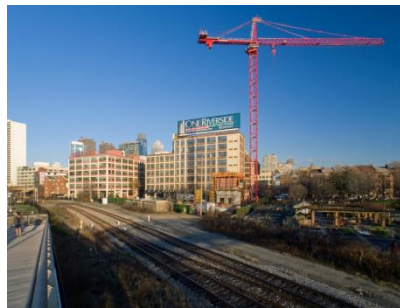
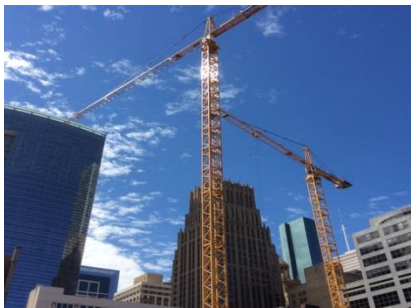


## ***The Civic Commons as a Strategy for Equitable Development***

**Mayor and Foundation Forum  
on the Civic Commons**

**Philadelphia  
September 9, 2016**



- ✓ **300% increase in building permits since the Great Recession**
- ✓ **Largest growth in Millennial population of any of the top 10 largest cities in US**
- ✓ **8 years of continuous population growth**
- ✓ **17% growth in downtown residential population (185,000)**

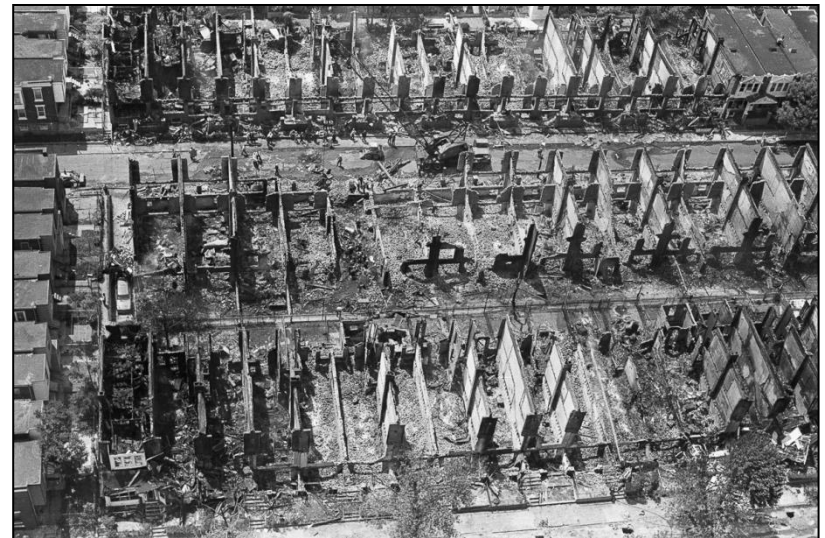


- 1. The historical “back story” of the renaissance of Center City (30 years of history in 5 minutes)**
- 2. The role of public space and civic amenities in advancing the Center City renaissance**
- 3. The role of the Civic Commons in promoting equitable development by extending high quality civic assets to neighborhoods beyond Center City**

