



Schuylkill River Development Corporation
STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2025

Contents

About the Plan	1
A Brief History of Schuylkill Banks	2
Capital Projects Overview	4
Environmental Scan	6
Fiscal Analysis	10
SRDC Leadership & Staff	12
SWOT Analysis	14
Goals and Objectives	16
Timeline	22
Conclusion	23





About the Plan

Schuylkill River Development Corporation

SRDC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization charged by the City of Philadelphia with revitalizing the area around the 8-mile tidal section of the Schuylkill River, from the Fairmount Dam to the Delaware River, branded as Schuylkill Banks.

The centerpiece of this effort is the construction, programming, and maintenance of a continuous riverfront trail and greenway with associated access points and amenities along the Banks. The first phase of trail construction, which is projected to be complete by the end of this plan period, will connect the Fairmount Water Works and Bartram’s Garden, both National Historic Landmarks. The subsequent phases of trail construction will extend Schuylkill Banks to Fort Mifflin, another National Historic Landmark, situated near the confluence of the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers.

Mission

SRDC is revitalizing Schuylkill Banks, connecting people and neighborhoods for the well-being of all.

Vision

SRDC envisions the transformation of Philadelphia’s tidal Schuylkill River, Schuylkill Banks, into a premiere riverfront destination that connects diverse neighborhoods, providing safe recreation and alternative transportation.

This Schuylkill Banks trail and greenway fosters:

- social and economic development,
- vibrant and healthy neighborhoods,
- public health improvements,
- environmental enhancements, and
- community members who are active stewards of Schuylkill Banks.

SRDC will achieve these results through continued diversity in governance, membership, and equitable community engagement.

Partnership

SRDC works with the City of Philadelphia and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in fulfilling its mission. Key City agencies include the Department of Commerce, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, Philadelphia City Planning Commission, the Mayor’s Office of Transportation and Utilities, and the Department of Streets. Key state agencies include Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, PennDOT, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Community and Economic Development and Fish and Boat Commission. In most cases, SRDC is the junior partner to these larger organizations, but our frequent presence on site makes our contribution significant.

Additionally, SRDC has great support and guidance from private foundations, including the William Penn Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Philadelphia Foundation, and the Knight Foundation. And SRDC is proud to partner with a variety of other public, private, and nonprofit partners to advance the Schuylkill Banks Vision and help create a more sustainable Philadelphia.

Strategic 5-Year Plan

This plan is the result of a year-long strategic planning process undertaken by SRDC staff and Board under the facilitation of a consultant. It takes a comprehensive look at the work that has been done on Schuylkill Banks to date and the vision for the Banks between 2021 and 2025 with big-picture goals and more specific objectives to achieve or more carefully consider over the five year period.

A Brief History of Schuylkill Banks

Early History of the Schuylkill

Before the founding of Philadelphia, the Schuylkill (then known as Manayunk, or “where we go to drink”) was an important part of the landscape for Leni-Lenape tribes.

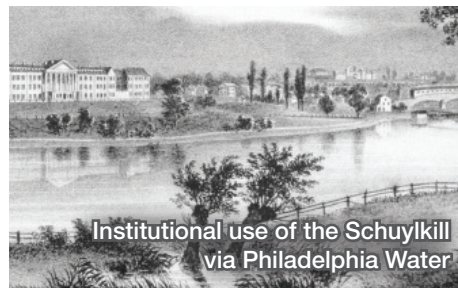
William Penn originally intended for his “greene country towne” to spread evenly between the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers, situating the city at the narrowest point between the two rivers. However, residents had other ideas, developing bustling neighborhoods along the Delaware River and leaving the Schuylkill River largely as a country retreat with bucolic estates, institutional uses, and larger farm tracts through the late 1700’s.

Industrial Revolution

The 1800’s brought the industrialization of the Schuylkill River, with heavy use of the tidal portion of the river for ships and barges at the beginning of the century, transitioning to rail yards, slaughterhouses, trash yards, and related uses by the end of the century.

Neighborhoods around the river consisted primarily of working class families who benefitted from living near factories and other centers of labor and could not afford to live farther away from the increasingly polluted riverfront.

The 1800’s also saw the institution of the Fairmount Water Works, Fairmount Dam, and Fairmount Park all of which worked together to protect Philadelphia’s drinking water from industrial and agricultural pollution upriver from Philadelphia’s City Center.



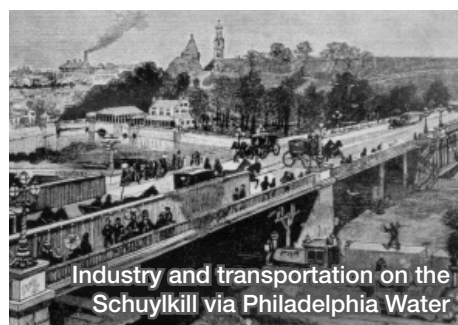
Institutional use of the Schuylkill via Philadelphia Water



Colossus Bridge via Philadelphia Water



South Street Docks via Philadelphia Water



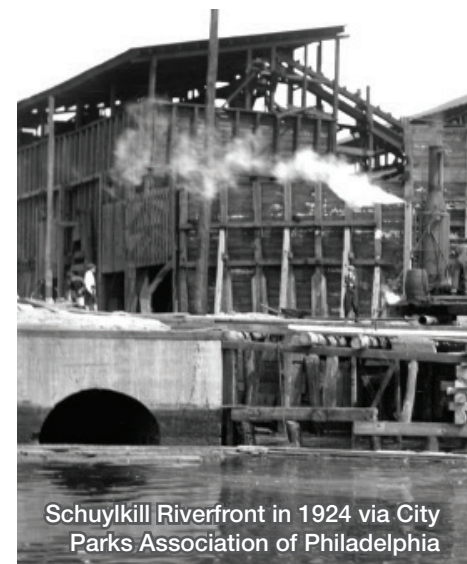
Industry and transportation on the Schuylkill via Philadelphia Water

Movements to Reclaim the River

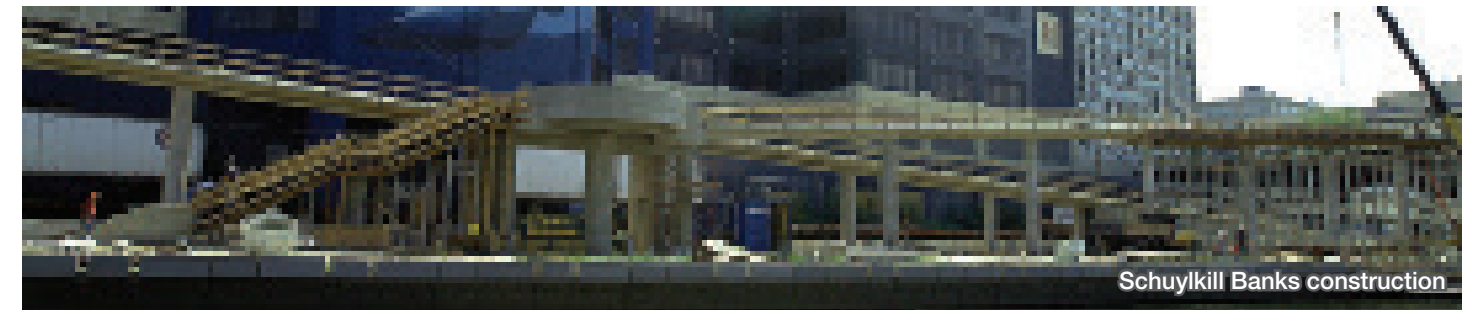
By the early 1900’s, the tidal Schuylkill was choked with so much trash and effluent that the river was unable to carry it all away from the city. In 1924, John Frederick Lewis and the City Parks Association published a tract calling for the reclamation of the lower Schuylkill River.

By the middle of the 20th Century, most industry had abandoned the tidal Schuylkill in Center City and West Philadelphia. What remained consisted of transportation infrastructure, including rail lines and a newly constructed expressway.

In the 1980’s, the Fitler Square neighborhood successfully advocated for the creation of Schuylkill River Park at 25th and Spruce Streets. Encouraged by its success, John Collins, a landscape architect, proposed a linear park along the largely abandoned riverfront.



Schuylkill Riverfront in 1924 via City Parks Association of Philadelphia



Schuylkill Banks construction

Schuylkill River Development Council

The Schuylkill River Development Council was formed in 1992 to advocate and raise funds for the riverfront park. This early iteration of SRDC was a very active neighborhood nonprofit.

Thanks in large part to its advocacy, the City of Philadelphia Department of Streets cleared, bulkheaded, and added a paved trail along the riverfront between Locust Street and MLK Drive.



Schuylkill River Development Corporation

A decade after its founding, SRDC voted to restructure. The new corporation had a Board of Directors comprised of stakeholders along the river, including universities, utilities, City agencies, and businesses. It also had a professional staff that was hired to fundraise and advocate for trail development, oversee capital projects, and implement programming.

