



# FDR Park

A SHARED VISION FOR OUR **FUTURE**

// Spring 2021

FAIRMOUNT PARK  
CONSERVANCY



PHILADELPHIA  
PARKS &  
RECREATION





FDR Park Master Plan  
// Spring 2021



A special thanks to the Friends of FDR Park

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**Project Leads:**

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 FDR Skatepark  
 First Tee of Greater Philadelphia  
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 Liga Pattison  
 Mid-Atlantic Youth Anglers & Outdoor Partners  
 Packer Park Civic Association  
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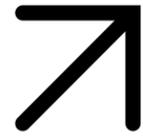
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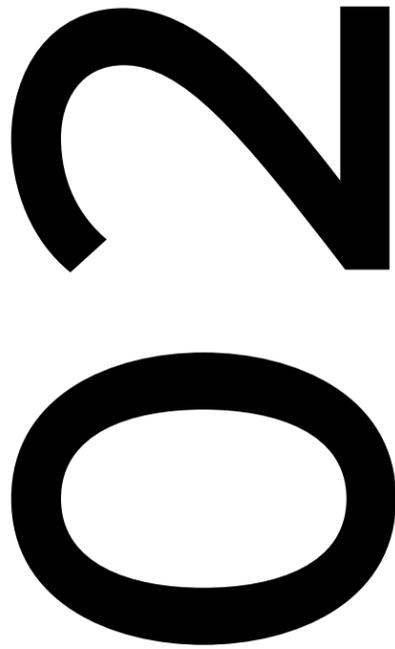
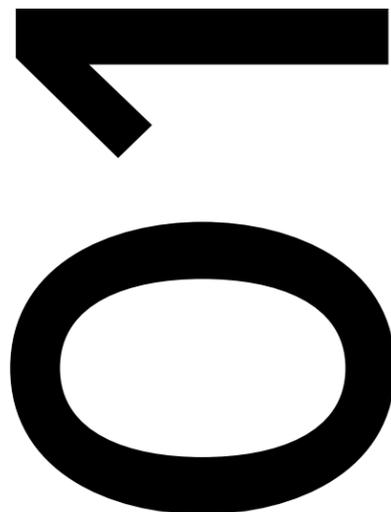


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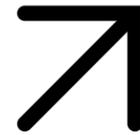
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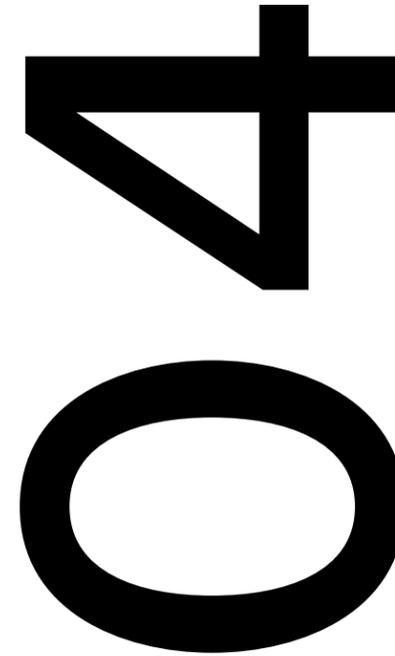
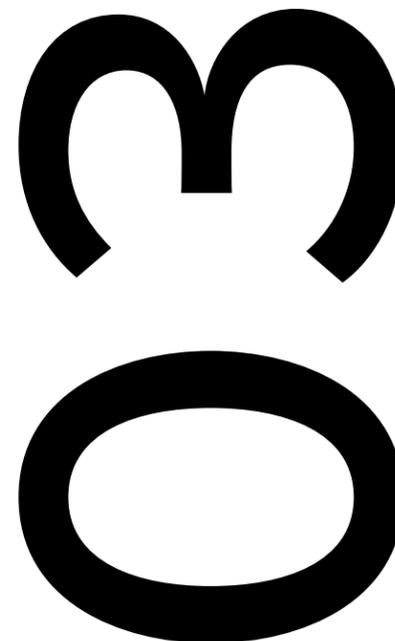
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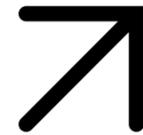
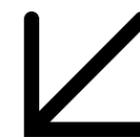
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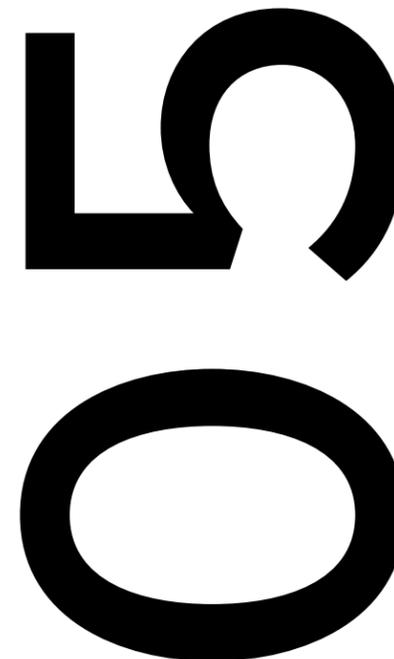


