as New York, Chicago and Boston. Various planning initiatives in Philadelphia have presented innovative ideas on how to capture parking revenue. Released in January 2007, the Center City Residents Association Neighborhood Plan has a detailed implementation section that outlines various strategies to encourage quality development. These include proposing fifteen-year tax abatements on the construction of underground parking and reaching an agreement with the Philadelphia Parking Authority to raise on-street parking fares in the neighborhood, with some revenues return to the community for streetscape improvements. The Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) describes similar initiatives in its transit-oriented development plans for Frankford Avenue and West Market Street. There, PCPC proposes that on-street parking be managed through the establishment of a parking benefit district (PBD), which would designate the district's parking-generated revenues for landscaping and maintenance. PBDs could also help subsidize transit passes and bike-storage facilities for community members.

Special Services Districts

Both SugarHouse and Foxwoods Casinos have offered to contribute \$1 million annually to a special services district (SSD). If approved by City Council after neighborhood petition and public process, the SSD would establish an entity that uses an assessment tax imposed on commercial and/or residential properties (depending on whether it is a business or neighborhood improvement district). The proceeds are used for public-space maintenance, programming, security and other functions. One type of SSD being explored in other cities is a park improvement district (PID), which would capture funds from residences and businesses within two blocks of a park so that those who most benefit from the park contribute directly to its maintenance. PIDs work best in neighborhoods with new construction, a high percentage of owner-occupied households and a financial ability to pay an additional fee. Though SSDs can float bonds for capital improvements, their main functions are to supplement city services and to capture funding for neighborhood initiatives such as maintenance and marketing. This capability makes the SSD an important option for the city to consider.

Market Incentives

Most of the important funding mechanisms that the city of Philadelphia uses at present involve public-sector incentives for private-sector development. These mechanisms should be carefully evaluated in order to ensure their effectiveness and efficiency.

Ten-Year Property-Tax Abatement

One of the best known of Philadelphia's economic development incentives is the ten-year property tax abatement program, which holds a property's tax assessment at its predevelopment level for ten years. The program has attracted national attention and is widely credited with stimulating the recent residential building boom in Center City and adjacent neighborhoods. Between 1997 and mid-2005, over one thousand abatements were approved for new residential construction alone. In this period, the city committed a total of \$121 million in property taxes as foregone for a ten-year period on residential projects. This leveraged up to \$458.5 million in new market value for the buildings constructed on abatement sites. After the ten-year period expires, the city will capture the full property tax value of these developments.

While the program has been successful in generating new residential construction, critics point to the inequities it can create (such as new residents benefiting from an abatement unavailable to existing residents, who may face increased property-tax assessments) and question its ongoing application in strong markets such as the central Delaware. Also, freezing the property tax for ten years limits the future tax revenues that may be captured within a TIF district, thereby restricting the potential for public investment in value-enhancing infrastructure while placing increased burdens on already strained streets, sewers, parks and open spaces.

Keystone Opportunity Zones

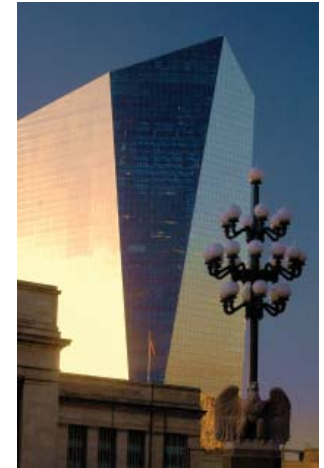
All land lying north of PECO's Delaware station and extending to Allegheny Avenue is within a Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ), which greatly reduces or eliminates taxes for owners to encourage commercial and business investment. Such comprehensive tax breaks provide a strong incentive for development, but they minimize revenue to pay back bond debt. There are two KOZs within the hypothetical TIF district analysis conducted by PIDC: the incinerator site and the proposed World Trade Center site north of Callowhill Street. If a TIF was implemented there, these sites would not generate property-tax revenue until the KOZ designation expires in 2011.

Tax increment financing, dedicated taxes, grants, tax abatements, special services districts and Keystone Opportunity Zones could each serve as useful tools for development along the central Delaware. Together they help to raise property values, thus improving the development landscape while strengthening the public realm for residents and visitors alike. Some of the strategies for financing the vision presented here could stimulate quality development along the riverfront and provide early funding for infrastructure improvements. Many of these tools could be used together, though others are not compatible. The city must determine how best to balance funding mechanisms that encourage private development with public access

and open space along the riverfront. Exploring the tensions and trade-offs and learning more about how various financing methods would affect private development are important aspects of future work.

Looking Ahead

Determining the right financing strategies will be essential for implementing the recommendations in the civic vision. Fortunately, some research suggests that federal funding for urban-redevelopment projects could increase in future decades. The Brookings Institution argues that the funding of transformative urban-infrastructure projects—large, catalytic projects that enhance the physical landscape and stimulate economic growth—will be required to keep our cities at the forefront of sustainable urban growth. Some federal initiatives may indicate that this funding shift is already taking place. Bills are in various stages of approval to create an affordable housing trust, establish new energy-efficiency standards and allocate hundreds of millions of dollars for streetcar and commuter-rail service. By having a clear vision of desired improvements, Philadelphia would be well positioned should funding policies change at the federal level in the coming decades. Improvements on this scale could be key factors in making Philadelphia competitive as a place to live and work, as well as in allowing the city to capture future growth in the knowledge economy.



Cira Centre

A recent example of Keystone Opportunity Zone development is the Cira Centre in University City.

Goal 2: Create a Strategy for Comprehensive Implementation, Management and Oversight

Build on existing governance along the riverfront and establish a set of required functions for agencies invested in the future of the riverfront.



Memphis

After twenty-five years, the four miles of continuous riverfront green space in Memphis are so well-established that revenue from contracts and park operations alone pays off almost all of the system's annual operating expenses.

Management and oversight of development, design and public investment along the central Delaware will be necessary to realize the civic vision. Currently, a multiplicity of city, state and multistate agencies have oversight of portions of the central Delaware. The coordination of strategies and policies is critical to ensuring that the civic vision and its underlying frameworks are realized.

Management and Oversight Options

The matrix provided on the following page (“Organizations and Departments with Oversight along the Central Delaware River”) shows many of the local organizations that have oversight along the central Delaware. It is evident that realizing the civic vision will require the work of a wide range of public and private organizations. Thus, improving coordination between these efforts should be a focus of future city administrations.

Other cities throughout the nation use various types of regulatory and implementing entities to support riverfront revitalization. The matrix provided on the following page (“Waterfront Development Management Types”) identifies a selection of organizations that represent successful public-private collaborations and self-sufficient entities and

describes their organizational functions. This analysis demonstrates the wide range of coordinated functions and services required to engender progressive riverfront development. Whatever form future implementation may take, these are some essential ingredients for success:

- **Sufficient funding:** The most successful waterfront implementation consortiums have lobbied for secured funding from the public sector, such as capital budgets (Portland, OR) or taxes (Chattanooga, TN). Additionally, rather than relying solely on public funds, many implementation bodies have established sources of revenue to supplement governmental funding. Creative funding examples include ground leases, corporate sponsorship and the linking of parks to revenue-generating assets such as parking garages, rental venues and concessions. According to a Regional Plan Association report, New York City Parks and Recreation estimates that the total revenue generated for the agency by all its park concession operations was \$61.5 million in 2002.
- **Shared purpose or vision:** Effective implementation strategies must have clearly defined goals that outline the philosophy, as well as action-oriented objectives achieve goals. Working toward the goals will help maintain the momentum of the project.

SPOTLIGHT:

PENN'S LANDING CORP.

Penn's Landing Corporation (PLC), the nonprofit, quasigovernmental agency charged with managing a large section of the central Delaware, is the primary public landholder in this area. Despite having an effective professional staff, the history of its politically controlled board is clouded in controversy, and it operates without public input or transparency. This has created public mistrust of the organization and is an issue that must be reconciled should PLC be considered as a possible organization for managing the implementation of the civic vision. PLC has some important assets, most notably its land holdings, which offer the opportunity for public access along 2.2 miles of the central Delaware, along with its ability to raise funds, develop real estate, implement public-improvement projects and provide services like trash removal and landscaping. However, any discussion about the future of PLC and its role in the central Delaware should stress the need for improved governance, transparency and public accountability.