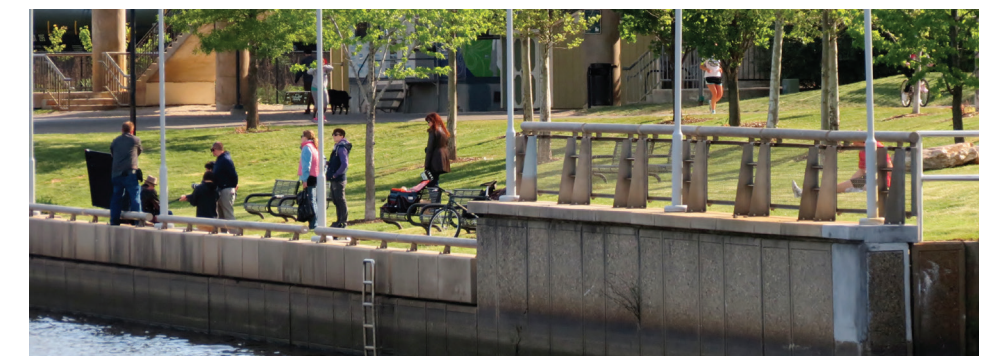
Under the leadership of the new Board, SRDC worked with the City to landscape the Center City portion of the trail, create a vision for a connected greenway along the entire tidal Schuylkill,

and take steps towards implementing that vision.

Between 1992 and 2020, more than \$86M was invested by SRDC, the City, and their partners along the tidal Schuylkill, resulting in dramatic improvements to the built environment and playing a significant role in the revitalization of neighborhoods along the completed portions of the trail and greenway.

Schuylkill Banks, and the larger Schuylkill River Trail, have received numerous awards and distinctions, including PA River of the Year, Trail of the Year, and the USA Today’s Best Urban Trail in America.

SRDC plans to capitalize on its successes to date in order to create momentum for the continued revitalization of the Schuylkill River.



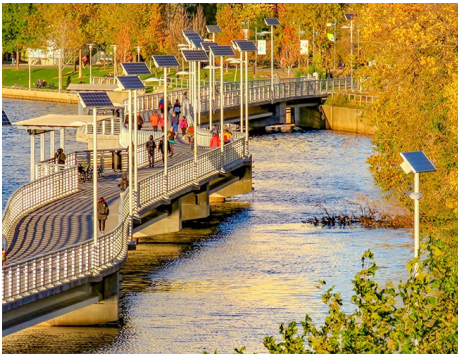


Capital Projects Overview

Completed Projects

As of December 2020, 3.65 miles of Schuylkill Banks are complete. This includes the Center City, Boardwalk, South to Christian, Grays Ferry Crescent, and Bartram’s Mile trail segments.

In addition to these major trail and greenway projects, SRDC and its partners have completed a number of trail access and enhancement projects. These include stair, ramp, and at-grade access points in neighborhoods surrounding trail segments, essential amenities like a restroom, recreational assets like docks and fishing piers, public memorial and art installations, and a variety of required repair and maintenance projects.



Projects in the Pipeline

Two projects are currently under construction. The first is the Schuylkill Crossing at Grays Ferry, which will connect Grays Ferry Crescent to Bartram’s Mile, adding 0.19 miles to the trail. The second is the trail section immediately south of Bartram’s Garden (56th Street to 61st Street) which will add 0.36 miles to the trail.

The next major trail segment, Christian to Crescent, is currently in design, and most of the funding for the project has been secured; construction is anticipated to begin in 2021 and be complete in 2024. This project will bridge the last gap in the trail between Christian Street and the Grays Ferry Crescent, resulting in a fully connected trail along the northernmost half of the tidal Schuylkill River, between the Fairmount Dam and a few blocks south of Bartram’s Garden.

SRDC is also working on plans to convert a formerly industrial pier on Bartram’s Mile into a fishing pier and scenic overlook.



Longer term Trail & Greenway Segments

The full vision for Schuylkill Banks involves extending the trail down to Fort Mifflin at the confluence of the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers, as well as a trail spur connecting from Passyunk Avenue to the Navy Yard.

The initial Schuylkill Banks trail segments were all built on abandoned, formerly industrial land. However, as progress moves further south, there is less available land and much of that land is currently being used for industrial purposes. As such, at least in the short-term, these connections to Fort Mifflin and the Navy Yard will need to be made via inland routes, ideally as separated bike and pedestrian routes along existing road rights-of-way.

Fully completing the tidal Schuylkill River Trail with connections to Fort Mifflin, the Navy Yard and JFK Park will likely take another 20 years.

COMPLETED TRAIL & GREENWAY SEGMENTS

Project	Opened	Investment
Center City	2000	\$8,800,000
Grays Ferry Crescent	2012	\$3,500,000
Boardwalk	2014	\$18,900,000
Bartram’s Mile	2017	\$5,840,000
South to Christian	2018	\$4,900,000

TRAIL & GREENWAY PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

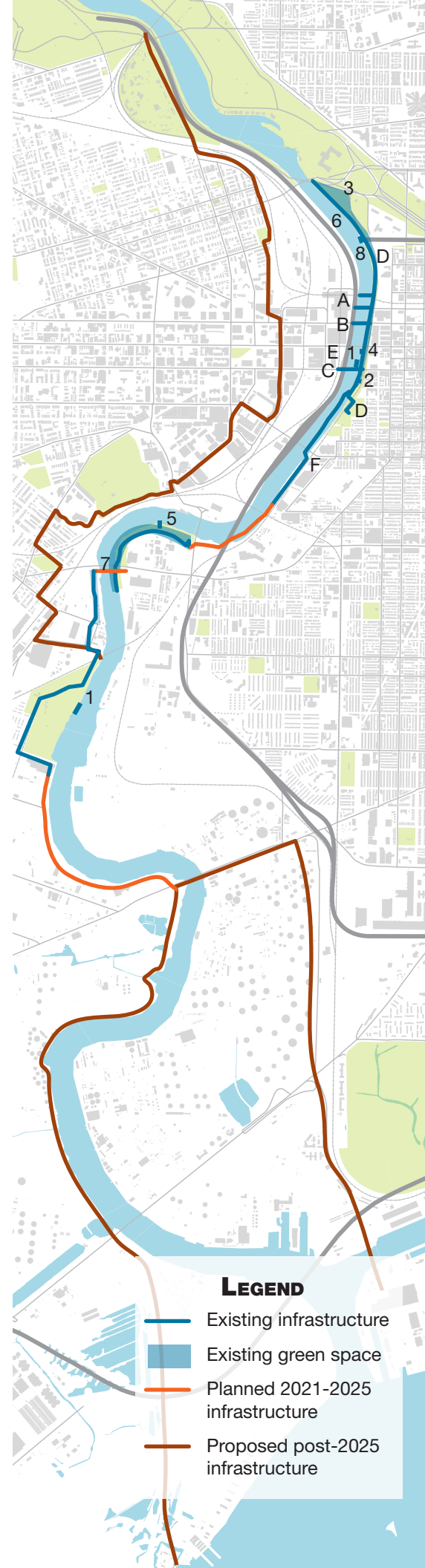
Project	Projected	Investment
Schuylkill Crossing at Grays Ferry	2021	\$15,900,000
56th to 61st Street	2021	\$4,650,000
Bartram’s Mile Fishing Pier	2021	\$560,000
Schuylkill River Bulkhead Improvements	2022	\$292,000
Christian to Crescent	2024	\$39,800,000
61st Street to Passyunk Avenue	2024	\$4,000,000

TRAIL CONNECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Project	Completed	Investment
A. JFK Boulevard Bridge	2009	\$19,800,000 (PennDOT)
B. Market Street Bridge	2009	\$1,100,000
C. Walnut Street Bridge	2012	\$2,600,000 (Streets)
D. Schuylkill River Parks Connector Bridge & At-Grade Crossings	2012	\$6,400,000 (Streets)
E. Schuylkill Banks Bridge Lighting	2013	\$1,300,000
F. CHOP Ped Bridge	2018	\$1,000,000 (CHOP)

ADDITIONAL SCHUYLKILL BANKS INVESTMENTS

Project	Opened	Investment
1. Schuylkill Banks Docks	2005	\$1,000,000
2. Composting Restroom	2010	\$200,000
3. Paine’s Park	2012	\$4,500,000 (FPSF)
4. 9/11 Memorial	2012	\$200,000
5. Grays Ferry Fishing Pier	2012	\$400,000
6. North End Lower Trail Rehabilitation	2012	\$100,000
7. Grays Ferry Skate Park	2013	\$75,000 (FPSF)
8. “Air” Public Art Installation	2015	\$56,300





Environmental Scan

Greenway Use & Public Perception

When SRDC first branded Schuylkill Banks, it was a little-known community amenity. In the subsequent decades, the popularity of the trail has skyrocketed and the branding in and around Center City has taken off. It is less clear to the greater Philadelphia population that Schuylkill Banks includes the Grays Ferry Crescent and Bartram’s Mile trail segments, but the Center City, Boardwalk, and South to Christian trail segments are all known as “Schuylkill Banks.” It seems likely that awareness that the southern trail segments are also