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***Move Bombing - 1985***

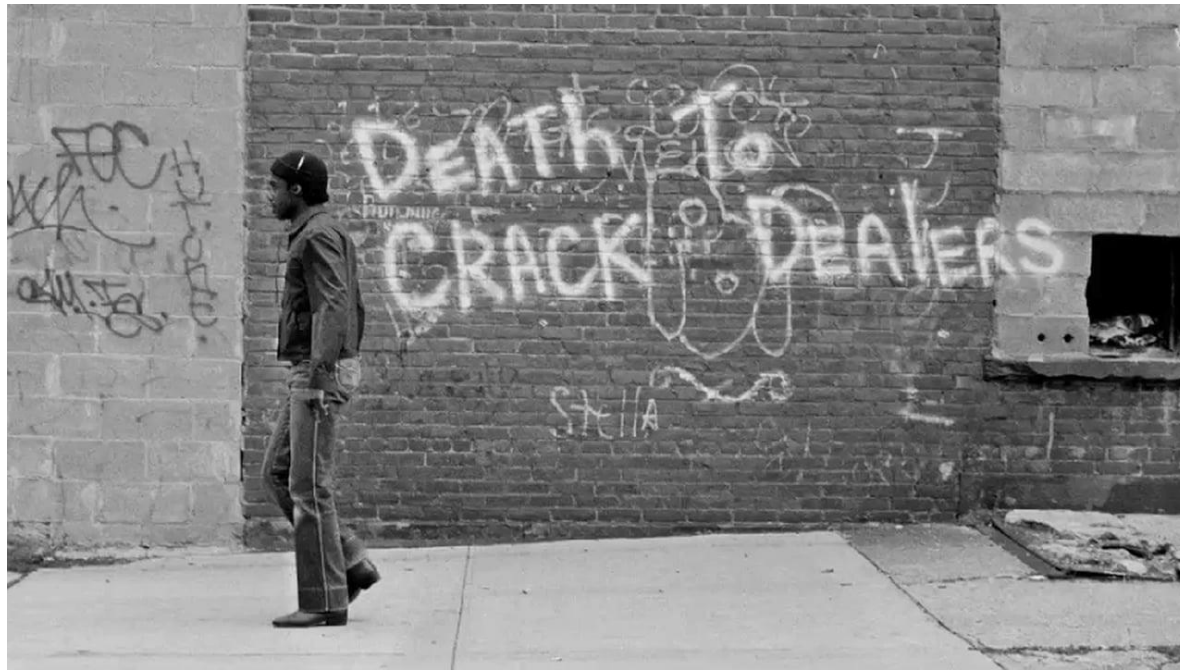


*Citywide Trash Strike - 1986*



***Gary Heidnik Arrest - 1987***





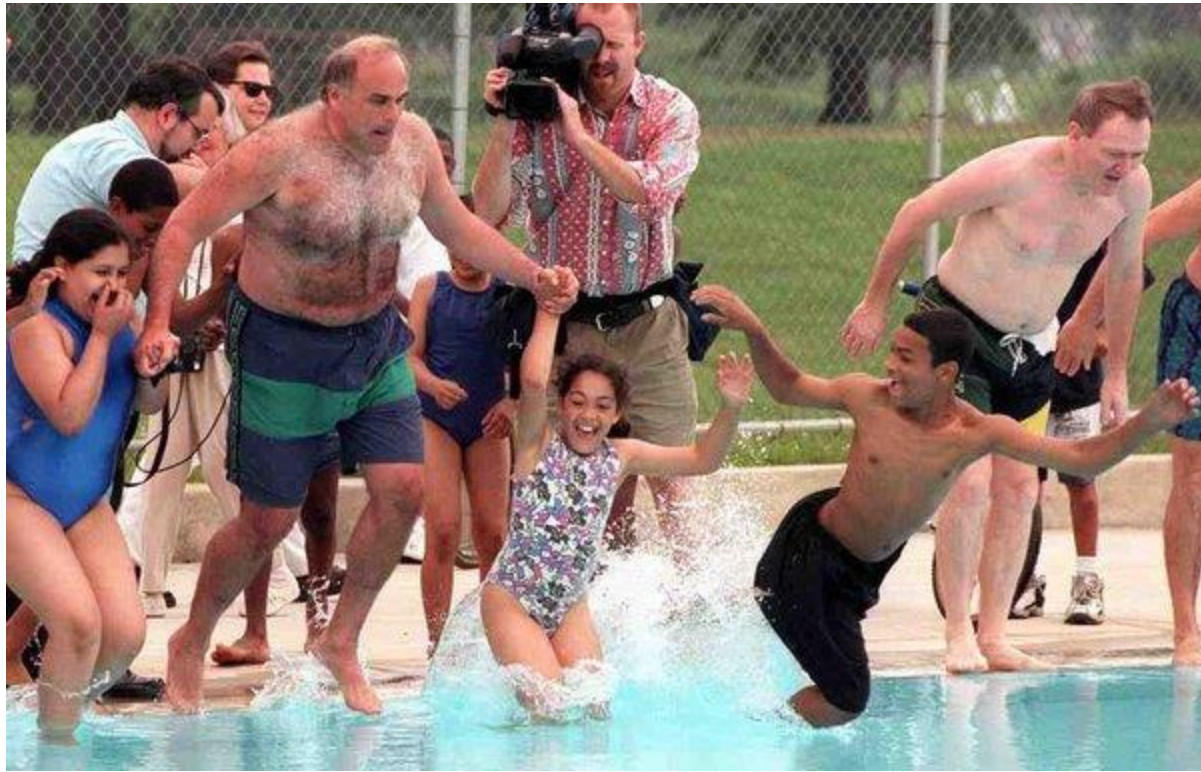
***Crack Crisis – Late 1980's***



***Rocky V - 1990***



***One Meridian Plaza Fire - 1991***



***Ed Rendell Elected Mayor - 1991***





***Center City District Formed - 1991***



***“Make it a Night  
Wednesdays”***



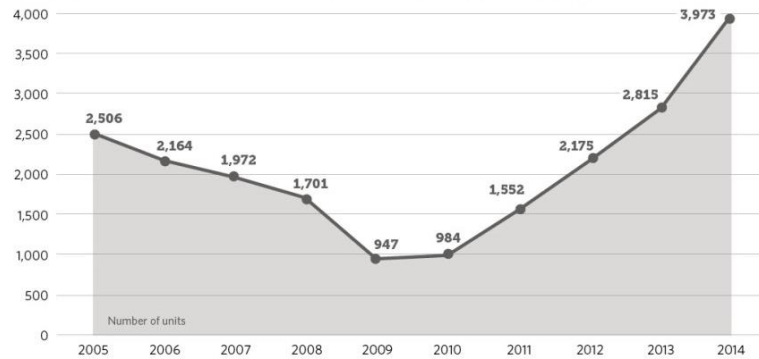
***Center City District Formed - 1991***



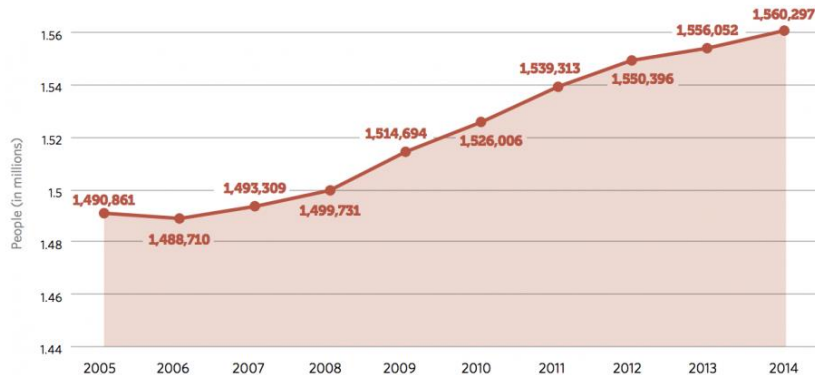
***Stephen Starr Opens Continental - 1993***



Philadelphia Building Permits 2005-2014



Philadelphia Population, 2005-14



**10 Year Tax Abatement Enacted - 1997**





May 13, 1985



May 13, 1985



May 13, 1985

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Independence Mall



Logan Square



Franklin Square



Ben Franklin Parkway



Schuylkill Banks