- **Leadership and ongoing political support:** The scale and the scope of the proposed Civic Vision for the Central Delaware will require patience, persistence and flexibility. Thus, continued leadership—essential. This leadership must include engaging in ongoing, open and transparent communication and forging strong partnerships between community stakeholders and political leaders. Communication and partnerships will ensure that project objectives are implemented—even after a political term ends. Additionally, the existence of an advisory body consisting of elected officials and members of the public will demonstrate a commitment by the community, city and state to the initiative. Some specific functions that leaders will need to address along the central Delaware include:

- Planning and design of Delaware Boulevard, a street grid, parks, trails and open spaces;
- Land acquisition and conservation;
- Construction of public spaces, trails and parks;
- Review of development plans to check for compliance with the civic vision;
- Maintenance of public spaces;
- Raising, receiving and spending of public and private funds for public infrastructure investment;

- Collaboration between city and state (both Pennsylvania and New Jersey) agencies working along the central Delaware; and
- An open, transparent governance structure.

Looking Ahead

Currently, multiple city, state and bi-state agencies and authorities manage portions of the public realm along the central Delaware.

In order to achieve the goals of the civic vision, it is clear that a coordinated and collaborative effort to implement, manage and oversee public infrastructure is required. Further research is necessary before specific proposals for a management strategy are offered.

Most of the management efforts studied during this process are single management entities, but that does not mean that existing groups cannot work together to fulfill complementary functions. Philadelphia currently has three riverfront management models to study—the Schuylkill River Development Corporation, the Delaware River City Corporation (along the north Delaware) and the Penn's Landing Corporation (along the central Delaware).

More detailed recommendations for implementation of the civic vision will be presented in early 2008.

Organizations & Departments with Oversight Along the Central Delaware River

CITY

| | |
|--|--|
| Philadelphia City Council | Proposes and passes bills and ordinances that influence public affairs and quality of life. Council is also involved with the approval of development proposal and zoning changes for riverfront properties. |
| Philadelphia Law Department | Offers legal advice to all departments, commissions and boards. The department provides assistance with the preparation of new zoning overlays and ordinances. |
| Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustments | Hears and decides development applications for variances to the zoning ordinance. The board may also recommend changes to zoning policies and zoning ordinances. |
| Philadelphia Department of Streets | Constructs and maintains city streets. |
| Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority | Facilitates the development of underutilized properties, with a special emphasis on financing affordable housing. |
| Philadelphia City Planning Commission | Guides the city's orderly growth and development through the creation of a comprehensive plan, zoning and land subdivision. |
| Philadelphia Department of Commerce | Coordinates economic development projects and programs and promotes Philadelphia as an economic engine. The department works closely with Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation. |
| Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation | Promotes economic development by leveraging financing and real-estate resources. PIDC is interested in attracting industrial development to portions of the riverfront. |
| Philadelphia Water Department | Provides and maintains integrated water, wastewater, and stormwater services. The department has a focus on sustainability and enhancing the region's watersheds. |
| Penn's Landing Corporation (PLC) | Manages 2.2 miles of publicly owned land on the central Delaware on behalf of the city and state. PLC provides events programming and facilitates development. |

STATE

| | |
|--|---|
| PA State Legislature | Grants riparian rights . By granting riparian rights, the legislature allows the development of state-owned land that is located between the pier head and bulkhead. |
| Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) | Administers PA's environmental laws and regulations. Its purview includes protection and monitoring of the Delaware River. |
| Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) | Maintains and preserves state park land. The department also establishes community conservation partnerships via grants and technical assistance to benefit rivers, trails, greenways and local parks. |
| Department of Transportation (PennDOT) | Oversees transportation issues across the state, maintains roads and highways and facilitates new roadway construction. Along the riverfront, PennDOT constructs, manages and maintains Interstate I-95 and Delaware Avenue / Columbus Boulevard. |
| Philadelphia Regional Port Authority (PRPA) | Manages, maintains, markets and promotes the public port facilities along the Delaware River. |

REGIONAL

| | |
|---|---|
| Delaware Regional Port Authority (DRPA) | Controls the operation and revenue from the four bridges crossing the Delaware, the PATCO Speedline and the RiverLink Ferry. The DRPA is focused on the industrial and commercial revitalization of the Philadelphia-Camden riverfront. |
| Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) | Fosters regional cooperation around transportation, the environment and community development. DVRPC convenes the Urban Waterfront Action group, which serves as a clearinghouse for questions related to waterfront development permits. |
| SEPTA | Provides multimodal public transportation and manages the construction and expansion of transit-related infrastructure. Many transit lines serve riverfront communities. |

FEDERAL

| | |
|---|--|
| Interstate Land Management Corp. (ILMAC) | Manages and maintains the federal land adjacent to highways. The organization raises funds for maintenance through parking revenues. ILMAC maintains the land abutting and covering I-95 through Center City. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society oversees the day-to-day maintenance of this land. |
| U.S. Coast Guard | Facilitates the commercial and recreational use of the river. The USCG also ensures safe, secure and environmentally responsible use of the waterfront. The station on the Delaware River services the waterways of eastern PA, southern NJ and Delaware. |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | Investigates, develops, designs and maintains the nation's water resources. Projects focus on flood control and environmental protection. |

Please Note: The above organizations represent a sampling of the many organizations that are currently working along the central Delaware River.

Waterfront Development: Management Types

| | Description | Organization Functions | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------|------------|---------|--------|--------------|
| | | Land Ownership | Land Management | Design Review | Civic Engagement | Event Programming | Waterfront Revenue | Planning | Public Art | Transp. | Upkeep | Road Network |
| I. Waterfront Development Council | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| River Renaissance, Portland, OR | Approved by City Council in 2004, this task force charges directors of eight city departments to manage the greenway along 17 miles of Willamette River shoreline. | X | X | X | ● | | | | | | | |
| II. Public-Private Development Ventures | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Schuylkill River Development Corporation, Philadelphia, PA | This agency was formed in 1992 to plan and implement eight miles of greenway along the Schuylkill River between the Fairmount Dam and the Delaware River, including adjacent riverfront properties within one mile of the Center City area of the trail. | | X | | ● | X | | X | | X | X | X |
| 21st Century Waterfront Trust Chattanooga, TN | Though it has evolved in form over the years, this agency assists city and county government and the private sector to spur economic development and create active public spaces along Chattanooga's waterfront. It generates about \$120 million per year from both dedicated hotel tax revenue and private-sector contributions. | | X | | ● | X | X | X | X | | X | X |
| III. Port Authorities | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Port of San Francisco San Francisco, CA | Looking for new revenue after a shipping decline, the Port of San Francisco adopted a public access plan to broker agreements for public access to private land owned by the port that is no longer as industrially viable. | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Delaware River Port Authority Camden, NJ | The DRPA has a mission of transportation and economic development in Southeastern Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey. DRPA runs PATCO and the RiverLink Ferry and institutes the tolling of four bridges across the Delaware. | | | | | | X | X | | X | | X |
| IV. Quasi-Public Development Corporation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hudson River Park Trust New York, NY | This state-mandated public benefit corporation is charged with designing and operating the five-mile Hudson River Park, largely composed of state-owned land remaining after the failed WestWay project. Its riverfront revenue makes it totally self-sufficient, no longer relying on state or federal grants to finance its operations. | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Battery Park City Authority New York, NY | This authority oversees the development of 92 acres in Lower Manhattan. BPCA is a rare nongovernment implementation agency that owns its land. The city granted ownership to BPCA, which now collects hundreds of millions of dollars in rent and PILOT payments. | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X | | X | X |
| Great Rivers Greenway District St. Louis, MO | This tricounty agency uses a dedicated portion of sales-tax revenue to fund planning and programming for the region's park and trail system. | | | | ● | X | X | X | | | | X |
| V. Improvement Districts | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Services District | SSDs use a tax assessment to supplement city services and provide increased security, maintenance, and programming within a given area. Different types include business, neighborhood, and park improvement districts. | | | | | | X | X | | X | | |
| Transit Revitalization Investment District, (Pennsylvania model) | TRIDs leverage future real-estate tax revenues to support transit-related capital projects, site development and maintenance within the defined district. Established in 2005 by the state, no TRID districts have been fully implemented in Pennsylvania yet. | X | X | | | | | X | X | | X | X |
| VI. Redevelopment Agency | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Boston Redevelopment Agency Boston, MA | The BRA combines the functions of what are typically two separate city departments: economic development and city planning. In the landmark Charlestown Navy Yard project, the federal government gave the land through public conveyance to BRA, which implemented a 106-acre, mixed-use development project. | X | X | X | | | | | X | | | X |
| Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, Philadelphia, PA | The RDA develops lands owned either by the Authority itself or the city. It also financially assists in the development of affordable housing. Established by state legislation over sixty years ago, the RDA was an important land-acquisition agency during the Urban Renewal era, leading such revitalization projects as Society Hill and Eastwick. | X | X | | | | X | | X | | | X |

"●" Public forums held in early stages of process

Note: Some classifications and waterfront management models were based on the Urban Land Institute's "Remaking the Urban Waterfront" and the Philadelphia City Planning Commission's white paper on waterfront management types. Though this list is not exhaustive, it shows the range of different organizations behind successful waterfront development projects.