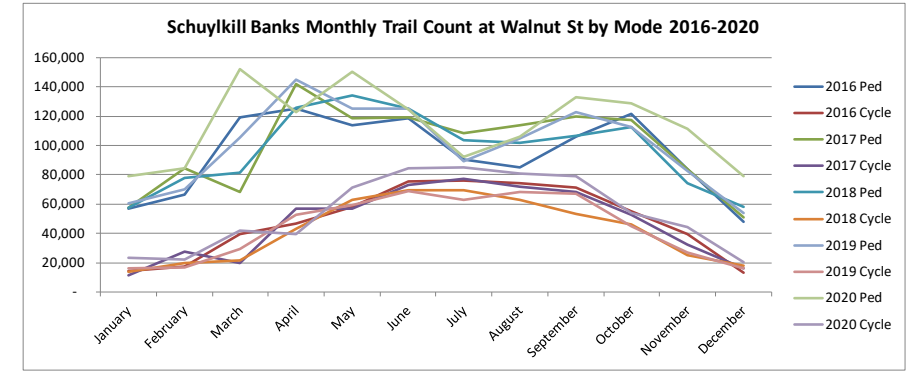
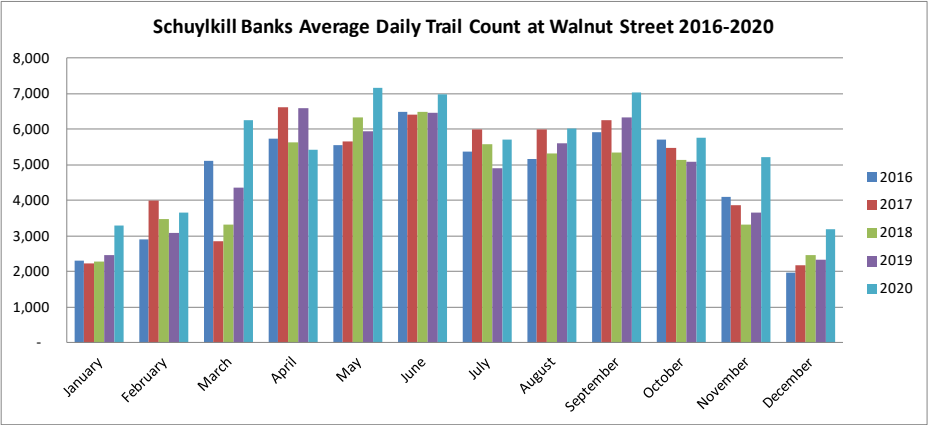
part of Schuylkill Banks will grow as trail segments are connected. Overall public reviews of the trail are very positive. It gets 4.7 out of 5 stars on Google and 4.6 out of 5 stars on Facebook. Positive reviews comment on the beauty of the trail, the great views, how much fun it is to use, and the activities that one can do on the trail. Caveats that are mentioned (or that impacted star ratings) include how busy/crowded the trail is in the summer, poor trail user etiquette, that access could be better for those with limited mobility, that there could be more restrooms, and a lack of visible security and/or police.

Online Ratings



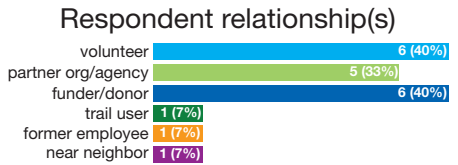
Schuylkill Banks Recreation:

- walking
- running
- cycling
- skating
- fishing
- bird-watching
- picnicking
- kayaking
- canoeing
- yoga
- tai chi
- circuit training
- reading
- playing
- dog walking
- sunbathing
- photography
- painting
- drawing

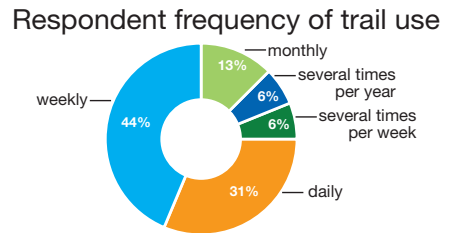


Stakeholder Survey

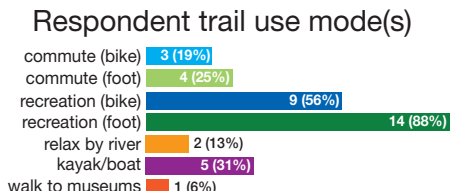
To facilitate the creation of this document, a questionnaire was sent to stakeholders of SRDC and Schuylkill Banks. Respondents included volunteers, funders/donors, trail users, adjacent neighbors, representatives of partner organizations/agencies, and former employees. Not all respondents answered all questions.



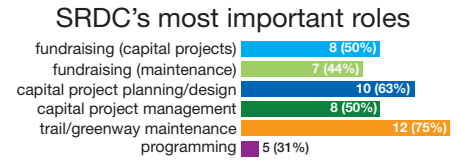
Almost half of the respondents use the trail weekly; almost a third use the trail daily; an eighth use the trail monthly; a smaller proportion use the trail monthly or several times a year.



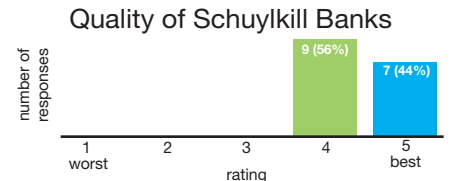
Most of these individuals either walk or run for recreation or bike for recreation. A smaller proportion kayak or boat on the river, commute by foot, commute by bike, picnic or relax by the river, or use the trail to walk to cultural institutions.



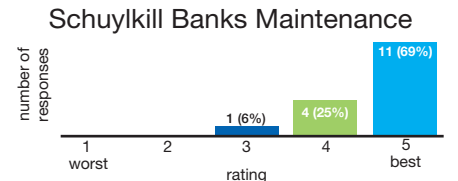
SRDC’s supporters are familiar with the wide variety of projects and programs the organization undertakes, including specific capital projects, events along the trail, maintenance, and stewardship of the tidal Schuylkill. When given the opportunity to list up to three of SRDC’s most important roles, this is how stakeholders responded.



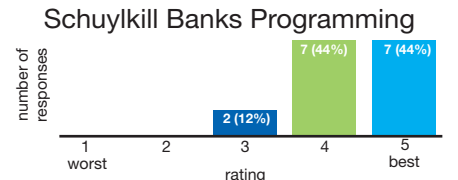
Respondents rated the overall quality of Schuylkill Banks as 4.4/5. Reviews indicated that the space is beautiful, easy to access and use, and a good mix of trails and amenities, but it can be too crowded and conflicts between users using different modes (i.e. walker and cyclists) can be particularly fraught.



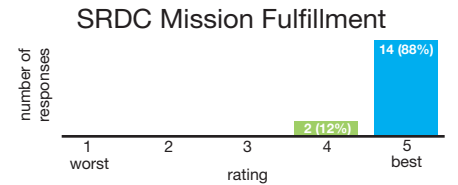
Trail maintenance received a score of 4.6/5; qualifiers were that graffiti and overflowing trash cans are a problem, as well as holes needing repair near Pennovation Center.



Programming quality was ranked 4.3/5; respondents had not all participated in programs and some did not feel that programming was necessary, but most agreed that program participants seem to enjoy themselves.

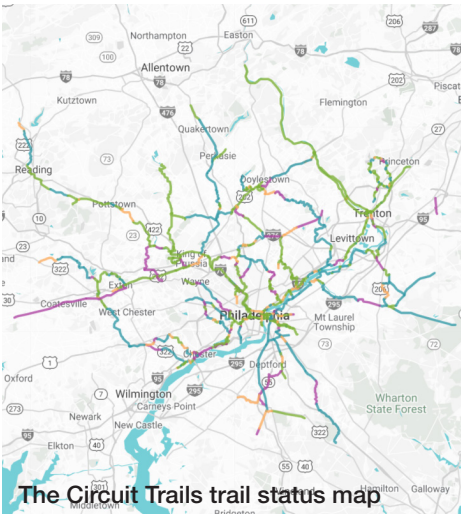
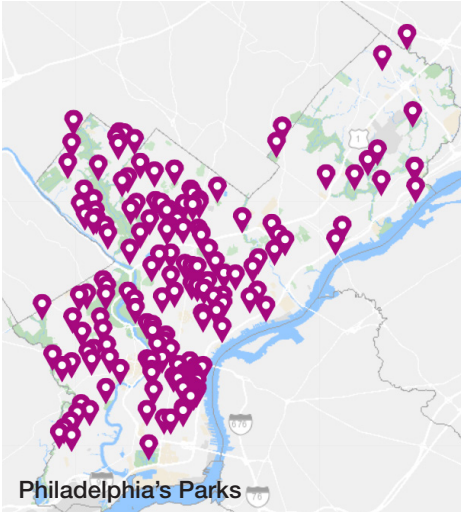


SRDC’s effectiveness at fulfilling its mission received a score of 4.8/5; responses indicated that the Banks are greatly improved over what they were like decades ago, that the popularity of the trail is clearly evident, that SRDC is making good progress on capital projects, and that Schuylkill Banks is a valuable amenity for neighbors and trail users.





