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**BARTRAM'S MILE, LOVE PARK JOIN PHILADELPHIA'S  
GROWING NETWORK OF GREEN SPACES**  
*Philly's Public Space Boom Continues With River-To-River Gems*

**PHILADELPHIA, June 27, 2017** – Each year, Philadelphia's urbanscape gets greener. In 2017, the city's verdant additions include **Bartram's Mile**, a mile-long western extension of the popular **Schuylkill Banks Trail**. Bartram's Mile connects West Philadelphia to **Bartram's Garden**, the lush estate of 18<sup>th</sup>-century botanist John Bartram. In the fall, Center City's JFK Plaza, better known as **LOVE Park**—for Robert Indiana's popular Pop Art word sculpture—re-opens with expanded landscaping, a modern visitor center and a spruced-up *LOVE* statue.

Also new in Philly park news: The formerly pie-in-the-sky plan to connect Center City to the burgeoning Delaware River Waterfront by capping Interstate-95—thereby adding 11 acres of public space—received a last promise of funding. Construction begins in 2019.

Such projects add to an already impressive list of public spaces for the city. Lively urban parks, reimagined recreational landscapes and spirited pop-up gardens have taken over once-overlooked patches of land and water. These transformations have inspired civic planners to reclaim inactive riverbanks, surplus lots and forlorn rail lines—and have renewed community pride.

Much of the action can be spotted in Center City and on Philadelphia's two rivers: the quiet, beautiful Schuylkill to the west and the shipping waterway of the Delaware 30 blocks to the east.

**Delaware River:**

The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) spearheads much of the development along the city's eastern waterfront. As cities worldwide find new ways to bring activity to post-industrial ports and piers, the organization moves ahead with a master development plan that creates appealing public destinations every half-mile and truly connects the city to its waterfront from north to south:

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- **Blue Cross RiverRink Summerfest** – One of the DRWC’s warm-weather fun spaces, first established in 2015, centers around an outdoor roller-skating rink, mini golf and an air-conditioned lodge outfitted with rocking chairs for people watching, eating and drinking. In 2017, Summerfest added boardwalk-style rides and amusements. Discounts for rink admission are offered to Blue Cross subscribers. Open through September 4, 2017. 101 S. Columbus Boulevard, (215) 925-RINK, [delawariverwaterfront.com](http://delawariverwaterfront.com)
- **Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest** – In 2013, the DRWC got people buzzing with the first installment of Winterfest, a seasonal garden and village. During winter only, the riverfront space features Philadelphia’s largest outdoor ice-skating rink, a chalet-inspired lodge with food from local restaurateurs, festive winter drinks, roaring outdoor fire pits, twinkling lights, seasonal décor and activities in and outside of the lodge. 101 S. Columbus Boulevard, (215) 925-RINK, [delawariverwaterfront.com](http://delawariverwaterfront.com)
- **Delaware River Trail** – Cyclists, joggers, strollers and rollers employ the first 1,400-foot-long portion of the riverfront trail, between Spring Garden and Ellen Streets. The DWRC Trail’s next two phases are replacing the southern portion between Washington Avenue and Pier 70 Boulevard and cutting the ribbon on the SugarHouse Casino portion, which will link the trail at Ellen Street to the casino’s current bike path. Eventually, the completed trail will be part of the East Coast Greenway and The Circuit Trails, a 750-mile network of bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the region. (215) 629-3200, [delawariverwaterfront.com](http://delawariverwaterfront.com)
- **Pier 68** – On Pier 68 in South Philadelphia, recreational anglers and recreation-seekers can fish, relax, picnic and observe the tidal nature of the Delaware River from up close. This \$1.7 million project opened in 2015. Columbus Boulevard & Pier 70 Boulevard, [delawariverwaterfront.com](http://delawariverwaterfront.com)
- **Race Street Pier** – In the shadow of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, the first project in the DRWC’s master plan for the Central Delaware River opened in 2011. Race Street Pier features two levels for recreation. The upper terrace, dubbed the Grand Sky Promenade, rises 12 feet toward the bridge and is paved with Trex, a sustainable, synthetic decking material made out of reclaimed plastic and wood. A multi-tiered seating area—perfect for watching the tide roll in—connects the promenade to the lower terrace. The DRWC sponsors free yoga classes seven mornings a week in season. Columbus Boulevard at Race Street, (215) 629-3200, [racestreetpier.com](http://racestreetpier.com)
- **Spruce Street Harbor Park** – The name is the address of this spring-into-fall destination, which attracts impressive crowds with bocce and shuffleboard, tree-slung hammocks and colorful lights, floating barges with over-the-water seating, a beer garden serving plenty of food options and a variety of events. Open through October 1, 2017. Columbus Boulevard & Spruce Street, (215) 629-3200, [sprucestreetharborpark.com](http://sprucestreetharborpark.com)
- **Washington Avenue Pier:** Following the enthusiastic reception of the permanent Race Street Pier, the DRWC debuted South Philadelphia’s Washington Avenue Pier in 2014. Visitors can climb a beacon created by artist Jody Pinto, take in river views from an elevated boardwalk and follow markers that relate the site’s history as a major immigration hub and the nation’s first navy yard. S. Columbus Boulevard & Washington Avenue, (215) 629-3200, [delawariverwaterfront.com](http://delawariverwaterfront.com)