Goal 3: Modernize Public Policy

Forward-thinking regulation and policy can catalyze quality development and promote sound urban-design practices.

Significant policy changes will be needed to ensure quality development and promote design excellence. Incentive programs can be established before policy is written in order to encourage sound development practices from existing landowners and to set the standards for future development of the riverfront.

Public Policy Options

As stated in Chapter Seven, the city cannot rely on the market alone to bring excellent urban development to the riverfront. A sound framework is necessary to ensure the development of high-quality, mixed-use neighborhoods along the central Delaware. The best way to achieve this framework is through public-policy initiatives, specifically zoning changes, as these changes will guide the market toward a better product.

While a zoning classification currently exists for riverfront property—the Waterfront Redevelopment District (WRD)—it is optional, and it offers few prescriptions for use or design. This makes it ineffective even when practiced. Therefore, a more prescriptive set of regulations will be necessary in order for the city to realize the vision presented in this plan for the central Delaware riverfront. See Chapter Seven for a more detailed explanation of zoning recommendations that will augment existing standards used by the North Delaware Greenway and the Schuylkill River Development Corporation.

Looking Ahead

Before the new riverfront zoning is officially instituted, incentives could help encourage sound development practices. Possible incentives for public improvements include the following:

- Matching grants from local or state government,
- Various tax breaks, and
- Density bonuses for provisions in mixed-income housing, ecologically sensitive design, adaptive reuse and concealed parking structures.

Policy could also be established to regulate the use and form of public space. The needed changes would include the following:

- An update of the development permitting process that uses the new zoning overlay to expedite approvals, make the public-input process more effective and ensure that all proposals are considered from a citywide perspective.
- An exploration of options for local government land acquisition or the establishment of a land trust (a non-profit organization formed to hold conservation easements and to compile land for preservation). This will be necessary to preserve ecologically sensitive areas along the riverfront and to protect narrow piers from development. Trusts can sell the land to government for public use.

SPOTLIGHT:

HUDSON RIVER PARK TRUST

Hudson River Park Trust is a public benefit corporation that represents a partnership between New York state and New York City. The Hudson River Park Trust is charged with the design, construction and operation of the five-mile Hudson River Park and greenway. The land is state owned, a remnant of the failed WestWay project, and includes land-use restrictions governing piers and protecting against overdevelopment. The city and state gave the first \$200 million in capital commitments, but now the trust is financially self-sufficient due to its revenue-generating capability—it generates about \$18 million in operating income per year—and agreements with private corporations. The trust has a fifty-member advisory council of elected officials and representatives from the business, environmental and civic communities. This council plays an integral role in the park-planning process. Recent highlights for the trust include a \$70 million grant from Lower Manhattan Development Corporation for park development and the opening of Pier 40 sports fields, which were built with significant support from Nike and the U.S. Soccer Foundation.

Goal 4: Continue the Dialogue



The Central Delaware Advisory Group has called for sustained public input—a hallmark of this planning process—to continue through the implementation stage.

The centerpiece of the planning process for *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* has been sustained civic engagement. New forms of collaboration have helped develop a vision based on shared civic values. The success of this process sends the message that Philadelphians are eager to realize the future of their riverfront according to the planning principles they created. It is essential for citizen involvement to continue, as it ensures that the public good will remain at the forefront of implementation efforts.



(Top) Community Feedback

Civic leaders participate in a summit for the Great Expectations project. The regional dialogue created by this summit serves as a model for future riverfront engagement initiatives.

(Bottom) Philadelphia Green

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Green program works with communities and city agencies, using greening initiatives to build community and create more attractive and livable public places.

Community Engagement Options

At the final Central Delaware Advisory Group meeting in September 2007, group members voted to continue their active involvement in riverfront development efforts and to support the open and transparent nature of the planning process. Voices from the development community also requested ongoing communication regarding the implementation of this civic vision. Continued community participation

must allow design professionals, landowners, community residents, business owners, developers and public officials to participate on equal footing. The following are opportunities for ongoing civic engagement:

- Involve citizens in the design of public spaces through workshop-type activities or greening efforts that allow them to play a role in the formation of public spaces. Public feedback has demonstrated that giving community members a stake in the design process has a significant impact on the use and maintenance of such public spaces. This public participation in maintenance could be encouraged through partnerships between city agencies such as the Fairmount Park Commission, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and community groups. Together, the city and these groups could create “Friends” organizations that would take part in maintaining public spaces along the riverfront.
- Create an ongoing feedback process, with regularly scheduled public forums as well as larger events addressing specific development proposals. Sessions should continue to be open and transparent and involve citizens across neighborhood association boundaries to strengthen neighborhood connections.

- Establish managing citizen committees or task forces comprised of different community members and riverfront stakeholders that act to guide the civic vision, advocate for its implementation and work with public officials and developers on next steps. Oversight committees would be a way to empower new community leaders, whom the *Philadelphia Inquirer* refers to as “unencumbered by the politics that can balkanize and paralyze neighborhood life.” Task forces could be organized around the seven citizen planning principles or could focus on specific subjects such as historic preservation, quality of life and development.
- Schedule a series of meetings at which the values and principles of the civic vision are revisited to ensure that they are guiding the implementation of the plan. As citizens and others view the existing conditions of the central Delaware and learn lessons during the implementation process, they may suggest that new values be added or that new ways of addressing values be investigated.

Looking Ahead

This planning process has set a new standard for public participation in Philadelphia. The emphasis on citizen participation has afforded Philadelphians a forum to voice their concerns and to develop values and principles fundamental to the creation of the civic vision.

Implementing the civic vision will require an ongoing commitment to civic engagement on the part of the city. Interactive and participatory planning is crucial to maintaining a vital and sustainable city in the twenty-first century. Thus, it is imperative that future city-planning processes include active and deliberative civic engagement—an ongoing marriage of citizens’ values and professional expertise that will ensure that policy makers and implementers make informed choices when conducting the people’s business.

More detailed recommendations for implementation of *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* will be presented in early 2008.

Early Action
Short-Term Initiatives
Mid-Term Initiatives
Long-Term Initiatives

PHASING



View from the North

The civic vision imagines a phased redevelopment of the riverfront that includes industry, commerce, housing, and a parks and open space network that contributes to sustainable growth.

Phasing

Though *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* outlines a long-term ideal for the riverfront, numerous phases are required to implement the plan. These depend to a large extent on federal, state and city funding cycles, future planning efforts and private development initiatives.

In order to ensure the success of the vision, this plan focuses on short-, mid-, and long-term initiatives, as well as on early action efforts that can be implemented immediately. Short-term initiatives center on key investments in public areas that could establish the vision's most important elements and lay the groundwork for future efforts. Mid-term initiatives will require greater planning and coordination between agencies; they will create significant physical change and help elevate the profile of the central Delaware riverfront locally and regionally. Long-term initiatives are high-profile, riverfront-defining projects that could have a major impact on the river, the city, the state and the region. They are transformative projects that can come to fruition only through collaborative leadership, ongoing community support and time.

Wetlands at Pier 70

Interim zoning overlay

Enhance Pulaski Park

Interim bike trail Festival Pier Development

Enhance Penn Treaty Park Transportation network feasibility study

Modify City Plan

Mass transit implementation plan

Lehigh Viaduct Park Historic preservation task force

Implementation research

Water-based recreation study

Neighborhood planning studies

Ecological study

Public education

Acquire rights-of-ways

Density bonuses

Extend key streets to riverfront

Reconstruct I-95

Establish water-taxi system

Open space trust

Establish active uses under I-95

Develop signature parks

Adaptive reuse of PECO building

Redesign Delaware Boulevard

Rebuild Penn's Landing

Develop partnerships

Define parcels in southern area

Development of Port Richmond rail yard area

Early Actions

These projects focus on public open-space initiatives that can happen quickly. They are high-impact, demonstration projects designed to showcase what is possible along the central Delaware. Many of these projects will serve as prototypes for future and/or ongoing development and will help to demonstrate the overall intent of the civic vision to the public.