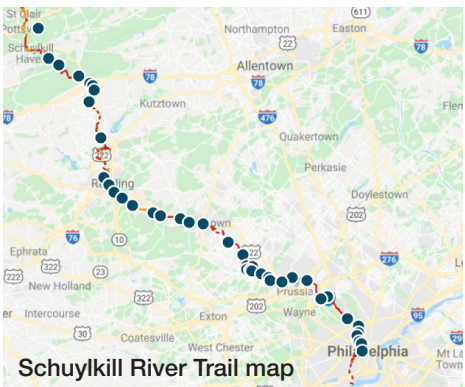
Environmental Scan (continued)



Partnerships

SRDC has a close working relationship with the City of Philadelphia, which owns Schuylkill Banks, a part of Fairmount Park. Capital funding comes to SRDC through the Commerce Department and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR). PPR also manages the trail segments in partnership with SRDC. The support of the City, including moral, operational, and financial support, are essential to SRDC's success.

Schuylkill Banks exists within a larger environment of local, regional, and national trails; it is part of the Schuylkill River Trail, the Circuit regional trail network, the East Coast Greenway, and the Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route. The success of



Schuylkill Banks is largely impacted by the success of these trail networks and the work of the many partners who build and maintain these interconnected trail segments.

Over the past decade, there has been a push among local and regional leaders and funders to build and maintain trails and to improve riverfronts, as they benefit public health, environmental sustainability, and economic development. The success of the Center City segment of Schuylkill Banks helped to prove trails can be a catalyst for public change, and subsequently there has been increased investment in these amenities. This has greatly benefited SRDC, enabling relatively fast growth of the trail and funding difficult and costly trail segments, such as the Boardwalk and Christian to Crescent.



Cultural Factors

SRDC is engaging in its five-year strategic planning process during a time of unprecedented uncertainty. We are in the midst of shutdowns and work-from-home orders due to COVID-19. While SRDC staff is able to continue many of its operations during this time, volunteer cleanups were on hold for the spring, summer, and most of the fall, aside from volunteers who took the initiative to pick up trash on their own and a limited number of socially distanced and masked post-flood cleanups in early August

(pictured here). Most of SRDC's annual programming was cancelled for 2020 and continues to be on hold indefinitely. SRDC was able to work with partners to host socially distanced kayak tours starting in July and the Exploring Our Urban Watershed educational program.

Many other businesses are shut down and our community is facing high levels of unemployment, especially among service sector employees. This will certainly lead to fewer individuals and businesses being able to support SRDC in the near future, as well as a reduction

in tax revenues which could reduce government support of SRDC's work.

In addition to less funding being available from past sponsors, individual donors, and government sources, it is also possible that priorities of funders (including public and private sources) will shift support to essential emergency and health and human services until the pandemic and related economic fallout are resolved.

In addition to COVID-19, our nation is grappling with the impacts of systemic racism and inequality across the country. This could have the result of changing the City's budgets in future years, as well as shifting the fundraising priorities of individual donors and businesses.

While it is still uncertain what the long-term effects of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter will be on our community, SRDC will need to consider the possible ramifications of the pandemic and protests on its future operations.





Fiscal Analysis

Overview

SRDC is in a solid financial position as of 2020 and has in place a good system for reporting its fiscal status to the Board of Directors. SRDC prepares monthly financial statements. At the quarterly board meetings, the Treasurer reports on the balance sheet, operating revenue, and expenses on an actual basis forecasted to the end of the fiscal year as well as compared to the budget. The Board also receives a statement of capital projects revenue and costs for the same period as the above board reports. The Board reviews and approves a budget for the next fiscal year at the last board meeting of the current fiscal year, usually in June. There is an annual financial audit and SRDC also complies with any program audits required by its funders.

Having said this, costs going forward will be substantial as trail construction becomes even more challenging as it moves southward and there is more infrastructure to operate and maintain. Accordingly, it is imperative that SRDC

continues to seek funding from all possible sources in order to maintain its fiscal strength, which is critical to its being able to accomplish its objectives.

Income

Grant Revenue
SRDC plans to continue to aggressively pursue grant funding to cover capital expenses. Predicting future funding from these sources is difficult, as programs evolve over time and the amounts of money available from various sources change based on the economy and political climate. For example, federal earmarks previously were an important source of funds for trail work. However, these grants have been eliminated. Despite this uncertainty and while acknowledging that past performance does not guarantee future success, SRDC believes that these past experiences are likely to be a good indication of what SRDC can expect going forward.

Stakeholder Contributions
SRDC anticipates continuing to rely

heavily on stakeholder contributions to cover a wide variety of operational costs over the next five years. As more trail segments are completed and staffing needs expand, this essential source of funding will likely also need to expand in order to continue to meet the needs of SRDC’s constituents at the same high level that they have come to expect.

Individual Giving
SRDC is working towards growing its individual giving program through a variety of on-trail and online marketing efforts. In addition to a traditional annual giving program, individual giving includes monthly giving, text-to-give, bench sponsorships, workplace giving, and AmazonSmile. As our audience grows and more people become aware of our mission and see the value of our work, SRDC expects that individual donations will increase accordingly. While success of this program has been modest to date, the individual contributions are important as they represent user buy-in.

Sponsorships
SRDC is also working towards growing its sponsorship program. Local businesses have shown an interest in sponsoring events, especially the movie series, and trail maintenance and beautification projects. Sponsors receive recognition based on sponsorship level, such as thanks on our social media pages and/or logo placements on relevant programming promotional materials.

Other Revenue
SRDC will continue to work with riverboat and kayak tours operators, and seeks to find the right balance of tours to properly meet demand and maximize the amount of revenue for all parties. As

these programs grow, there is certainly the potential that SRDC could earn more significant revenues from partnering with organizations to run tours or from charging a dock use fee for events outside of our regular schedule.

Investment Account
The Corporation receives funds from a variety of sources for use in fulfilling its mission. At times, this funding is received in advance of need and the Corporation has discussed proper and prudent strategies for securing and, where possible, growing these funds until they are needed for capital improvements or for maintenance and operations. SRDC is also sensitive to the rapidly escalating costs of maintaining developed portions of the Schuylkill Banks trail and greenway, and is exploring new revenue streams to support this important part of our mission.

As part of these efforts, SRDC’s Board has established an investment account to allow for more aggressive growth of assets in situations where funding is not anticipated to be needed for some time. This account is subject to an Investment Policy which has been approved by the Board of Directors. It is SRDC’s hope that this investment account could grow into an endowment fund, which would cover a large portion of SRDC’s operational budget in the future.

Expenses

Capital Projects
Capital costs include planning and design consultants, engineering expenses, and costs related to remediation and construction projects. The amount of funds raised for and spent on capital projects varies greatly by year,

based on the varying stages of development of each trail segment.

Capital work is funded primarily through government and private grants, often matched with stakeholder contributions. Most grants require some level of match funding and SRDC strategically combines grants and contributions in appropriate ratios to meet all grant requirements. Stakeholder monies and other non-grant private donations normally do not have match requirements, but are often used to help fulfill matching requirements or otherwise close funding gaps for projects.

Operatons
SRDC has an operating budget of approximately \$1.2M per year (FYE 2021 figure) to cover ongoing costs of business. These expenses include staffing and benefits, office space and technology needs, professional services, public programming, and trail maintenance.

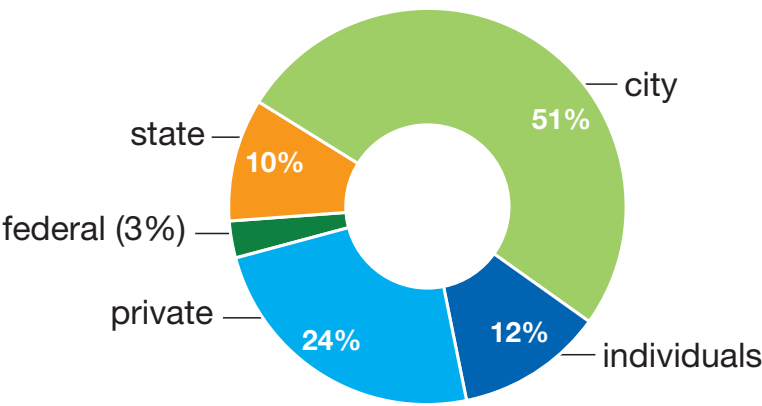
Operations costs are primarily funded through SRDC Stakeholder contributions, supplemented with donations

from individuals through SRDC’s individual giving program, corporate sponsorships, and other forms of revenue listed in the income section.