### **Schuylkill River:**

Long a labor of love for citizens who live in the western part of Center City, the Schuylkill River Trail, overseen by the Schuylkill River Trail Council, is well on its way to connecting the lower part of the river to trails that wind through Manayunk all the way to Valley Forge and beyond.

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- **Schuylkill Banks Trail** – The paved riverfront trail extended in 2015 so that runners, bikers, bladders and outdoor types can cruise along the river from Christian Street to Kelly Drive and beyond. When they do, they pass the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Fairmount Water Works, Paine’s Park skateboard park, Lloyd Hall and bike and Segway rentals near Boathouse Row. **Bartram’s Mile**, a 1.1-mile greenway that debuted in 2017, expands riverfront access on the other side of the Schuylkill, in Southwest Philadelphia from Grays Ferry Avenue to 56<sup>th</sup> Street. Plans for the trail include repurposing an abandoned historic railroad crossing just south of Grays Ferry Avenue Bridge, connecting the Grays Ferry Crescent and Bartram’s Mile. (215) 222-6030, [schuylkillbanks.org](http://schuylkillbanks.org)
- **Schuylkill Banks Boardwalk** – Philadelphia has its own permanent boardwalk in the form of a 15-foot-wide, 2,000-foot-long, ADA-compliant concrete path that juts out above the Schuylkill River. Part of the Schuylkill Banks Trail, the 2014 addition provides runners, bikers and pedestrians with a trail connection between Locust Street and the South Street Bridge. Those who want to take in the scenery can do so at any of the four overlooks offering city and waterfront views. Schuylkill River (near 25<sup>th</sup> Street) at Locust Street, (215) 222-6030, [schuylkillbanks.org](http://schuylkillbanks.org)
- **Venice Island** – The Philadelphia Water Department partnered with Parks & Recreation and residents of Philadelphia’s Manayunk neighborhood to turn a municipal project into an island-sized children’s attraction. Here’s how it happened: The utility built a four million-gallon underground water tank and a pumping station with a green roof. On top of the tank went a 250-seat performing arts center devoted primarily to kids’ theater, an outdoor amphitheater, a basketball court, a sprayground and lots of park space with stunning sunrise and sunset water views. Main & Cotton Streets, (215) 685-3583, [veniceisland.org](http://veniceisland.org)

### **Center City:**

Center City District spearheads much of the park work in the core of the city, with solid contributions from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, to ensure that recreational opportunities abound in parks and pockets all over downtown Philly.

- **Cira Green** – This elevated park, which debuted in 2015, perches 95 feet above the street and wows guests with skyline views and cool breezes. Atop the Cira Centre South parking garage, the site employs green roof and storm water management techniques to reduce impact on the environment and sewer system. This summer, the venue’s Friday happy hours have been a hit. An onsite restaurant is planned for later in the year. Entrance on 30<sup>th</sup> Street between Chestnut & Walnut Streets, [ciragreen.com](http://ciragreen.com)
- **Dilworth Park** – In 2014, City Hall’s western-facing front yard transformed from a concrete sweep to a \$55 million multi-use park, complete with tree groves, benches, a cafe and areas for outdoor events and performances. A large programmable fountain offers children a place to romp and splash in warm weather. During the winter, an ice rink brings skaters to the park. The site’s Greenfield Lawn provides a place to relax, and sloping glass roofs lead to the major transit hub below the park. 15<sup>th</sup> & Market Streets, (215) 440-5500, [dilworthpark.org](http://dilworthpark.org)
- **The Oval** – Ben Franklin surely would have appreciated this eight-acre pop-up park, which occupies Eakins Oval, a little-used parking lot on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. Food trucks, movies, a beer garden, free health and fitness classes, theme days and a ground mural designed by PORT Urbanism and painted by Mural Arts Philadelphia bring the space to life for one summer month. The park, open for its fifth year in 2017, is imagined and executed by Fairmount Park Conservancy and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation. July 20-August 20, 2017. 2451 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, [theovalphl.org](http://theovalphl.org)