Chestnut Street Park



Sister Cities Plaza



Dilworth Park



Race Street Pier

***Remaking Center City's Public Realm 2001-2011***



**”The making of an  
urban outdoor oasis.”**  
*- New York Times*

**‘New York Times’ ranks Philly no. 3  
in list of places to go in 2015**

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Before



After







Before



After







Before



After

***Lower Schuylkill Master Plan 2003***





Before



After







Before



After







Before



After



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# Resurgence of Center City fueling Philly's evolution

Updated: AUGUST 28, 2016 — 1:08 AM EDT

f t 246 REPRINTS



ED HILLE / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

DID Agency's new Philadelphia office in the Graham Building on South 15th Street.

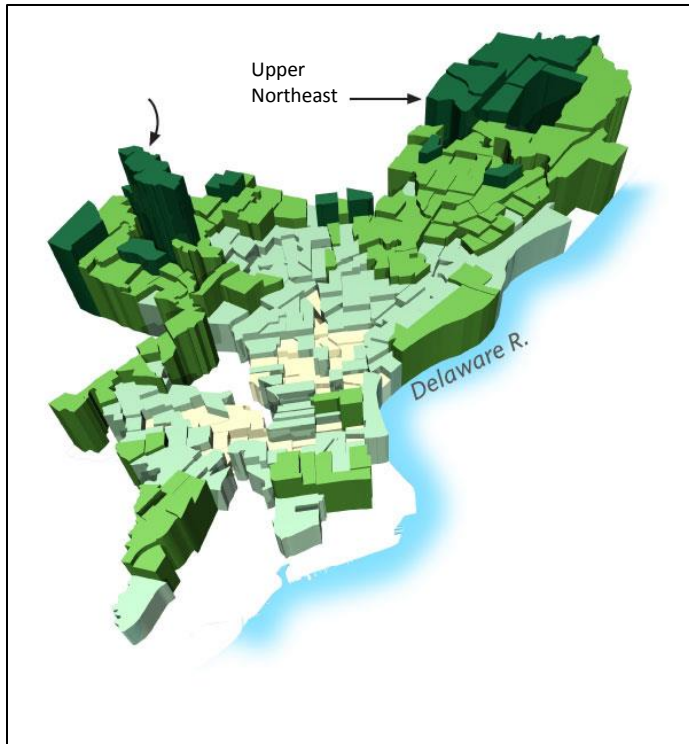
**"The city is getting discovered...[t]he old urban-decline narrative is over."**