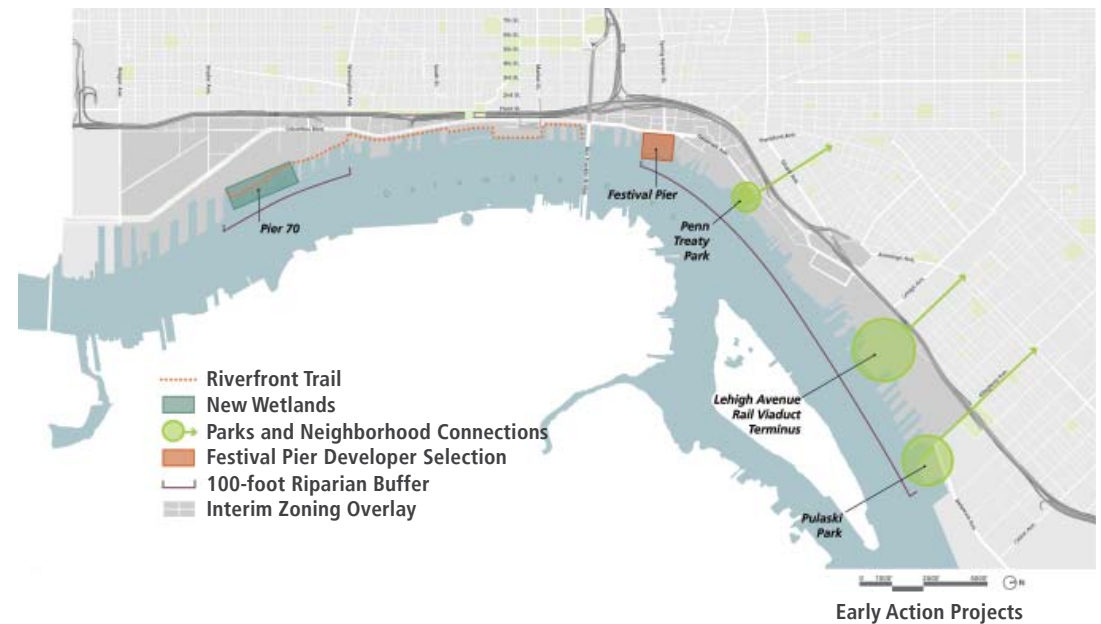
From left:

Interim bike trail
Penn Treaty Park
Tidal wetlands at Pier 70

- Work with the Center City District to launch a two-mile interim bike trail from Pier 70 to the Benjamin Franklin Bridge that will showcase the recreational potential of the future river trail.
- Enhance Penn Treaty Park and Pulaski Park through collaborative initiatives with the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and local community groups. Citizens participating in the vision plan and in the New Kensington CDC's neighborhood-planning efforts identified Penn Treaty Park as the jewel of the central Delaware, while Pulaski Park is revered by its Port Richmond neighbors and has tremendous potential to serve as an important neighborhood green space and to provide a linkage along Allegheny Avenue to Campbell Square.
- Evaluate the cost and feasibility of creating park space at the terminus of the Lehigh Avenue rail viaduct, an untapped potential recreational resource that could serve as a gateway to the riverfront for Kensington and Port Richmond.
- Construct tidal wetlands, meadows and floodplain forest at the existing finger piers adjacent to Pier 70 in conjunction with efforts by the Philadelphia Water Department and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's efforts to meet the federal mandate of the Clean Water Act.

- Work with the Penn's Landing Corporation to craft a Request for Qualifications and Request for Proposals for the redevelopment of the Festival Pier/Incinerator site as an integrated public park space and development parcel.
- Draft and adopt an interim zoning overlay to establish development standards for the central Delaware. At a minimum, the zoning ordinance should mandate a 100-foot buffer for public riverfront access where feasible and create use and design guidelines for riverfront development. Design guidelines could address view corridors, parking requirements, building height and bulk, floor-area ratio and density, setbacks/build-to lines, facades, signage, streetscape and stormwater management. Implementing this ordinance requires cooperation between key city departments including City Council, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, the Zoning Code Commission and the City of Philadelphia Law Department.

These early action projects will encourage greater pedestrian activity and establish standards for pedestrian-scaled, urban mixed-use developments. Improving and developing quality open space and accessibility are primary steps in reclaiming the river and bringing Philadelphians back to their riverfront.



Short-Term Initiatives

Due to the intensity of development pressures on the central Delaware riverfront, the civic vision outlines a series of short-term initiatives that could be implemented in the coming years. These initiatives would form the foundation of the overall vision. Key elements of the vision, such as Delaware Boulevard and the park system, would take shape during this phase. These initiatives are divided into two categories with equally important impacts effects:



From left:

**Ore Pier at Port
Richmond rail yards**

**Terminus of the Lehigh
Avenue viaduct**

Pulaski Park

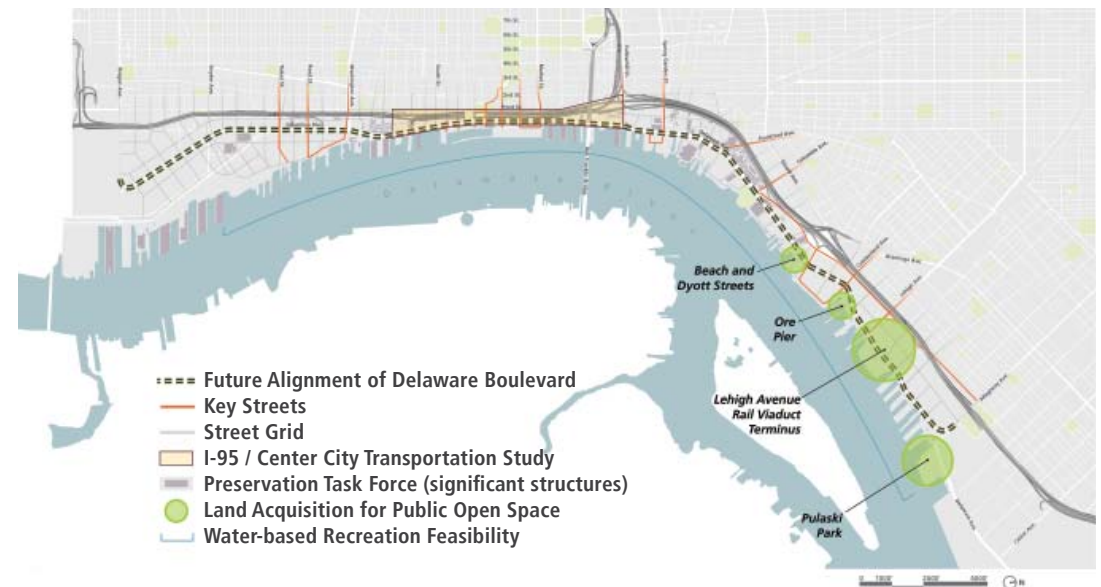


- **Background Projects:** Policy/study oriented projects that would serve to institutionalize the elements of the plan frameworks—movement systems, parks and open space, and land development.
- **High-Visibility Projects:** Physical projects that would serve as milestones and have significant regional implications.

Background Projects

- Institute policies to provide density bonuses to developers to foster the development of mixed-income housing, “sustainable” buildings, historic preservation and adaptive reuse, and transit-oriented development. Through density bonuses, the city would demonstrate its commitment to a better built environment and ensures that the riverfront remains accessible to all Philadelphians.
- Establish a trust to target priority land acquisitions for public open space.
- Conduct additional research on potential funding sources and management structures. Mobilize city and state officials to begin implementing the strategies proposed.
- Form a historic preservation task force to ensure that historical structures within the project area are preserved and that tours or markers illustrate the riverfronts’ evolution from its colonial and industrial eras to the present.
- Modify the official city plan to extend key city streets to the riverfront and establish the ideal alignment for the redesigned Delaware Boulevard. This action would define the city’s intention to incorporate new streets into future development.

- Conduct a feasibility study for the proposed transportation network along the central Delaware. This would focus on reconstructing I-95 at Center City, and would address the long-term economic, environmental, and engineering feasibility of connecting the foot of Market Street and Old City with Delaware Boulevard and the river. Options include covering or putting the highway below grade.
- Capitalize on the transit-alternatives analysis being undertaken by the Delaware Regional Port Authority to develop an implementation plan for mass transportation options along the riverfront. Further studies should produce designs for possible rail systems, identify future station locations and address further integration with SEPTA or PATCO.
- Adopt a Complete Streets policy to ensure that standards for multi-modal movement and public access are met.
- Assess feasibility of and locations for water-based recreation activities given the central Delaware's water currents and industrial uses.
- Conduct an ecological study that outlines the impact future riverfront development on the Delaware watershed.
- Encourage ongoing planning studies at the neighborhood level. To this end, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission is seeking funding to support further planning, project design, programming and early-action projects for riverfront neighborhoods. Additionally, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission will play an important role in coordinating these neighborhood-planning efforts.



Short-Term Background Projects

- Encourage collaboration between the City Planning Commission and the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Task Force on a study of how to integrate car sharing and bike sharing into the central Delaware transit network.
- Coordinate a public-education campaign to ensure ongoing support for the civic vision. It is important that stakeholders in key leadership positions endorse the overall vision and understand the economic and quality-of-life benefits that are attached to a revitalized riverfront. Public education must occur at all levels—among neighborhood leaders, city leaders and the development community, as well as throughout the city as a whole.