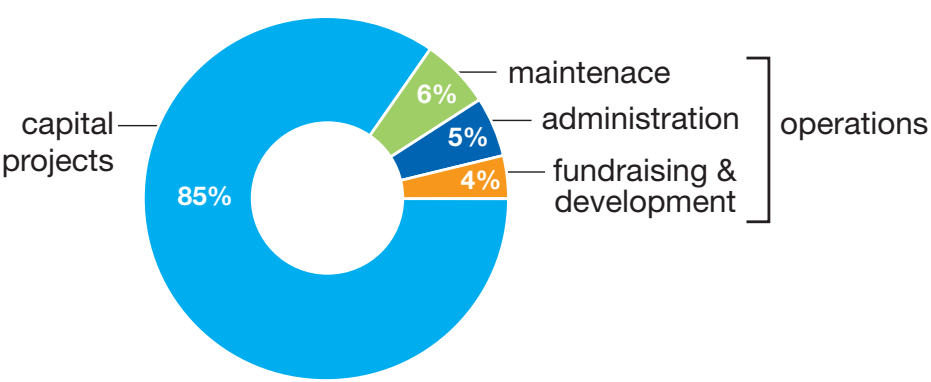
SRDC expects that most of its regular operating expenses will increase over the next five years as more trail segments come online and additional staff and tools are required.

The current maintenance budget includes part-time staff costs, materials for graffiti removal and trash pickup, landscaping equipment, repairs to facilities such as the kayak shed, Schuylkill Banks Center, golf cart storage shed, and tool sheds at the Grays Ferry and Center City segments. These costs also include landscaping and grounds work not covered by PPR under the shared maintenance agreement. Projected increases will stem from increases in total miles of trail to be maintained and the corresponding increase in materials and personnel hours needed to continue SRDC’s current level of maintenance.

SRDC Income by Source Type in Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020



SRDC Expenses by Category in Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020





SRDC Leadership & Staff

2020-2021 Board of Directors

SRDC’s Board of Directors provides vision and direction for Schuylkill Banks. A dynamic partnership of public and private entities is in place to provide effective leadership and governance.

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Marc J. Armstrong
Managing Principal
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Madeline Bell
Chief Executive Officer
The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

Patricia Brown
Director of Account Management,
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Vicinity Energy

Kathy Cacciola
Vice President, Enterprise
Sustainability
Aramark

Michael Carroll, PE
Deputy Managing Director, Office of
Transportation and Infrastructure
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Commissioners

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Rodney J. Oglesby
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Kathryn Ott Lovell
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Philadelphia Parks & Recreation

Rebecca Rhynhart
City Controller
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John Westrum
CEO and Chairman
Westrum Development Company

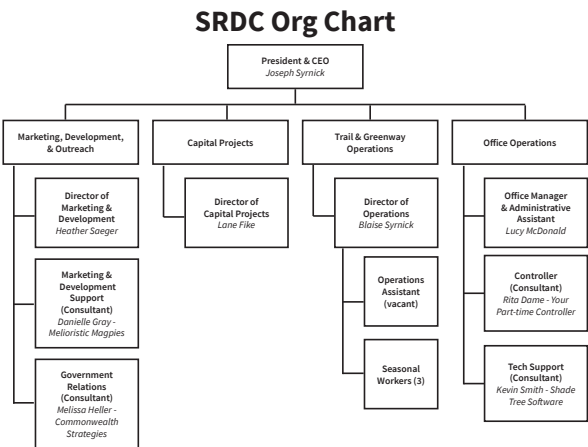
SRDC Staff

Full-Time Staff
SRDC employs five full-time employees, as described below. In addition to their position-specific tasks, all employees are involved with programming activities, including the ticketing, set-up, running, and cleanup of events.

- President and Chief Executive Officer – Responsible for all aspects of SRDC work.
- Director of Capital Projects – Responsible for planning, design and construction coordination for capital projects.
- Director of Marketing & Development – Responsible for SRDC marketing, communications and fundraising efforts.
- Director of Operations – Responsible for all operational matters including maintenance and programming.

- Office Manager & Administrative Assistant – Ensures the efficient and effective administration of the office and its programming administrative needs, primarily providing support for the CEO, with some support provided to other staff members.

Consultants
SRDC supplements staffing as needed with consultants, including a part-time controller, IT support, government relations support, marketing & development support, on-trail maintenance contractors, and professionals required to plan, design and implement capital projects.



2020-2021 Steering Committee

SRDC’s Steering Committee provides additional guidance and support for SRDC in fulfilling its mission.

Duane Bumb
Senior Deputy Director of Commerce
Philadelphia Department of Commerce

Samantha Corson
Greenberg Traurig, LLP

Bill Goetz

Alan Greenberger
Drexel University

Melissa Heller
Commonwealth Strategies, Inc.

Jocelyn Hill
Director of Public Affairs & Assistant
General Counsel
Consolidated Rail Corporation

Douglas G. Hock
Executive Vice President & CEO
Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia
(represents Madeline Bell on Board)

John Hogan, Sr.
The Mariner Insurance Group

David Kanthor
Transportation Planner
Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Mark Kocent
University Architect
University of Pennsylvania

Paul Levy
President & CEO
Center City District

John Mondlak
Senior Director of Real Estate
Development
City of Philadelphia

Aparna Palantino
Deputy Commissioner
Philadelphia Parks & Recreation

Nancy Trainer
Drexel University



SWOT Analysis

SRDC staff and Board of Directors were all invited to complete a questionnaire weighing in on SRDC’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, as well as priorities for the organization and other items of note for this plan. An analysis of the responses to the survey is reported below.

Strengths

Quality and Dedication of Staff

SRDC’s biggest strength is the quality of its staff. The board of directors and SRDC’s staff (75% of respondents) commented on how hardworking, dedicated, and/or capable the staff is, and how amazing it is that so much work is done by such a small and mighty crew.

Schuylkill Banks

Another big strength that SRDC can capitalize upon is Schuylkill Banks itself, with half of respondents commenting on how the popularity, beauty, and/or accessibility of the greenway benefits SRDC. It is easier to engage stakeholders for projects and programs that positively impact a wide variety of people, and SRDC benefits from its successes to date building and maintaining such a beloved community amenity. A related strength noted by one quarter of respondents is how passionate Schuylkill Banks supporters are about the greenway.

Capable Leadership

SRDC also benefits from strong leadership (one quarter of respondents) and capable, well connected, and helpful directors (one quarter of respondents). Capable leadership from an engaged Board of Directors is key for nonprofit success, and SRDC’s board is full of intelligent, motivated, and well connected leaders.

Other noted strengths:

- Past history of fundraising success
- Governmental support

- Pragmatism/strategic decision making
- Good reputation among peers and community
- A meaningful mission
- Good communication among staff

Weaknesses

Heavy Workload for Staff

SRDC’s biggest weakness is its small staff and high workload. While SRDC’s staff is highly competent and capable, there are currently only five full-time staff people and two additional part-time maintenance contractors. Schuylkill Banks has more than doubled in length over the past several years, but its staff is still the same size it was in 2010. Staff members regularly put in extra hours, especially during the summer programming season, and are at high risk for burnout. As Schuylkill Banks continues to grow and evolve, its staff will need to similarly grow and evolve.

Reliance on Outside Funders

Like most nonprofits, SRDC’s next biggest weakness is its heavy reliance on a relatively small number of funders. SRDC has been incredibly lucky to receive support from all levels of the government and from key foundations principally for its capital work, as well as from a core group of corporate stakeholders for its operations. However, these funders could shift priorities and stop supporting SRDC at any point in time. The best practice is for nonprofits to have a wide base of funding that comes from many different sources

in order to cushion the effects of any single funder removing its support. SRDC has stepped up individual giving and corporate sponsorships in recent years, but should continue to widen and deepen its funding pool in the next five years.

Relative Lack of Engaged Community Members

Related to diversifying funding, the next most frequently cited weakness is a lack of community support of and involvement with the trail. SRDC does have a small group of dedicated volunteers and does receive some feedback from trail users, especially on the trail or through social media, but most trail users are not invested stewards of the greenway. Increased efforts should be made to better engage the community in caring for and supporting the trail over the next five years.

Other noted weaknesses:

- Capital projects prioritized over other mission goals
- No successor for President & CEO Joseph Syrnick
- No term limits for board members
- No HR department
- Lack of board participation
- Need more diversity in leadership
- Board reporting specific to capital projects
- Limited corporate outreach
- Lack of recognition/awareness of organization and its work
- Lack of necessary supplies (could use more maintenance vehicles, more efficient technology)

Opportunities

Expand Community Impact

Expanding the trail into more neighborhoods will facilitate increased community connections, especially in South and Southwest Philadelphia. New residential development in several neighborhoods along the river will bring more potential trail users and stewards. SRDC should also increase participation with community meetings/forums/steering committees and continue to partner with similar and complementary organizations in order to further its mission.

Build on the Support for Trails

The second big opportunity is to build upon the popularity of trails in general and Schuylkill Banks specifically. This will allow SRDC to expand its bandwagon fundraising efforts on all levels (grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual giving), and develop trail users into volunteers and donors. SRDC also has an opportunity to engage community members with an array of pop-up events.

Other noted opportunities:

- High visibility of Christian to Crescent design
- Design a sustainable funding base
- People looking for activities close-to-home
- Use rising awareness of environmental issues to expand funding sources
- Build upon the recent leadership change at PIDC to complete Bartram’s to Passyunk
- Partner with similar national organizations

Threats

Potential Loss of Funding

The biggest current threat to SRDC is the possibility of reduced funding in the future, especially in the face of COVID-19. All businesses are currently facing unprecedented levels of uncertainty, and this is an ideal time to assess all possible funding sources and opportunities to help mitigate this very real threat to SRDC’s operations.