**"Seven of the 10 biggest projects are being completed by, or in partnership with, out-of-town developers - many new to Philadelphia."**

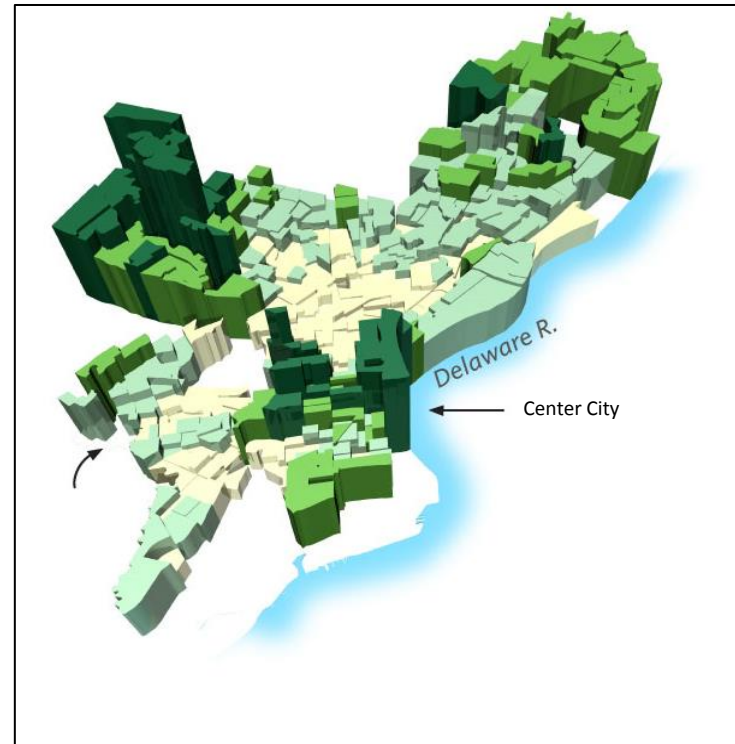


## A Cautionary Tale:

Never in its history has the risk of Philadelphia becoming two cities been so great.



1970



2015

1. The historical “back story” of the renaissance of Center City (30 years of history in 5 minutes)
2. The role of public space and civic amenities in advancing the Center City renaissance
3. **The role of the Civic Commons in promoting equitable development by extending high quality civic assets to neighborhoods beyond Center City**

## GREAT PUBLIC SPACES STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

**ACCESS TO GREAT PUBLIC SPACES** is a key ingredient for a vibrant and creative city, providing a stage for healthy civic life that promotes community engagement and opportunities for outdoor recreation and play.

**OUR GOAL** is to improve access to, revitalize, and develop parks, trails, and public spaces that enhance the quality of life of residents in neighborhoods on the periphery of Center City and promote greater social and economic integration.



**OUR FOCUS** will be on specific places where we can build on the momentum of existing planning and development, including neighborhoods that are revitalizing, changing, and some that are continuing to struggle.



**OUR APPROACH** is to connect residents to high quality public amenities and, through new trails and greenways, promote greater connectivity between neighborhoods and Center City.

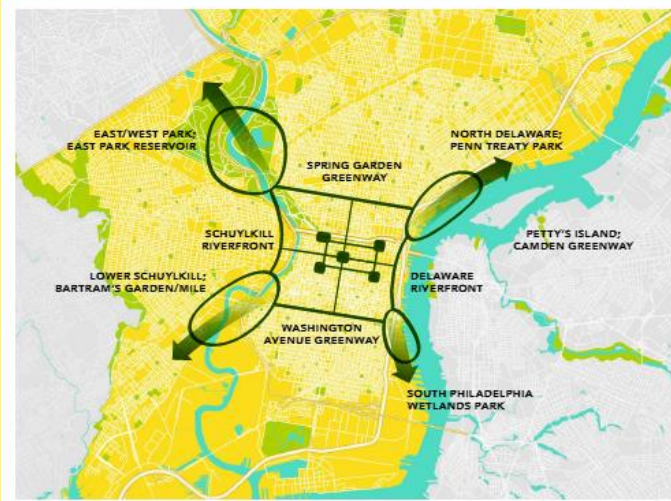


**OUR INVESTMENTS** will accomplish this by:

- Enhancing the amenities in existing parks and public spaces
- Improving access to existing parks and public spaces
- Supporting innovative and high quality programming to activate and animate public spaces
- Promoting connectivity through new and expanded trails and greenways
- Encouraging the use of data to improve public space management
- Advocating for sustainable public space operations and maintenance practices