High-Visibility Projects

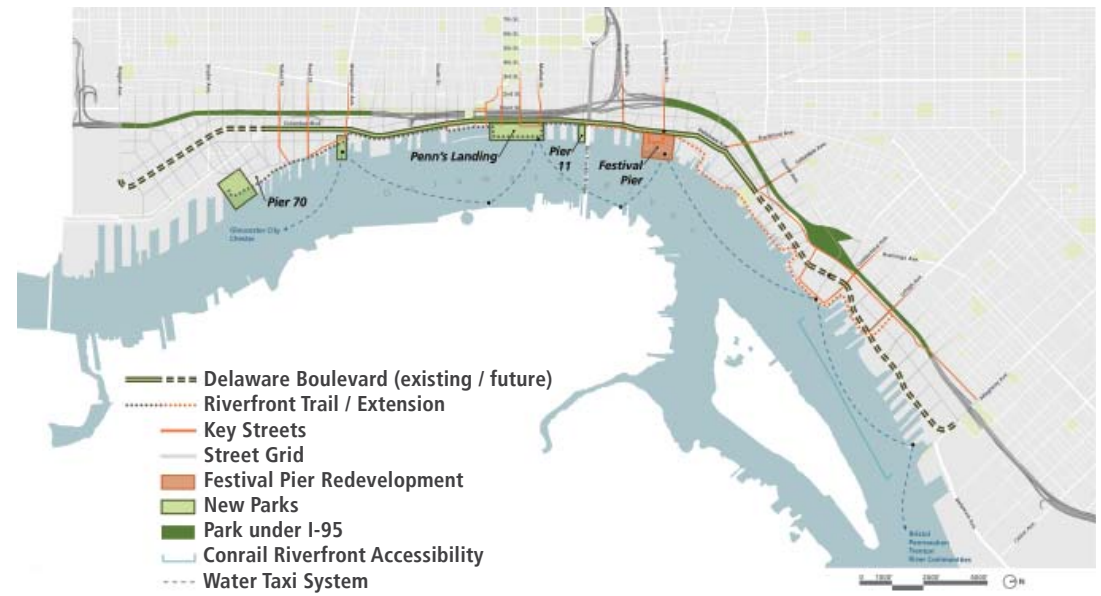
- Design, construct and expand the interim riverfront trail that will be implemented as one of the civic vision's early action projects. To do this, the city must develop clear design guidelines for the trail so it can be built on city-owned parcels and in conjunction with development projects. It is important that the design guidelines correspond with the standards developed for the north Delaware riverfront. Progress in implementing the trail will serve as a symbolic gesture, reinforcing the city's commitment to the revitalization of its riverfront. Partnership opportunities with public agencies and private developers exist, and productive partnerships will help garner funding, expand limited resources and expedite the trail's completion.
- Create spaces for a range of active uses underneath I-95. Proposed amenities include stormwater parks, rain gardens, green parking, pedestrian trails and paths, recreation facilities and civic portals. At first, this effort will be completed in conjunction with improvements to the Girard Avenue interchange section of I-95. Later, this project may serve as a prototype for future infrastructure reconstruction.
- Begin the redesign of Delaware Boulevard, a roadway that will serve as the spine of future riverfront activity. Though the boulevard will be completed in an incremental fashion, key improvements made from the onset will serve to establish the framework for the ongoing development of the roadway. Initial implementation phases should focus on interim improvements within the existing right-of-way. Interim improvements include maintaining the current width of the boulevard to allow for traffic pressures associated with new development, widening sidewalks to encourage greater pedestrian activity and incorporating a landscaped median along the length of the entire

boulevard. Existing rights-of-way include these:

- In the north, Beach Street (between Cumberland Street and Schirra Drive and Dyott Street and Marlborough Street);
 - In the central, Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard (Marlborough Street to Washington Avenue); and
 - In the south, Columbus Boulevard (Washington Avenue to Oregon Avenue)
- Acquire the necessary rights-of-ways required to establish the boulevard along the entire length of the riverfront. This would include another between Cumberland St. and Lehigh Ave., and an extension of Lehigh Ave from Richmond St. to Delaware Boulevard a small area of private property between Dyott Street and Schirra Drive.
 - Begin to extend major Philadelphia streets to the riverfront at key locations. These streets will provide connections to the river and serve as gateways to the neighborhoods. These essential connector streets include Lehigh Ave., Cumberland St., Columbia Ave., Spring Garden St., Frankford Ave (connecting with Ellen St.), Washington Ave., Dock St., Reed St. and Tasker St. Along with providing these key roadway connections, these streets should be a part of a comprehensive streetscape and tree-planting effort to further link neighborhoods to the riverfront.
 - Develop a series of signature parks. Research shows that well-designed public spaces serve a catalytic function for development and encourage public support for publicly financed improvements. Two key demonstration projects include the development of green public space on the northern end of Penn's Landing and on Pier 11 beneath the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.

- Work with Conrail and possibly the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) to ensure that the portions of the Port Richmond rail yards adjacent to the river remain accessible to the public despite the potential for the property to become a light-industrial center.
- Establish dedicated rights-of-way for buses along Delaware Boulevard to improve the efficiency of public riverfront transit. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) can serve Philadelphia well as an interim approach to improved mass transportation along the riverfront.
- Finish design and construction of the Festival Pier/Incinerator site at Spring Garden Street. The city-owned parcel could be designed to include commerce, culture, open space and development. In conjunction with this development, investments should be made in the Spring Garden Street station of the Market-Frankford line.
- Develop green space and create public riverfront access at the foot of Washington and Snyder Avenues in South Philadelphia. These riverfront parks may include tidal wetlands and revitalized piers to provide new venues for fishing and boat docking.
- Establish a water-taxi system to support riverfront activity and provide connections north and south along the river and east to Camden.

Though a long-range vision serves to promote big ideas, short-term action items are necessary to build momentum for the civic vision and develop the political will to execute the larger plan. Small successes demonstrate the viability of the vision, providing tangible benefits to the city as a whole.



Short-Term, High-Visibility Projects

Mid-Term Initiatives

While development pressures are already affecting the riverfront in the short term, it is important that the city establish mid-term initiatives to define the context for longer-term goals, objectives and projects that have larger citywide and regional implications.



From left:

Girard Avenue Stormwater Park

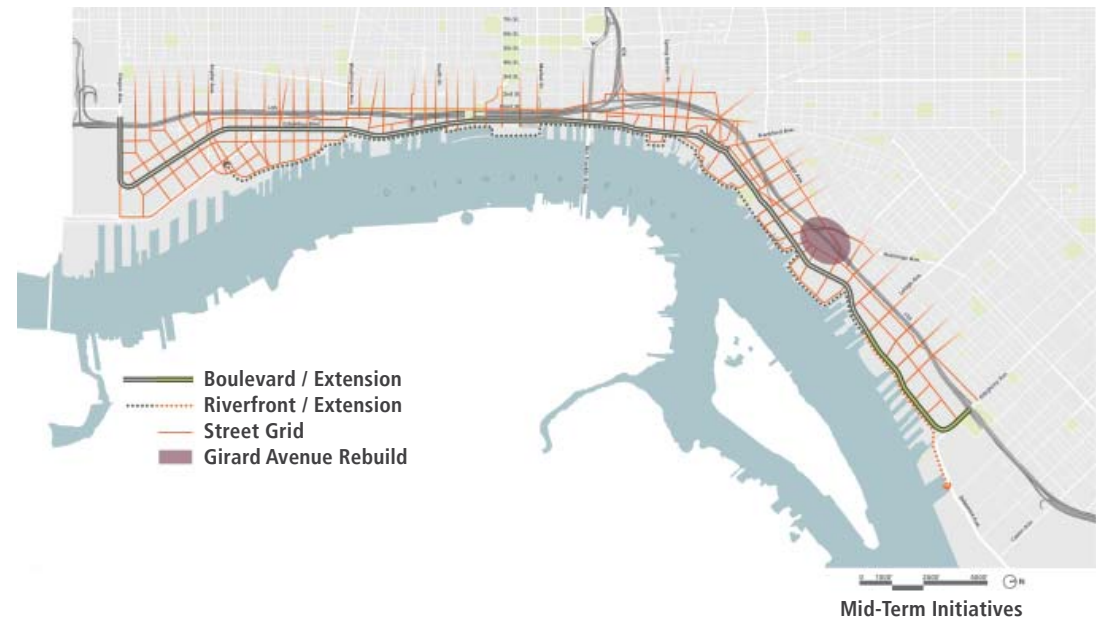
**Delaware Boulevard in the north,
with riverfront trail connecting
to the East Coast Greenway**



- Develop partnerships. There are multiple opportunities for collaboration between city and state agencies. In particular, the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) is under a federal mandate to construct a combined sewer outfall, and PennDOT will make a significant infrastructure investment as it begins the reconstruction of I-95 through Center City. Integrated planning efforts between PennDOT and the PWD could help these agencies maximize the limited funding each agency has for infrastructure improvements.
- Complete Delaware Boulevard. In the mid-term, the boulevard should be implemented from Lehigh Avenue to Allegheny Avenue along the river's edge. This extension of the boulevard in this location will maximize the development potential of the underutilized Port Richmond rail yards, and also create a foundation for future development.
- Work with PennDOT to realize long-term interchange reconstruction roadway improvements in conjunction with the Girard Avenue. In order to accommodate vehicular detours during construction, PennDOT plans to build a temporary roadway through the Conrail lands from Cumberland Street to Allegheny Avenue. This civic vision recommends that the city and PennDOT work together to ensure that the temporary detour route becomes integrated into the proposed road network as a part of a new Delaware Boulevard.