Reliance on the City

The next biggest threat to SRDC is any potential tension in its relationship with the City of Philadelphia. SRDC was formed because of the City’s interest in revitalizing the tidal Schuylkill, and the two entities have worked well together for more than two decades. SRDC provides vital on-the ground services to the City, and the City has historically been very supportive of SRDC’s efforts on its behalf, providing necessary building permits, partnering on grants and capital projects as needed, and sharing responsibility for trail and greenway maintenance with the City providing ordinary maintenance and SRDC providing extraordinary maintenance services. Should this relationship become strained, should City regulations or codes become more demanding and/or over-zealously enforced, or should the City run out of money or political will to support the continued development and maintenance of Schuylkill Banks, it would become difficult to impossible for SRDC to operate.

Effects of COVID-19

The next biggest threats to SRDC are effects of COVID-19. These include three main factors. The first and most immediate threat is the reduction in

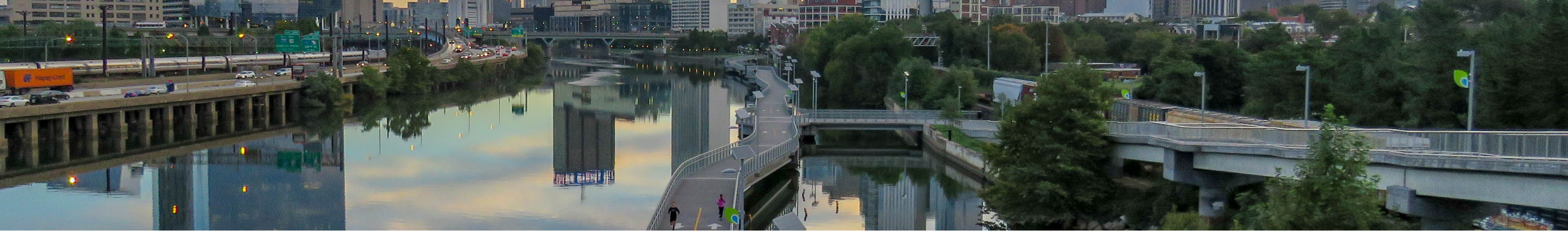
SRDC’s volunteer workforce due to social distancing requirements. SRDC has increasingly come to depend upon volunteer labor for its maintenance and operations as the trail has grown. With COVID-19, SRDC had to cancel multiple cleanups in 2020, including its Spring Cleanup, the largest volunteer event of the year.

The second immediate threat is crowding on Schuylkill Banks as people are stuck at home and unable to recreate elsewhere. SRDC is encouraging trail users to explore less popular trail segments, including Bartram’s Mile, Grays Ferry Crescent, and MLK Jr. Drive (which is currently closed to motorized traffic) but the demand for access to space in Center City is very high at present, straining the capacity of the greenway.

The third COVID-19 threat is the potential for suburban flight by individuals scared of living in crowded conditions in the face of the pandemic. The severity of this last threat will depend on the duration of the pandemic.

Other noted threats:

- Overcrowding on trail
- Migration of homeless populations to the Banks
- Managing safety of trail users
- Increased costs of operations and maintenance in the future, particularly as older sections age
- Contractors dragging heels on projects



Goals and Objectives

2021-2025 will be a crucial period for SRDC. The organization’s largest capital project to date will be built and senior staff, including the organization’s CEO of more than a decade, will be closer to retirement. SRDC’s primary focus to date has been dramatically expanding its physical space in a short period of time, especially by working with the City to plan, raise funds for, and build very large and technically difficult capital projects. Beyond 2025, SRDC will need to focus more of its time and efforts into working with the City and other partners to raise funds for and perform maintenance on the trail and greenway, while still planning for future trail extensions to Fort Mifflin and the Navy Yard.

Wrap up current capital projects

SRDC’s top priority for 2021-2025 will be wrapping up its trail building and major greenway renovation efforts between the Fairmount Dam and Passyunk Avenue. This includes completing construction on:

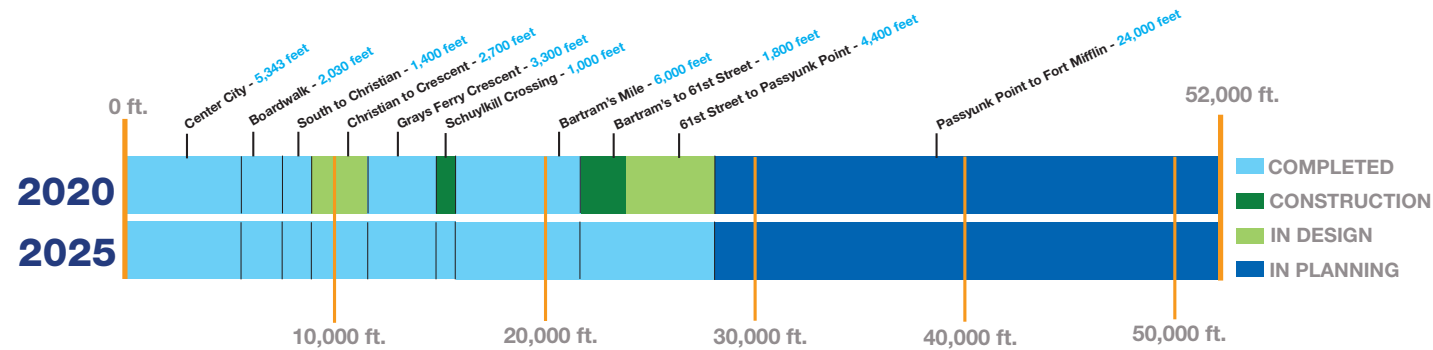
- the Schuylkill Crossing at Grays Ferry,
- the ambitious Christian to Crescent trail segment,
- the Bartram’s to Passyunk segment (Phase I from 56th Street to 61st Street and Phase II from 61st Street to Passyunk Avenue),
- bulkhead restorations in Center City, and
- construction of a fishing pier at Bartram’s Mile North.

These projects are currently at varying degrees of readiness, with some like the Schuylkill Crossing already under construction, and others like Bartram’s to Passyunk Phase II just beginning the planning phase. It is essential that SRDC complete these projects as

quickly as possible, while it has broad public support for the trail expansions and greenway enhancements and while the current CEO and Director of Capital Projects are able to oversee the work for which they have laid the groundwork for more than a decade.



MAJOR TRAIL PROJECTS BY LENGTH | 2020 & 2025



Undertake executive succession planning

Emergency Succession Planning

In the short term, SRDC needs to establish an emergency succession plan that details what should happen if there is an immediate short- or long-term vacancy of the CEO (illness, injury, etc.). This plan should detail:

- the CEO’s roles and responsibilities, and which staff and board members will be expected to take over which roles;
- whether an interim CEO will be called in and if so, who that person will be or how they will be chosen, and how will they be compensated;
- where to find a list of all current accounts, grants, memberships, and other resources (e.g. current status of all capital projects and list of relevant contractors with contact information for those projects) along with where their respective records are kept and how to log-in or otherwise access any necessary account(s).

Retirement Succession Planning

In the longer term, SRDC needs to establish a plan for how it will hire its next CEO or ED when Joe Syrnick retires and how the executive transition will occur. It is important that this transition be carefully planned and executed in order to ensure SRDC’s future stability.

This will include:

- Set a timeline for the transition. How much notice will the Board need before Joe’s target retirement date?

- Establish a leadership succession team. At minimum, this should consist of board members including at least one member of the executive committee, but can also include staff members and/or community members (though only the board should be involved in hiring decisions).
- How to communicate the transition to stakeholders. Who will be responsible for communicating the message to different groups of stakeholders? When should the communication occur? What will the message be? For example: This is a natural step in SRDC’s evolution, Joe’s plans for the future, outline for next steps in the transition, how can stakeholders provide thoughts/feedback during the transition, thank Joe for all he has done and emphasize the positive changes that will occur as SRDC enters a new phase.
- Ensure that organizational documents are all up to date (including bylaws, mission statement, personnel policies, balance sheets, audits, organization history, articles of incorporation, strategic plan, organizational chart, job descriptions, budgets, annual reports, and list of funders with contact information).

- Review the job description for the new CEO/ED position. This should encompass tasks that the current CEO performs while keeping an eye to the future needs of the trail (possibly less focus on capital work and more focus on fundraising, programming, maintenance, and marketing).

- Decide on the scope and method of the search. Who will be the point person at SRDC? Who will perform the search? What is the budget and timeline for the search? How will prospects be identified? Will the job be advertised? If so where/how? How will potential candidates be screened and interviewed? How will finalists be selected? What references or background checks will be required? Who is in charge of offering the contract to the chosen candidate and what will be included in the contract?
- How will the leadership transition be announced and celebrated?
- How will the transition occur? Will there be overlap between the outgoing and incoming CEO? Will Joe be available to answer questions after the transition? If so how, and for how long?