[www.WilliamPennFoundation.org](http://www.WilliamPennFoundation.org)

PHOTO CREDITS: 1, 3, 5, 6: R. Kennedy for OFTDC; 2: Andrew Rosen for OFTDC; 4: Smith Memorial Playground; 6: D. Tward for OFTDC.



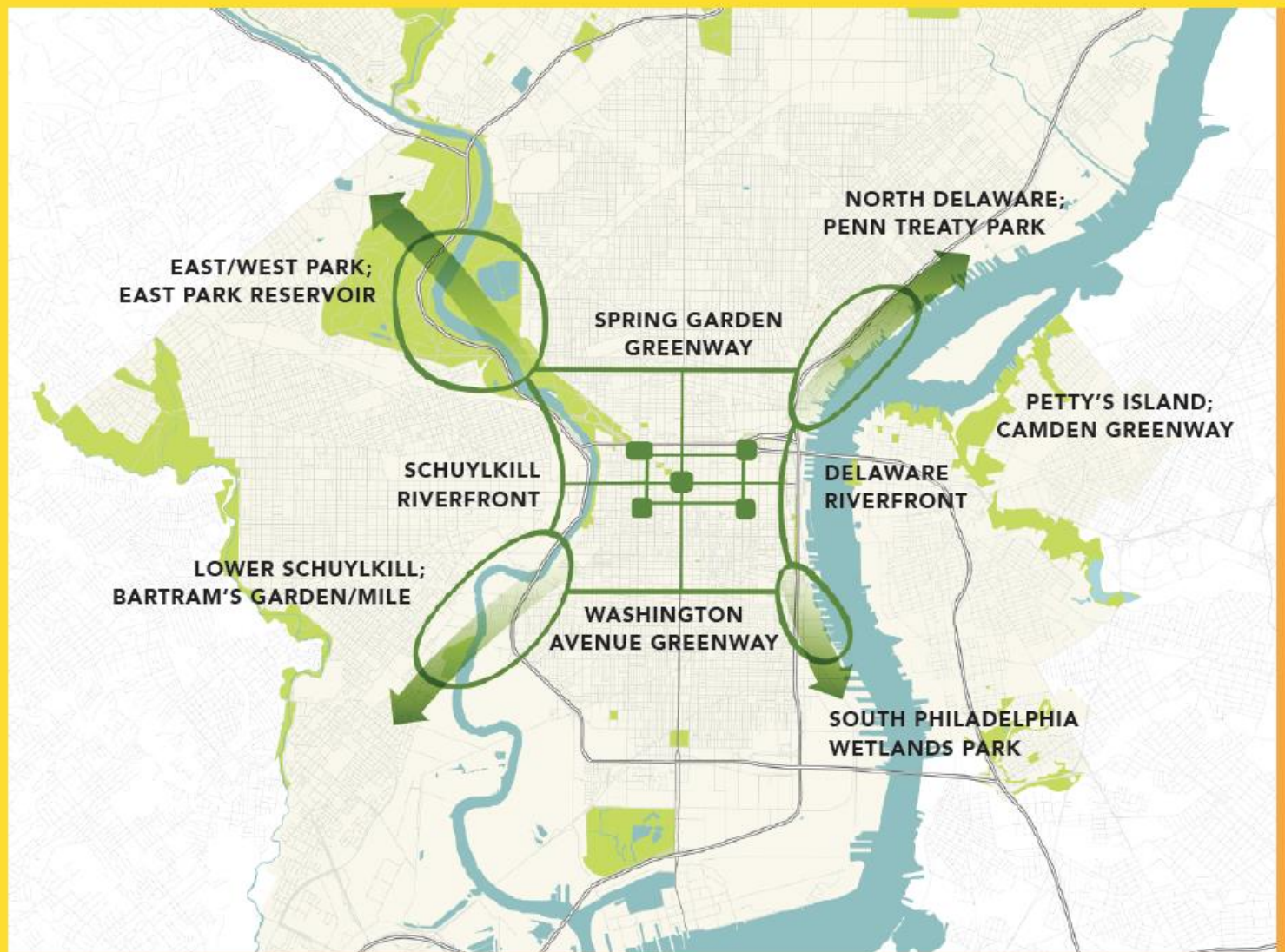
There are many opportunities to create "great public spaces" in neighborhoods outside of Center City.