- Construct the additional streets necessary to build the proposed street network that would extend Philadelphia's city grid on the west side of I-95 to the river's edge. Many of these streets could be developed in combination with privately funded development projects. The network of streets would form urban block sizes that could be adopted to serve different uses over time. A network of streets, with its accompanying infrastructure for utilities (sewer, water, power, etc.), offers a ready template for new types of development.
- Complete the riverfront trail so that it is continuous throughout the project area. This trail will serve as Philadelphia's portion of the East Coast Greenway, which links Maine to Florida by a continuous bike path.
- Add amenities to the riverfront including, water recreation, public art, historical markers, attractive landscaping and active programming that helps define the trail and parks.

The completion of mid-term projects will offer significant milestones that will generate continued interest in the future of the riverfront. Many of these projects will require establishing a balance between public and private interests.



Long-Term Initiatives

After years of development and progressive implementation of open space and circulation frameworks, the central Delaware riverfront could consist of an eclectic mix of uses and park spaces that extends Philadelphia's signature urban style to the river's edge. As development fills in along the street and open-space networks, landmark projects such as the following could stimulate continued riverfront development



From left:

Delaware Boulevard and inland park in South Philadelphia

Marina expansion at Penn's Landing

Mixed-use development along northern riverfront

- Complete the development of Delaware Boulevard. Increased population density, public-space amenities, mass transit and an integrated road network could dramatically alter the character of what is currently Delaware Avenue/Columbus Boulevard. As mass transportation and additional road networks develop, Delaware Boulevard could decrease in size—becoming two lanes in each direction—with permanent mass-transit options accommodated within a defined transit median. Decreasing the width of Delaware Boulevard could help calm traffic

and create a pedestrian-oriented street. At full operation, a Delaware River transit line could link with ferries at Penn's Landing, the existing SEPTA No. 15 trolley at Girard Avenue, the Market-Frankford line at Second and Market Streets, PATCO at Franklin Square or the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, and the southern extent of the Broad Street line near the Sports Complex. Transit could have an identity of its own to match the character of the completed boulevard.

- Begin the reconstruction of I-95 in the southern and central sections of the central Delaware. Collaborative partnerships between city, state and federal agencies in the short- and mid-term could result in new ways of thinking about the future of the interstate; thereby reconnecting the city to the riverfront by eliminating the barrier-like quality of I-95. This could be accomplished through capping, or creatively bridging the highway, or placing an interstate below grade.
- Along with the redesign of I-95 in Center City, complete the open space and marina at Penn's Landing, creating a signature green space on the Delaware through an international design competition.
- Redevelop the PECO site as an alternative energy generator or a commercial, performance or art space. The adaptive reuse of this iconic building would create a new landmark along the riverfront and complement an improved Penn Treaty Park.

- Begin to develop new, medium-density, mixed-use development between Washington and Oregon Avenues as the big-box retail buildings in South Philadelphia near the end of their economic cycle. Initial steps could include these:

- Coordinating with the port to define its role as an anchor institution;
- Establishing the street grid in order to define parcels for future development. This includes developing Weccacoe Ave. as an extension of Delaware Boulevard;
- Developing an inland park to provide recreation opportunities where access to the riverfront is limited due to port activities; and
- Incorporating community facilities, such as a charter school or port-related job training centers.

- Complete the transition of the Port Richmond rail yards into a business park and mixed-use community. With the addition of the boulevard and a new street network through the Port Richmond rail yards, the currently anticipated light industrial complex can transition into a twenty-first century business park—encompassing a mix of industrial, commercial and retail uses—and serve as an employment center for the city. This business center could be designed to attract knowledge industries connected with the region’s universities and medical and pharmaceutical communities.



The high profile projects discussed above represent the culmination of multiple early actions and short-term and mid-term initiatives that can raise the city's national and international profile as a world-class riverfront. When these signature projects are considered within the context of a phased implementation, it becomes evident that *A Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* sets forth an ambitious but attainable future for Philadelphia.



Next Steps

A *Civic Vision for the Central Delaware* outlines an overall vision for seven miles of Philadelphia's original riverfront, presenting the goals of the vision in three overarching frameworks—movement systems, parks and open space, and land development. The civic vision was developed in a year long public process and reflects the aspirations of the citizens of Philadelphia.

Philadelphia can advance the civic vision and the future of its Delaware riverfront through the implementation of these bold but achievable next steps. Seizing this unique opportunity to shape the public realm along the central Delaware will signal that the time for progressive change in the city of Philadelphia has arrived.

Though this ends one step in the Central Delaware Riverfront Planning Process, it marks the beginning of a new phase for Philadelphia and the Delaware riverfront. Persistence will be necessary in order to implement this vision, which begins with the following short-term initiatives:

- **Movement Systems:** Establish Delaware Boulevard on existing rights-of-way, beginning to form the spine of a new street network that will extend the city to the river.
- **Park and Open Spaces:** The civic vision encourages collaboration between city and state entities in order to implement an interim bike trail along the riverfront and improve two neighborhood parks—Penn Treaty Park and Pulaski Park. Funding is available for these public space improvements to begin as early as 2008. This will help animate the riverfront and build momentum for future parks projects.
- **Land Development:** The plan recommends that the city adopt an interim zoning overlay to establish development standards for the Central Delaware.
- **Implementation:** In collaboration with civic leaders, Penn Praxis plans to publish an implementation plan. The plan will:
 - Set out detailed action steps.
 - Recommend an order for achieving these actions where they need to be phased in over time.
 - Put forth a detailed strategy for obtaining the necessary legislation, land and rights of way, funding, and other prerequisites to make this vision a reality.
 - Foster the continuation of the civic dialogue.

APPENDIX



Acknowledgements

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Brandywine Realty Trust
Bridgeman's View Tower
Building Industry Association of Philadelphia
Cedar Shopping Centers
Center City District
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Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
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HSP Gaming
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EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 00__06**CENTRAL DELAWARE ADVISORY GROUP**

WHEREAS, the Central Delaware riverfront is an area generally adjacent to the Delaware River from Allegheny Avenue southward to Oregon Avenue (the "Central Delaware"); and

WHEREAS, under our New River City initiative, Philadelphia is redefining and improving recreation, commerce and development along the rivers, including the Central Delaware;

WHEREAS, it has been 24 years since a comprehensive plan was adopted for the Central Delaware and development perspectives and market conditions have changed;

WHEREAS, a new Central Delaware master plan must be developed in a manner that respects the needs of all stakeholders, including local residents, local businesses, and the broader public interests of all residents of and visitors to Philadelphia;

WHEREAS, a goal of the plan shall be a civic vision for the Central Delaware that balances the public good, access to the waterfront, open space and quality urban development;

WHEREAS, appropriate transportation infrastructure, including adequate mass transit, is an essential component of any successful plan for development of the Central Delaware;

WHEREAS, the prospect of casinos located along the Central Delaware underscores the importance of a comprehensive land planning strategy that incorporates neighborhood and business enhancement, traffic and parking management, and coordination between the City and the Commonwealth;

WHEREAS, Penn Praxis ("Consultants") is the non-profit, clinical consulting arm of the School of Design of the University of Pennsylvania with demonstrated experience in solving real world problems, and will serve as the primary consultant for this initiative; and

WHEREAS, funding requirements for this initiative shall be made available from private sources and supplemented on a needs-only basis by the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, by the power vested in me as Mayor of Philadelphia, it is hereby ORDERED:

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ADVISORY GROUP

The Central Delaware Advisory Group ("Advisory Group") is hereby created.