SRDC’s Board of Directors should establish a working committee to work with Joe to answer these questions.

Expand operations to best suit the expanded trail

Staffing

SRDC may need to expand its staff in order to reduce staff burnout and ensure that it is able to fulfill its mission.

In the short-term, SRDC should hire additional maintenance workers as trail segments open. Currently, maintenance is overseen by one staff member who manages two or three part-time maintenance contractors. As the trail becomes longer and better connected and its maintenance staff grows, SRDC



Goals and Objectives (continued)

may want to consider switching from a location-based model to a task-based model, where one small team of experienced landscapers (possibly supported by interns such as those with the Student Conservation Association) works on landscaping along the entirety of the trail and a different small team (possibly local high school students or recent graduates seeking early job experience) is tasked with litter pick-up and graffiti removal for the entire trail.

The need for more marketing was brought up several times during the exploration portion of the strategic planning process. SRDC has historically worked on a shoestring marketing budget, relying heavily on low-cost marketing strategies like on-trail flyers, banners, rack cards, and yard signs, as well as a website, electronic newsletter, and social media. Schuylkill Banks as a brand and destination is well known within the city, but increased marketing efforts could help to raise support for trail maintenance and raise awareness of SRDC as a nonprofit, which are objectives listed elsewhere in this plan. This will become increasingly important in coming years as SRDC transitions from focusing primarily on large capital projects to focusing on maintaining the Banks. Within the next few years, SRDC should consider hiring a marketing associate who can spend a significant amount of time on the trail taking photographs and providing up-to-the-minute updates on SRDC's trail use, projects, and programs. This individual should be a good photographer who is comfortable with social media and other online tools, as well as on-site and guerrilla marketing techniques that are well suited to public spaces. Graphic design skills and/or public relations experience

or the willingness and desire to learn those skills would be a plus. A larger reorganization of the staff will likely be beneficial by the end of the strategic plan period, especially as Joe, Lane, and Blaise are likely to retire within these five years or shortly thereafter.

A logical breakdown of roles for the organization could be:

- CEO or Executive Director (oversees SRDC in close collaboration with the Board of Directors)
- COO or Director of Operations (oversees capital projects and trail maintenance)
- Director or Manager of Development (writes and manages grants, seeks sponsors, oversees individual and major gifts programs and other fundraising efforts)
- Director or Manager of Programs & Outreach (oversees on-trail programming, coordinates with trail operators/vendors, manages volunteer program and part-time seasonal staff, serves as community liaison)

- Office Manager (manages SRDC's office and serves as executive assistant)
- Marketing Associate (works closely with Director of Development and Director of Programs and Outreach to promote organization and its programs through social media, website, and marketing materials)
- Landscaping Associates (2 individuals focused on upkeep of plantings, possibly a horticulturist and assistant)
- Maintenance Associates (2-3 individuals focused on litter and graffiti removal, restroom maintenance, etc.)
- Part-time Seasonal Associate(s) (1-2 individuals assisting with programming, marketing, and maintenance as needed, especially during late spring through early fall)

SRDC adopted new Equal Opportunity and Supplier Diversity statements in September 2019, and should be mindful of these policies throughout its hiring processes.



Board of Directors

SRDC has a strong Board of Directors with representation from the City of Philadelphia and many corporate stakeholders located near Schuylkill Banks. However, the board as it currently exists lacks representation from neighbors and community groups and does not currently reflect the racial composition of Philadelphia. Additionally, some board members have become less involved over time. Less engaged board members should be rotated off as their terms come to an end.

Efforts should be made to increase diversity on the Board and bring community members onto the board and steering committee as positions become available. Community members could be identified through SRDC's volunteer program and through its nonprofit and community partners; other diverse recruits could be found through Young Involved Philadelphia's Board Training Program. SRDC should also look to bring more corporate stakeholders who are engaging with SRDC and/or located further downriver onto the board, including companies like FMC, Spark Therapeutics, and Hilco Redevelopment Partners.

SRDC's Board of Directors should consider implementing new policies and procedures including encouraging participation in board committees, setting diversity and participation goals for potential board members being considered by the nominating committee, and/or term limits in order to support these objectives.

Tools & Supplies

COVID-19 has highlighted the weakness of having SRDC's server physically located and maintained in its



office. Migrating to cloud-based server would allow on-trail and other remote work, and in the long run would save money compared to continuing to pay a contractor to maintain a physical server. SRDC should seriously consider switching over to a service like Microsoft 365 or G Suites for Nonprofits, which offers a full suite of tools, including easy access to files and email from anywhere. Microsoft 365 for nonprofits is currently \$3/user/month (\$180/year at the current staffing level) and the business version of G Suites for nonprofits is currently \$4/user/month (\$240/year at the current staffing level). Before switching, SRDC should confirm that this move will be compatible with necessary software that its team and consultants who use SRDC equipment (primarily the part-time controller) need to complete their duties. Microsoft 365 will be more similar to the tools and workflows that SRDC staff currently use, while G Suites allows for easier collaboration on documents.

In order to better enhance mobility and flexibility, SRDC should opt for laptops rather than desktop computers as existing staff machines need to be replaced. Laptops can be tethered

via a dock to the SRDC network, a larger monitor, and keyboard/mouse for use when in the office, so the in-office experience will not change. Having a laptop will allow employees to work from the trail or other remote locations as needed. SRDC should also consider purchasing a cell phone with data plan that can serve as a Wi-Fi hotspot for staff working out of the trailer; this will be especially important for the head of operations and the marketing associate.

As Schuylkill Banks continues to grow, SRDC will likely need to purchase additional maintenance vehicles and tools. A new maintenance facility was installed at Bartram's Mile in late 2020, which will need to be equipped with a new maintenance cart and array of tools necessary to keep Bartram's Mile and Bartram's to Passyunk in good repair. Tools in all three maintenance centers (Center City, Grays Ferry Crescent, and Bartram's Mile) will need to be replaced and upgraded as needed. In the longer term, SRDC would also benefit from having a work truck that can be used to haul supplies and allow the head of operations to move between distant trail segments more quickly.



Goals and Objectives (continued)

Fundraising Strategies

SRDC currently has support from the City of Philadelphia and SRDC’s stakeholders, as well as revenue from a variety of public and private grants. The support from the City and grantors primarily goes towards capital projects, which are easier to fund than ongoing operations. The best way to expand SRDC’s operating budget and protect SRDC against possible future market shocks and changing funder priorities is to expand its fundraising base.

Over the next five years, SRDC should continue to seek new grants and corporate sponsorships and expand individual giving. It is easier to maintain funder relationships than to establish new ones, so SRDC should also be sure to prioritize its partnerships with current foundation, government, and corporate funders and developing existing individual donors.

SRDC should also consider establishing a Development Committee in order to actively engage Board Members in fundraising, especially with identifying and developing major donors.

Other fundraising strategies to consider include:

- Expanding adopt-a-bench to include less-expensive paver options
- Establishing a major gifts program
- Hosting fun/competitive fundraising events (e.g. bocce, croquet, beanbag toss or water balloon toss tournament, runs/walk-a-thons, relay race, night market at Grays Ferry Crescent or Bartram’s Mile)
- Establishing a kayak rental program (see expanded programming section on the next page)

- Installing a kayak storage locker on the trail and renting out the space to locals who want to store their kayaks by the river
- Consider having SRDC less involved in riverboat and kayak tours by turning over the operations to Patriot Harbor Line and Hidden River Outfitters. SRDC or the City could simply promote the tours and rent the docks to these operators.

- New online store with Schuylkill Banks merchandise

Volunteers

SRDC has greatly expanded its volunteer program in the past few years. As risks from COVID-19 are reduced or eliminated, SRDC should renew its efforts to engage closely with the community to get the maintenance and programming support that it needs. Special effort should be made to engage new volunteers in South and Southwest Philadelphia, as there are currently fewer cleanups and volunteers on these trail segments.

Sustainability

Schuylkill Banks was built, in part, to protect the City from extreme weather events like flooding, which are becoming more common as the average global surface temperature rises. Many of SRDC’s recent projects, like installation of rain gardens, are specifically designed to enhance the sustainability of the space.

Sustainability is a value that is shared by many of SRDC’s enthusiastic supporters. In order to maintain its reputation as a sustainable organization and continue to positively transform the riverfront, SRDC should lobby the City for the installation of resources that will

allow trail users to be more sustainable, including permanent recycling bins on the trail and water stations (replacing the water fountain at Locust Street with a water bottle refill station and adding stations at Grays Ferry Crescent and Bartram’s Mile).

SRDC should also prioritize sustainable practices in its operations, including reducing use of paper and plastic as much as possible.

Safety and Security

When trail users post online complaints about the trail, it is often concerns about security. While there has not been much documented crime on the trail, there was a period of a few years where young teens and pre-teens on bikes would occasionally harass trail users, especially women who were walking or running. Additionally, conflicts between users occasionally occur on the trail, especially when it is crowded and people are distracted or careless (e.g., a speeding cyclist and distracted pedestrian collide).