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- **PHS Pop Up Gardens** – The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) is bringing two versions of its popular greening projects (called “horticultural interventions” by staffers) to underused lots in 2017. The South Street Pop Up returns with a new design that romances the garden, while the first-time uCity Square location transforms a vacant lot into an urban orchard of sustainable practices and repurposed materials. Both feature curated food and beer menus, with proceeds supporting PHS programs that address challenges such as healthy eating, food accessibility, environmental sustainability and urban livability. Open through October 2017. 15<sup>th</sup> & South Streets & 36<sup>th</sup> & Filbert Streets, (215) 988-8800, [phsonline.org](http://phsonline.org)
- **The Rail Park** – Work has commenced to transform a three-mile section of an abandoned elevated Reading Rail line north of Callowhill Street into a leafy green space with room to walk, sit and admire the Center City view. Phase One, slated to be completed in spring 2018, is an industrial, four-block section. During construction, passersby can learn more about the vision for the park through Friends of the Rail Park board member-led, street-level walking tours along the site. Along Noble Street between 11<sup>th</sup> & Broad Streets, [therailpark.org](http://therailpark.org)
- **Sister Cities Park** – Kids especially adore this landscaped urban discovery tucked along the Parkway. The site stars a Children’s Discovery Garden, pebble-bottomed boat pond, the Logan Square Café, an eco-smart branch of the Independence Visitor Center, a pint-sized hill that evokes the Wissahickon Valley and a programmed fountain that pays tribute to Philadelphia’s 11 sister cities. On warm Thursday nights, music lovers bring their own bottles and snacks for picnics and performances. Center City District maintains and programs the park. 18<sup>th</sup> Street & Benjamin Franklin Parkway, (215) 440-5500, [sistercitiespark.org](http://sistercitiespark.org)

#### **Center City & Beyond:**

- **Indego Bike Share** – Pedal power hit Philadelphia in 2015 with the launch of Indego, the city’s bike-share program named for sponsor Independence Blue Cross. The program celebrated one million rides just a year and a half after its start. Today, cyclists rent bikes from 115 stations throughout and beyond Center City. Riders pay per ride or opt for the monthly pass. An Indego app points to real-time station and bike availability. The most recent expansion, which included 14 new stations and other upgrades, was funded by an \$800,000 grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to mark the system’s second anniversary. [rideindego.com](http://rideindego.com)

#### **Future Philly Parks & Trails:**

- **30<sup>th</sup> Street Station District Plan** – This 35-year project includes 40 acres of green and pedestrian-first space.
- **Bainbridge Green** – Queen Village residents are working to activate and green up the Bainbridge Street median between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets.
- **Broad Street and Lehigh Avenue** – This busy yet overlooked intersection is due for a community green space with events such as movie screenings.
- **Cherry Street Pier** – Long vacant Pier 9 on the Delaware River will transform an abandoned warehouse and outdoor space into shipping container-offices and vendors an open-air garden and performance space in 2018.
- **Festival Pier Revamp** – This larger project includes a redo of the Delaware Waterfront concert space near Noble Street.
- **Frankford Pause** – This neon-pink park—with magenta lights that grow brighter when the SEPTA elevated train pulls into the Margaret-Orthodox station—is slated to open fall 2017.
- **I-676 Bridges** – As crews sure up the bridges that pass over this segment of the inner-city interstate, they’ll cap the traffic-packed byway, adding overhead parks and green space.

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- **June 5<sup>th</sup> Memorial Park** – A park will mark the tragic 2013 building collapse in Center City Philadelphia at 21<sup>st</sup> and Market Streets.
- **LOVE Park** – The better-than-ever park re-opens in fall 2017, and the *LOVE* sculpture moves home.
- **One Drexel Plaza** – The 1.3-acre West Philadelphia space will serve as the activity center for Schuylkill Yards, a Drexel University-Brandywine Realty Trust collaboration
- **Parkside Edge** – The initial phase of the Centennial Commons will bring seating, swing chairs and gardens to Parkside Avenue from 41<sup>st</sup> Street to West Memorial Hall Drive.
- **Penn's Landing I-95 Cap** – Eleven acres of green space will include an ice-skating rink, spray pools and café—and will greatly improve the connection between the city and the waterfront.
- **The Rail Park** – This ambitious, multi-phase project will connect Chinatown, Fairmount and Brewerytown and rival New York City's High Line when complete.
- **Schuylkill River Trail** – The Bartram's Garden-to-Passyunk Avenue and South-to-Christian streets segments are up next.

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*Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos of Greater Philadelphia, visit the photo gallery of [visitphilly.com/pressroom](http://visitphilly.com/pressroom).*