**OUR CRITERIA** are specific, since there are more worthy public space projects that we can hope to support. We will concentrate on investments that advance one or more of the following objectives:

- Increases access to public space/green space in an under-served community
- Provides a new public amenity desired by the local community
- Responds to strong evidence of community interest and support
- Serves a community outside or on the periphery of Center City
- Acts as a community gateway, portal, or connector
- Enhances the performance of an existing park or public asset
- Promotes connectivity to the "Circuit" regional trail network
- Promotes public access to a riverfront or waterway
- Capacity and resources are available for operation and maintenance

**CONTACT** Shawn McCaney, Senior Program Officer for Creative Communities  
at (215) 988-1830 or [SMcCaney@WilliamPennFoundation.org](mailto:SMcCaney@WilliamPennFoundation.org)





*There are many opportunities to create "great public spaces" in neighborhoods outside of Center City.*



## **WPF Great Public Spaces**

**Connectivity**

=

## **Reimagining the Civic Commons**

**Diminishing Social Isolation**

**Equity of Access**

=

**Social/Economic Integration**

**Shared Civic Space**

=

**The “Civic Commons”**

**Conserving Community  
Identity**

=

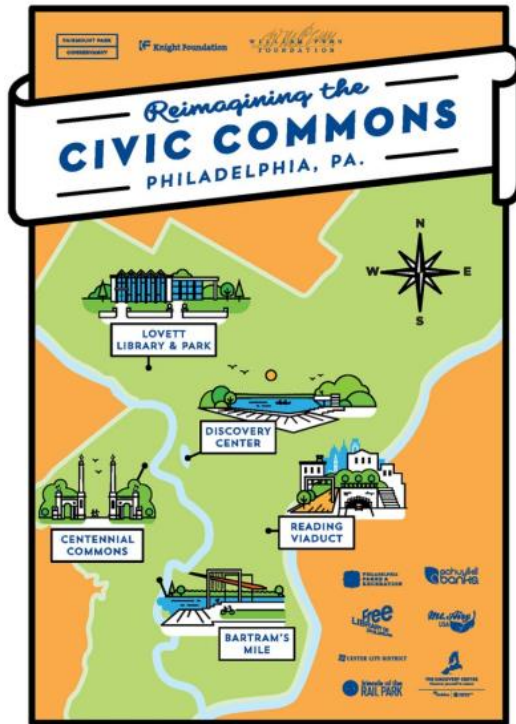
**Engendering Pride of Place**

**Enhance Performance;  
Repurpose Assets**

=

**Next Generation Synergies**

**A carefully curated set of investments  
Intended to promote engagement,  
equity, and economic opportunity**



**Reading Viaduct  
Rail Park**



**Bartram's Mile**



**Parkside Edge**



**Audubon  
Discovery Center**



**Lovett Library  
& Park**



# READING VIADUCT RAIL PARK

The abandoned viaduct is the “cork in the bottle” that impedes reinvestment in the last undeveloped area on the edge of Center City and forms a barrier dividing two communities.

This investment represents the first public amenity in a multi-ethnic, mixed income residential neighborhood that contains no parks, playgrounds, recreation centers, libraries, or public schools.

The Rail Park seeks to transform a barrier into a shared community asset.