SRDC has been in regular contact with PPD over the years and its bicycle officers already patrol the trail as often as they can, but as there is not much crime on the Banks, PPD is not able to increase its presence. Additionally, recent protests have brought to light the fact that increasing police presence in an area does not make everyone feel safer. Hiring security staff would be cost prohibitive and may or may not provide much benefit, especially as there is a lot of trail to cover. While there are some cameras already installed between Race Street and Christian Street, SRDC should install additional security cameras south of Christian Street, especially on upcoming trail segments as they are

built. The Christian to Crescent trail segment will have cameras installed as part of the project.

SRDC should continue to be aware of any safety and security issues along the Banks and take reasonable action to keep trail users safe and secure, as well as promptly communicating these issues to the Board.

Trail safety is about more than just surveillance and crime prevention. SRDC should continue to work with PPR to keep the trail well maintained in order to prevent falls and accidents. SRDC should also consider installing more bike repair stations along the trail, possibly at Grays Ferry Crescent and/or Bartram’s Mile in order to help keep trail users’ bikes in good working order.

Deepen our relationship with partners and the community

Expand programming

One of the most requested trail activities year after year are kayak rentals. While SRDC offers guided kayak tours, they are only offered three or four times per month in the summer, and do not always fit with the schedules of individuals who would like to get out on the river. SRDC could consider starting a more robust kayak rental program. This could be a staffed program during limited hours (similar to what is available on Penn’s Landing), or a more remote option where renters pay in advance and receive a code to retrieve the kayak and gear from a riverside locker (similar to what is available on the Mississippi River). Risk, liability, and

insurance all need to be considered in this discussion.

In 2019, SRDC worked with PA Fish & Boat Commission to host pop-up fishing clinics which were very popular with participants. SRDC should consider hosting a variety of pop-up events to better engage trail users. This could include events such as birding walks, walk with a doc, bike maintenance workshops, bike rodeos (in wider spaces like Gray’s Ferry Esplanade), rain barrel workshops, plant identification workshops, tree pruning workshops, lantern fly identification and removal walks, etc. This would simultaneously engage a wider range of people with Schuylkill Banks, create a deeper sense of community and stewardship on the trail, and raise awareness of SRDC as a nonprofit organization supporting Schuylkill Banks.

Participate more actively with trail, rivers, and community coalitions

SRDC is a member of a variety of coalitions, including the Circuit regional trail network and the Civic Com-mons. Historically, SRDC’s staff also

participated in other community groups, including a West Philadelphia group convened monthly by the University of Pennsylvania and occasionally visiting other neighborhood groups to update communities on SRDC’s projects and programs and seek volunteers. As the trail has grown and the number of staff responsibilities has increased, this community outreach has been of lower priority and our staff has spent less time nurturing these partnerships.

Other nonprofits and neighborhood groups are very helpful in terms of reinforcing SRDC’s role as a leader in Philadelphia public spaces, learning about what programs and projects have worked (or not worked) elsewhere, learning what neighbors would like to see and do on the trail, and developing people into volunteers and donors. As SRDC’s staff grows, it should strategically reprioritize the community connections that most benefit the organization and Schuylkill Banks.





Timeline

Short-Term

- Capital Projects**
- Finish Construction on the Schuylkill Crossing
 - Finish Construction on Bartram’s to 61st
 - Begin Construction on Christian to Crescent
 - Finish design on the Bartram’s Mile Fishing Pier

Succession Planning

- Develop Emergency Succession Plan
- Establish timeline for CEO Retirement Succession Plan

Operations

- Consider establishing new Board policies and procedures regarding diversity, and participation
- Establish a Development Committee
- Continue to expand and deepen SRDC’s funding pool, with a focus on corporate sponsorships and individual giving
- Renew volunteer recruitment efforts after COVID restrictions are no longer necessary
- Hire additional maintenance workers as needed
- Outfit Bartram’s Mile maintenance facility
- As office computers need to be upgraded, replace with laptops and docks for external monitors and peripherals
- Consider migrating to a cloud server (like Microsoft 365 or GSuites)

- Prioritize sustainable practices
 - Continue to prioritize trail and greenway maintenance
- Partnerships**
- Consider testing out some free and low-cost pop up events, such as those listed earlier in the plan
 - Establish relationships with community groups surrounding upcoming trail segments

Mid-Range

- Capital Projects**
- Finish Construction on Christian to Crescent
 - Design and construction of 61st Street to Passyunk Ave Segment
 - Complete bulkhead restorations in Center City
 - Construction of a fishing pier at Bartram’s Mile North
 - Begin planning for additional trail segments to extend the trail and greenway to Fort Mifflin and the Navy Yard

Succession Planning

- Establish a leadership succession team and begin strategizing for an upcoming executive transition

Operations

- Consider establishing separate teams for landscaping tasks and general trail maintenance
- Consider hiring a Marketing Associate
- Consider setting up a wifi hot spot in the Schuylkill Banks Center
- Repair and replace vehicles and tools required for trail maintenance as needed

- Install safety cameras on trail segments as they are built
- Consider new and innovative fundraising opportunities, including those listed earlier in the plan
- Lobby the City for recycling bins and waterbottle refill stations on the Banks

Partnerships

- Consider establishing a kayak rental program or rentable kayak storage program
- Participate more in strategically beneficial partnerships
- Establish partnerships with community groups near proposed South and Southwest Philadelphia trail segments

Long-Term

Capital Projects

- Design and construction of additional trail and greenway segments and access points extending the amenity from Passyunk Avenue to Fort Mifflin and the Navy Yard

Succession Planning

- Complete executive transition
- Update Emergency Succession Plan once the new leader is in place

Operations

- Consider realigning staff to fit the needs of the organization under new leadership
- Consider purchasing a truck for use by the head of operations

Partnerships

- Nurture and develop community and agency partnerships

Conclusion

Overview

SRDC is currently in a good position, with significant capital projects completed, underway, or soon-to-be underway, a strong staff and Board, and a solid financial footing. Over the next five years, it should focus on:

- wrapping up capital projects north of Passyunk Avenue,
- positioning itself for an executive transition,
- deepening its relationships with the community, and
- preparing to increase focus on trail and greenway operations in 2026 and beyond by expanding and diversifying funding sources, and expanding operations as needed.

Schuylkill Banks in 2025

Capital Improvements

By 2025, SRDC and its partners will greatly expand recreation and transportation opportunities on Schuylkill Banks with completion of the:

- Schuylkill Crossing at Grays Ferry,
- Christian to Crescent Connection, and
- Bartram’s to Passyunk.

Programming

Public programming by SRDC and its partners will continue to bring new audiences to Schuylkill Banks. Programming will expand to cover new trail segments as appropriate, and SRDC will continue to work with partners on innovative and engaging outdoor programming.

SRDC will also promote the Banks as a venue for programs run by outside



operators, agencies, or individuals to further fulfill its mission.

Operations & Funding

SRDC will continue to work with PPR to plan, build, and maintain Schuylkill Banks. It will expand its maintenance staff as needed to maintain the high levels of cleanliness and safety for which Schuylkill Banks is known.

Staff will continue to seek all available funding to cover capital and operating costs. Specific sources will include government and private grants; stakeholder contributions; corporate sponsorships; individual giving; investment income; and revenues from on-trail operations. This broad strategy will help ensure the long-term sustainability of Schuylkill Banks.

Economic Impact

Investments made to expand the Schuylkill Banks trail and greenway will lead to significant economic impacts for the region. Some of these benefits will come directly from construction and maintenance activities, such as jobs and tax revenue from labor for contractors and suppliers.

The greenway will also help to attract new development to the neighborhoods surrounding Schuylkill Banks. These benefits, which can already be seen along the Schuylkill in Center City and

University City, will expand to South and Southwest Philadelphia.

Community Impact

Expanding the Schuylkill Banks greenway to South and Southwest Philadelphia will transform diverse riverfront neighborhoods. Residents will have a convenient and inexpensive means of moving between their neighborhoods, Center City, and University City.

Institutions like Bartram’s Garden and Woodlands Cemetery will be more easily accessible by visitors coming from the north, and can expect to see increased patronage thanks to the trail connection.

Riverfront recreation will be easier and more pleasant, connecting community members and enhancing public health.

Environmental Impact

The expanded greenway will also create a positive impact on the environment. Existing brownfields will be converted to beautiful, green spaces with rain gardens and other features to absorb stormwater runoff, improving quality and quantity of water in the tidal Schuylkill.

New trees combined with lowering barriers to multimodal transportation will help to mitigate air pollution within the region. The greenway will also create new habitat for migrating waterfowl and other forms of urban wildlife.

A scenic view of a park with a river, trees, and a paved walkway. In the foreground, there is a large tree on the right and a large rock on the left. The middle ground features a paved walkway with a metal railing overlooking a river. A person is visible on the walkway. The background is filled with dense green trees.

Learn more:
www.schuylkillbanks.org
215-309-5523

Plan by Melioristic Magpies, LLC