The mission of the Advisory Group is to oversee development of the Central Delaware master plan (the "Plan"). The Plan shall include integrated strategies for successful implementation. The Consultants shall support the Advisory Group and serve as the technical resource for development of the Plan.

The following persons, and such others as may be appointed by the Mayor, shall be members of the Advisory Group:

- (1) Executive Director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission ("Planning Commission"), who shall chair the Advisory Group;
- (2) A representative (each with an alternate designated for the duration of the initiative) from each of: Dickinson Narrows Civic Association, Fishtown Neighbors Association, Franklin Bridge North, Neighbors Allied for the Best Riverfront, New Kensington Community Development Corporation, Northern Liberties Neighbors Association, Old City Civic Association, Old Swede's Court Homeowners' Association, Pennsport Civic Association, Port Richmond on Patrol and Civic Association, Queen Village Neighbors Association, River's Edge Community Association, Society Hill Civic Association, Society Hill Towers Homeowners' Association, and Whitman Council;
- (3) A representative (each with an alternate designated for the duration of the initiative) from each of: South Street/Headhouse District, Center City District, and Old City District;
- (4) A representative (each with an alternate designated for the duration of the initiative) from each of: Greater Philadelphia, Philadelphia African-American, Philadelphia Asian-American, and Philadelphia Hispanic Chambers of Commerce;
- (5) A representative (each with an alternate designated for the duration of the initiative) from each private funding source that substantially funds this initiative;
- (6) The following persons, or their designees:
 - a. Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;
 - b. Councilpersons from the First and Fifth Councilmanic Districts;
 - c. Two Councilpersons-at-large, who shall not be from the same political party, designated by the Council President;
 - d. State Senator from the First District;
 - e. State Representatives from the 175th, 177th and 184th Districts;
 - f. City Solicitor;
 - g. Commerce Director;
 - h. Managing Director;
 - i. Secretary of External Affairs;

- j. Executive Director of the Fairmount Park Commission;
- k. Director of Region VI of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation;
- l. General Manager of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority;
- m. President of Penn's Landing Corporation;
- n. Chief Executive Officer of the Delaware River Port Authority;
- o. Executive Director of Philadelphia Regional Port Authority;
- p. Executive Director of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission;
- q. Captain of the Port of Philadelphia; and
- r. President of the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation.

A Steering Committee shall undertake all day-to-day operations on behalf of the Advisory Group and ensure the Advisory Group is kept fully informed.

The Steering Committee shall be comprised of the following persons, and such other persons appointed by the Mayor:

The Executive Director of the Planning Commission, who shall chair the Steering Committee;

Three civic association representatives, selected from among and solely by those members of the Advisory Group designated under Section 1(c)(2) of this Order, who in making such selection shall ensure geographic diversity;

One representative of a business district, selected from among and solely by those members of each such group who are designated as members of the Advisory Group under Section 1(c)(3) of this Order;

One representative of a chamber of commerce, selected from among and solely by those members of each such group who are designated as members of the Advisory Group under Section 1(c)(4) of this Order;

A representative of a funding organization, selected from among and solely by those members of the Advisory Group designated under Section 1(c)(5) of this Order;

A district City Councilmember, selected from among and solely by those members of the Advisory Group designated under Section 1(c)(6)(b) and (c); and,

The Commerce Director.

The Advisory Group and Steering Committee shall each meet from time to time as is necessary. All meetings of the Advisory Group and the Steering Committee shall be open to the public. Such meetings shall be publicized through a notice that will specify whether there will be an opportunity for the public to observe or to provide public comment.

The Advisory Group shall cease to exist on May 31, 2009, unless earlier terminated or extended by executive order.

ADMINISTRATION COOPERATION

City departments and agencies shall provide the Advisory Group with such cooperation as may be reasonable and appropriate.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This order is effective immediately.

John F. Street, Mayor

Signed this ____ day of October, 2006

Additional Information

A. Project Links

The following documents and links provide extra insight for those seeking details on specific elements of the Central Delaware Planning Process, as well as the design ideas themselves.

These documents can be found on the PlanPhilly website; an index is listed at the following URL: <http://www.planphilly.com/node/2101>

This PlanPhilly page contains links to the following detailed reports:

1. Notes from the Civic Process: This includes links to all the comment and input from the public forums led by the Penn Project on Civic Engagement for the Central Delaware Planning Process. These documents were prepared by the moderators who facilitated the discussion groups. An overview on the value of such principle-based planning is given by Harris Sokoloff, faculty director of the Penn Project on Civic Engagement and designer of the civic engagement process.
2. City Plan Change Process: This outlines, in further detail, the process behind making changes to the official City Plan. This document was submitted by the Philadelphia Board of Surveyors in response to the design idea of extending key Philadelphia streets to the river's edge along the central Delaware.
3. Philadelphia Riverfront Zoning: In 2005, City Council approved a new residential zoning designation called the Waterfront Redevelopment District (WRD). Its criteria are optional, and a developer can apply for this designation on any property along the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers. This Appendix provides the zoning language itself, as well as an analysis of the code given by the Design Advocacy Group.
4. Subconsultant Reports: The design work was led by PennPraxis in collaboration with the design firm Wallace Roberts and Todd, LLC and the Philadelphia City Planning Commission. Other private consultants contributed with research and analysis in specialized areas. Each consultant submitted reports to PennPraxis, the main elements of which were summarized in the civic vision document. Their full reports can be found here on PlanPhilly.
 - a. Economics Research Associates, economic analysis
 - b. Glattig Jackson Kercher Anglin, transportation planning
 - c. Arup USA, Inc., civil engineering
 - d. Andropogon Associates, ecological systems
5. Philadelphia City Planning Commission: A link to the home page of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, city agency responsible for guiding growth in Philadelphia and partner in the Central Delaware Planning Process. Executive Director Janice Woodcock served as the Chair of the Central Delaware Advisory Group.

6. Zoning Code Commission: A link to the website that follows the progress of Philadelphia's new Zoning Code Commission, which was created in May 2007 after the passage of a voter referendum. The site also provides information on zoning and urban planning issues and trends.

B. Design Workshop

PennPraxis, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission and planning consultants Wallace Roberts & Todd organized and facilitated a design workshop at which participants were asked to imagine a new future for the Delaware riverfront. Five world-renowned designers led teams of local planning professionals, community members and design students through three days of collaborative brainstorming and intensive designing. Using the citizen-derived planning principles as their foundation, the teams imagined a fully transformed central Delaware riverfront. Over five hundred citizens attended the standing-room-only presentation at the Independence Seaport Museum to see the work of the design teams, and many of the ideas were published in the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Philadelphia Daily News and presented on local television and radio stations. During the workshop, three essential planning networks were identified: movement systems, open space and land development. These three networks became the basis for this vision plan.

The following images reflect some of the important work produced during the workshop:



Dick Meyer, a Philadelphia architect created this evocative image of Market Street at Front Street. The image envisions an at-grade connection from the city to an open social space at Penn's Landing. Here pedestrians are able to flow from the city to the river and vice-versa.



Design professionals that participated in the spring design charrette first engaged the idea of an alternative route for I-95. This rendering gives some idea of the tremendous development opportunity that lies in the capping of the highway.



This image shows the true potential for a complete urban boulevard in the southern portion of the project area. Ideas for the Boulevard include active frontages, pedestrian and cyclist friendly streets and sidewalks, significant greening, and mass transit.



Active new uses on the waterfront can complement and showcase the historical significance of structures and fixtures that remain. Here the preservation and enhancement of the Ore Pier and the gantries at Pulaski Park add to the uniquely Philadelphia experience along the central Delaware.

A brainstorm over Phila.'s big block

RIVERFRONT from A1 Department of Transportation has dismissed such schemes as pie-in-the-sky. But after a spirited debate, the agency's deputy secretary for administration, Ron Cutler, concluded that a re-alignment of I-95 was worth exploring. Since PennDOT will need to reconstruct the road in about 10 years time, the road, "that would be the time to make changes."

"You'd be making a huge mistake if you don't bury I-95," responded Ed Uhlir, the design director for Chicago's Millennium Park, which was also built atop a complex of roadways. While Millennium Park cost a whopping \$320 million to build, he said it had paid Chicago back by attracting \$4 billion in private investment.

The workshop, which drew 60 planners, architects and engineers, was organized by Penn Praxis, a nonprofit planning group from the University of Pennsylvania that is preparing a waterfront master plan for the city.

The goal of such intense brainstorming sessions, known as "charrettes," is "to make the dreams of our imagination," said Praxis director Harris Steinberg.

So, along with calls to minimize the impact of I-95 on the waterfront, the five design teams produced a laundry list of suggestions, from the familiar to the fanciful.