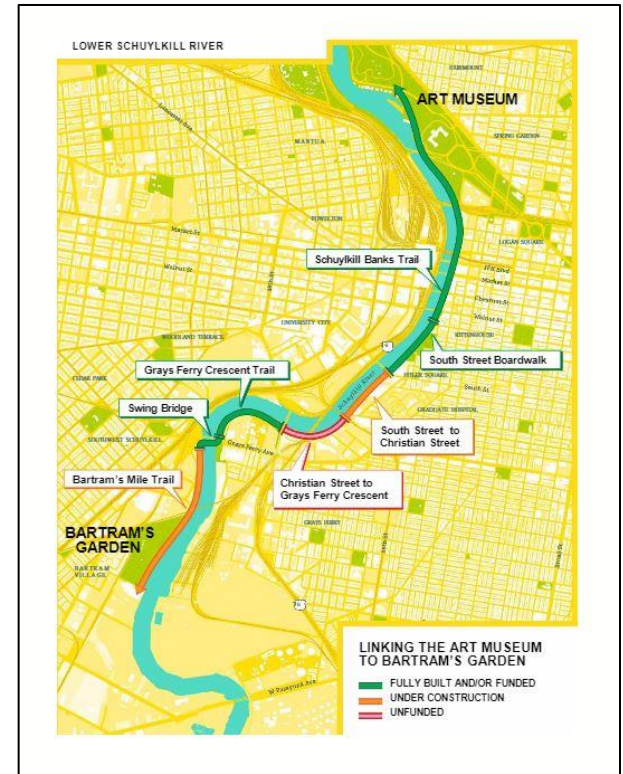


# BARTRAM'S MILE

Transforming a formerly industrial area into riverfront park and pathway that is the final link in a trail that will connect an isolated and impoverished neighborhood to Center City.

Will result in a new public recreation amenity for an under-served and under-resourced community.

The key equitable development challenge will be to create and maintain a sense of “ownership” by the local community of the Bartram’s Mile waterfront park and pathway even after it eventually connects to larger Schuylkill River Trail, which experiences over one million annual regional users.





# CENTENNIAL COMMONS

Involves the development of new, high quality and unique public recreation improvements in an underutilized park adjoining a low and moderate-income neighborhood.

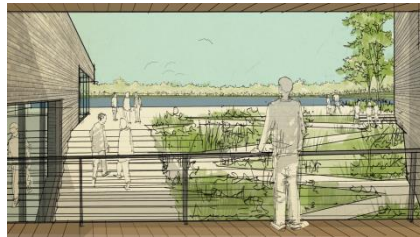
Since the site is adjacent to two regional attractions, the Zoo and a children's museum, the overarching aim of the effort is to create a set of shared civic amenities that serve local needs while at the same time welcoming nonlocal visitors.



# AUDUBON DISCOVERY CENTER

Transforming a defunct 40-acre reservoir into an urban wildlife refuge and environmental center that will also host the regional headquarters of Outward Bound's leadership training program.

Results in an unique new public amenity in a distressed neighborhood that will offer programming for local residents as well as regional visitors and serve as a new anchor institution and gateway to the park.





# LOVETT LIBRARY & PARK

Leveraging the planned renovation of a neighborhood library by improving adjacent land into a new park space that together will create a new center of the community.

Perched on the boundary between different neighborhoods, the new Lovett Library and Park will serve as a public gathering space that will promote social interaction and engagement among diverse residents of the local community.





# CIVIC COMMONS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: INCREASED AWARENESS

The creation of the **Philadelphia Civic Commons** significantly enhanced the visibility of and public interest in the five model projects - something that they could not have achieved individually.

The combination of the five projects into a larger collective has also generated new energy and momentum that is accelerating project development. The effort received extensive coverage in the regional media.



# CIVIC COMMONS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: PROJECT ACCELERATION

The **Philadelphia Civic Commons** has injected an additional \$11MM of funding into the model projects, leveraging prior public and private support and accelerating development of the model projects.

In Year 1 two of the model projects, Bartram's Mile and Audubon Discovery Center, have broken ground.



# CIVIC COMMONS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: NEW COLLABORATIONS

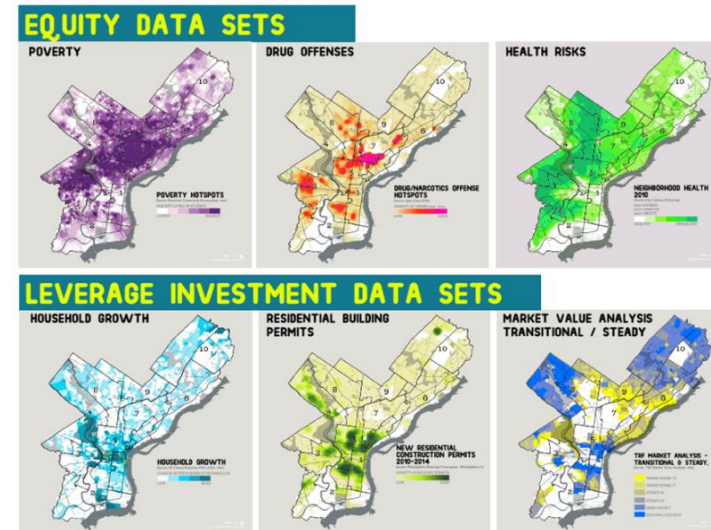
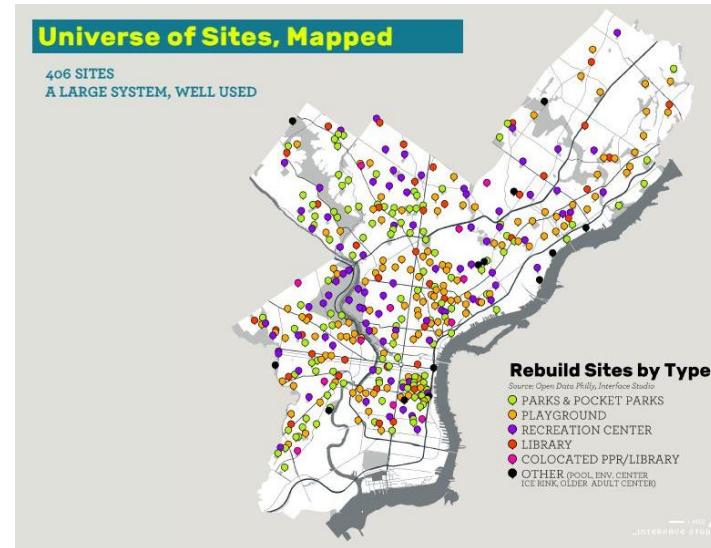
A key component of the **Philadelphia Civic Commons** has been the establishment of a new “Civic Commons Network” comprised of the model project managers and city officials designed to promote operational efficiency and expand impact through collaboration; activities in Year 1 included:

- Regular convening/relationship building
- Information and resource sharing
- Exploration of joint learning opportunities
- Planning for collaborative activities





# CIVIC COMMONS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: A MODEL FOR CITYWIDE POLICY

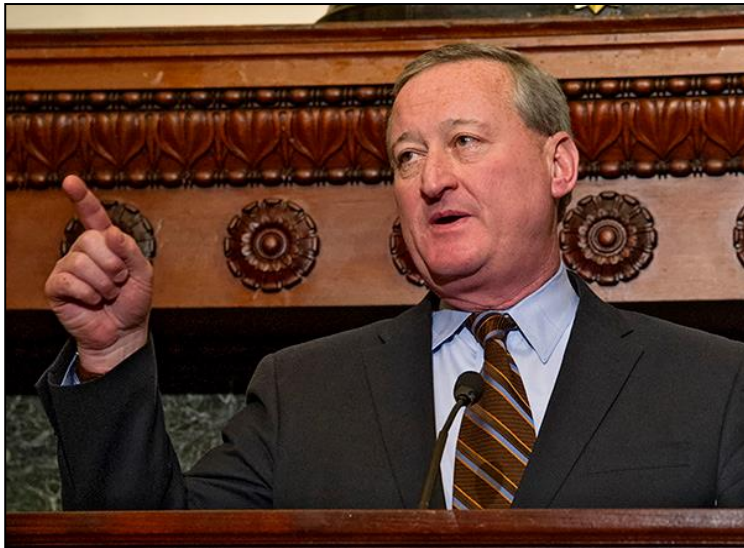


# **CIVIC COMMONS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: A MODEL FOR CITYWIDE POLICY**



➤ **Equity**

➤ **Engagement**



➤ **Economic  
Opportunity**

# **CIVIC COMMONS ACCOMPLISHMENTS: LESSONS FROM THE PILOT CITY**

- Strong, productive partnership with the public sector has been critical
- More compact geography promotes a tighter Civic Commons network
- Strong local convener/leadership is utterly essential
- Allow time for relationship building and pre-planning
- Joint communications provides an important shared lift
- Programming experimentation funds can incentivize collaboration
- Make civic commons network permeable to accelerate external learning
- Successful Civic Commons projects rely heavily on extensive, highly inclusive, and transparent engagement
- Involve network members in developing research agenda



# FOR DISCUSSION: EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

1. Vital and thriving neighborhoods are not museums nor are they frozen in time; there is a need for effective strategies to ***respectfully manage the inevitable evolution of neighborhood identity*** that promotes the conservation of the positive elements of neighborhood character that is associated with long-time residents while also welcoming, embracing, and incorporating the cultural contribution of new residents and community groups.
2. How to effectively ***manage the varying asymmetry in capacity between strong neighborhood development actors*** (private developers, anchor institutions, government) ***and residents*** and promote informed deliberation, discussion, and decision making that represents the best interests of the full community and helps to capture the maximum potential benefit for local residents.