- Turn Delaware Avenue into a gracious boulevard with wide sidewalks for pedestrians, a bicycle path and generous landscaping.
- Improve connections between Center City's business district and the waterfront by running a rolling line down Market Street, from 8th Street Station to the river. The line would then loop north and south along the improved waterfront boulevard.
- Rather than impose a continuous waterfront park on the river's one-footed coastline, build a necklace of green spaces similar to Penn Treaty Park. There would be one park for each river neighborhood, located every 2,000 feet or so. Each park would have an easy pedestrian connection back to the neighborhood.
- Create an industrial park on the northern portion of the Delaware. This unexpected idea came from Peter Latz, a German landscape architect whose work celebrates the industrial zone. As an important demonstration project, he advised the city to save Peco's district, but eventually, fill Deeco electric station at Richmond Street and convert it to a biogas generation plant. It would be a statement that industry is still possible in the 21st century.
- Work with the port to reclaim

Some of the Top Recommendations

- **Make Delaware Avenue** a broad boulevard with room to stroll and bike.
- **Have a rolling run** on Market Street to connect the Center City business district with the waterfront.
- **Make space for parks** along the waterfront, one for each river neighborhood, that connect back to the neighborhood.



A proposal to convert an old Peco building to a biogas station would make a statement, a planner said.

- **Create an industrial park** along the waterfront, turning Peco's derelict Art Deco building at Richmond Street into a biogas plant.
- **Reclaim marshland** along the river's edge south of Home Depot.

But just as the wide canyon of I-95 dominates the river vista, the highway dominated the three days of discussion for halting the city back to the Delaware.

Two distinct scenarios for pushing the city eastward emerged. The first approach, presented by Barthelme, was dubbed the stacking scheme because it would place Columbus Boulevard on top of I-95. By creating a two-level road system, Philadelphia could reduce the width of the highway chosen by half, to 200 feet.

The advantage of stacking the highways is that it would raise Columbus Boulevard to the level of Front Street. Rather than having to navigate a daunting overpass to get to the river, people would cross an ordinary city street, albeit a wide one. The city's east-west streets — Market, Chestnut, Walnut — could be extended across the boulevard. Once they reached the east side, the streets would slope gently down to the river, just as they did in the days before the interstate.

But the stacking approach was too tame for the team led by Gary Hack, dean of Penn's School of Design. He argued that Philadelphia should cover

both I-95 and Columbus Boulevard with an enormous platform, starting at Spring Garden Street and growing south. The concrete deck would create acres of new land for development.

It would also allow Philadelphia to extend its street grid east to the river. Because the platform would sit more than 20 feet above the water, he suggested using the space below as Penn's Landing as a parking garage. Although some might criticize parking as a poor use of river frontage, Hack argued that the garage could be used to generate revenue and to keep cars out of Center City. A variety of intermodal transit systems, from ferries to trolleys, would shuttle people into town.

"What you'd gain to a city," Hack said.

The first step, Hack said, for PennDOT to do a basic feasibility study to identify the engineering challenges, estimate the potential cost, and identify sources of funding.

Nearly everyone involved in the charrette agreed that the city and state must move quickly before the vast stretches of vacant waterfront are locked in by development proposals.

The recent approval of two riverfront casinos by the state has already constrained the plan's flexibility. Since the Praxis study began last fall, Steinberg has insisted that planners must accept the casino as "part of the facts on the ground."

On Saturday, however, he noted diplomatically "that the possibility of two casinos being sited along the river are still by many to conflict with our vision. We acknowledge those tensions."

Despite such constraints, the Praxis study marks a major policy shift in Philadelphia. Since the Rendell era, city leaders have resisted attempts at waterfront planning, arguing that it would hamstring developers. But the hands-off approach led to the riverfront's becoming a dumping ground for false uses.

Steinberg said he hoped that the master plan, which will be ready in October, would provide a development map for the next mayor. Several candidates have already declared that urban planning is an important campaign issue.

Unfortunately, it isn't important enough yet for any of the mayoral candidates to have attended Saturday's presentation.

Hiding I-95: Two Ideas



Stacking

By placing Columbus Boulevard on top of I-95, Philadelphia could reduce the width of the waterfront chosen by half, to 200 feet. The advantage of stacking the highways is that it would raise Columbus Boulevard to the level of Front Street. Rather than having to navigate a daunting overpass to get to the river, people would cross a wide city street. The city's east-west streets — Market (above), Chestnut, Walnut — could be extended across the boulevard and slope to the river.



Decking

This approach would cover both I-95 and Columbus Boulevard with an enormous platform from Spring Garden Street south. The concrete deck would create acres of new land for development (shown in light pink). It would also allow Philadelphia to extend its street grid east to the river. Space below the deck on Penn's Landing would be used as a parking garage and hub for shuttles into town.

Inga Saffron, architecture critic for the Philadelphia Inquirer, helped to raise awareness about riverfront planning and design issues by reporting on the March workshop.

C. Public Art Resources

The redevelopment of the central Delaware riverfront offers Philadelphia the opportunity to continue building its legacy as a national model for public-art programs. Many existing groups in the city have set the standards for urban public art nationwide. These include the Fairmount Park Art Association, the Redevelopment Authority's (RDA's) Percent for Art Ordinance, the Philadelphia Art Commission, and the Mural Arts Program. A closer look at these groups will show what assets Philadelphia already has that can be used to bring public art to the central Delaware riverfront.

Fairmount Park Art Association

Founded in 1872, the Fairmount Park Art Association (FPAA) is the nation's first private, nonprofit organization dedicated to "bringing public art and urban planning together." The association commissions, interprets and preserves public art to promote the role that public art plays in creating and enhancing the city's civic spaces in Philadelphia. Some of its most influential recommendations have included establishing a city art commission and adopting a citywide Percent for Art Program. The group has participated in such planning projects as the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, the sculpture garden along Kelly Drive and the Schuylkill River Trail.

Percent for Art Program

In 1959, Philadelphia's City Council established the first Percent for Art Program in the United States. The program is designed to encourage early dialogue with developers about incorporating public art into the urban landscape. The program requires that developers of land owned by the Redevelopment Authority budget one percent of the total construction contract for original, site-specific works of public art. A committee of designers and educators guides developers to ensure successful installation.

Philadelphia Art Commission

The Philadelphia Art Commission serves as an approval body for the design and location of all buildings on city land or paid for wholly or in part with city funding, for the acquisition of works of art by the city and for the nature of other encroachments into or over the public right-of-way. The commission also reviews conservation and relocation plans for city-owned sculptures and public artworks, as well as private-property construction in certain areas. Its members are appointed by the mayor, and the commission is composed of art and design professionals and the commissioner of public property.

Order of Magnitude Costs

| Parks* | | Cost (per acre) | |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Recreation | | \$1.75 million | |
| Wetland | | \$2 million | |
| | | | |
| Roads** | | Cost (per mile) | |
| Boulevard | | \$40 – \$45 million | |
| Primary Street (80' wide) | | \$13.6 million | |
| Secondary Streets (34' wide) | | \$5.8 million | |
| Interstate 95 | | \$175 million*** | |
| | | | |
| Transit | | Cost (per mile) | Cost (per vehicle) |
| Modern Streetcar | | \$10 – \$25 million | \$150,000 – \$900,000 |
| Light Rail Transit | | \$20 – \$40 million | \$2 – \$3 million |
| Trolley | | | \$150,000 – \$900,000 |
| Bus Rapid Transit | | | \$300,000 – \$1.2 million |

*Soft costs for parks is typically estimated by calculating 25% of the hard costs.

**This includes driving, parking, turning and bike lanes, but no sidewalks.

***Calculated using the estimated \$525 million price tag for Girard Avenue interchange, which covers about three miles of highway.

Mural Arts Program

Established in 1984, the Mural Arts Program (MAP) began as a citywide effort to stop harmful graffiti. Over the decades, MAP has brought national and international recognition to Philadelphia, which has been named America’s “City of Murals.” MAP works in over one hundred communities each year, employing three hundred artists and serving more than three thousand youth in its art education programs. MAP coordinates its mural projects with existing community development initiatives, thus making use of what the program refers to as “grassroots social capital” to ensure its success.

D. Order of Magnitude Costs

The following represent generalized construction costs in 2007 dollars for implementing elements of the civic vision. The figures were provided by city and state agencies and their consultants, so they represent a reliable starting point for an implementation conversation. They can be read as up-to-date unit estimates of public space construction, though numerous additional factors (soft costs, design fees, legal fees, inflation, etc.) must be considered for any proposal.

To provide a sense of project scale, recent large-scale development projects in Philadelphia include the \$700 million state-funded expansion of the Pennsylvania Convention Center, the \$512 million construction of Lincoln Financial Field, and the \$346 million Citizens Bank Park.