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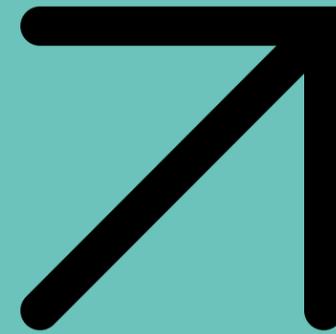
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# 01



## WHY WE NEED A PLAN

FDR Park impacts Philadelphia's quality of life. As the city's population continues to grow, recreation trends change, and our climate shifts, this historic park needs to be reimagined in order to regain its role as a critical piece of civic, public health, and ecological infrastructure.

# History of the Park

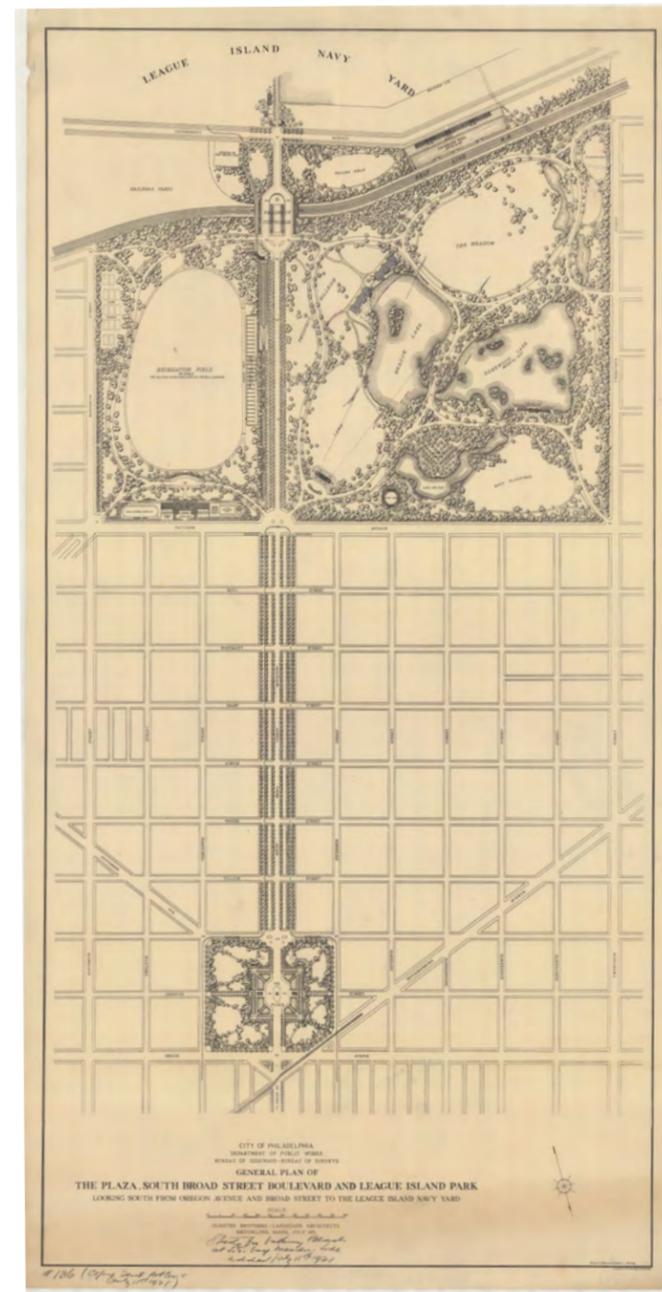
## THE ORIGINAL VISION

League Island Park was originally designed in 1904 by Samuel Parsons Jr. in a project led by the City's Bureau of Surveys. The design for the park stretched from 11th Street to the east to 20th Street to the west, and north from Pattison Avenue to the mouth of the Delaware River in the south. The parkland was reclaimed mostly from the marshlands of Greenwich Island and the conditions of the site looked bleak: "the territory where it is proposed to lay out this park consists of 300 acres of low-lying land on the Delaware River.... Irrigation ditches, a sluggish, winding stream, and a small amount of what may be termed upland are all that at present represent the park." [The Olmsted Brothers' Artificial Nature: South Philadelphia's League Island (F.D.R) Park, by Chris Dougherty]. Subsequently, work ground to a halt in 1910. This initial design called for one single water feature surrounded by a concrete wall and overlaid by a pedestrian and vehicular circulation system that meandered through the park with double-arch bridges spanning over the water. When the construction of this original design stalled in 1910, the Department of Public Works saw the need to commission a new design.

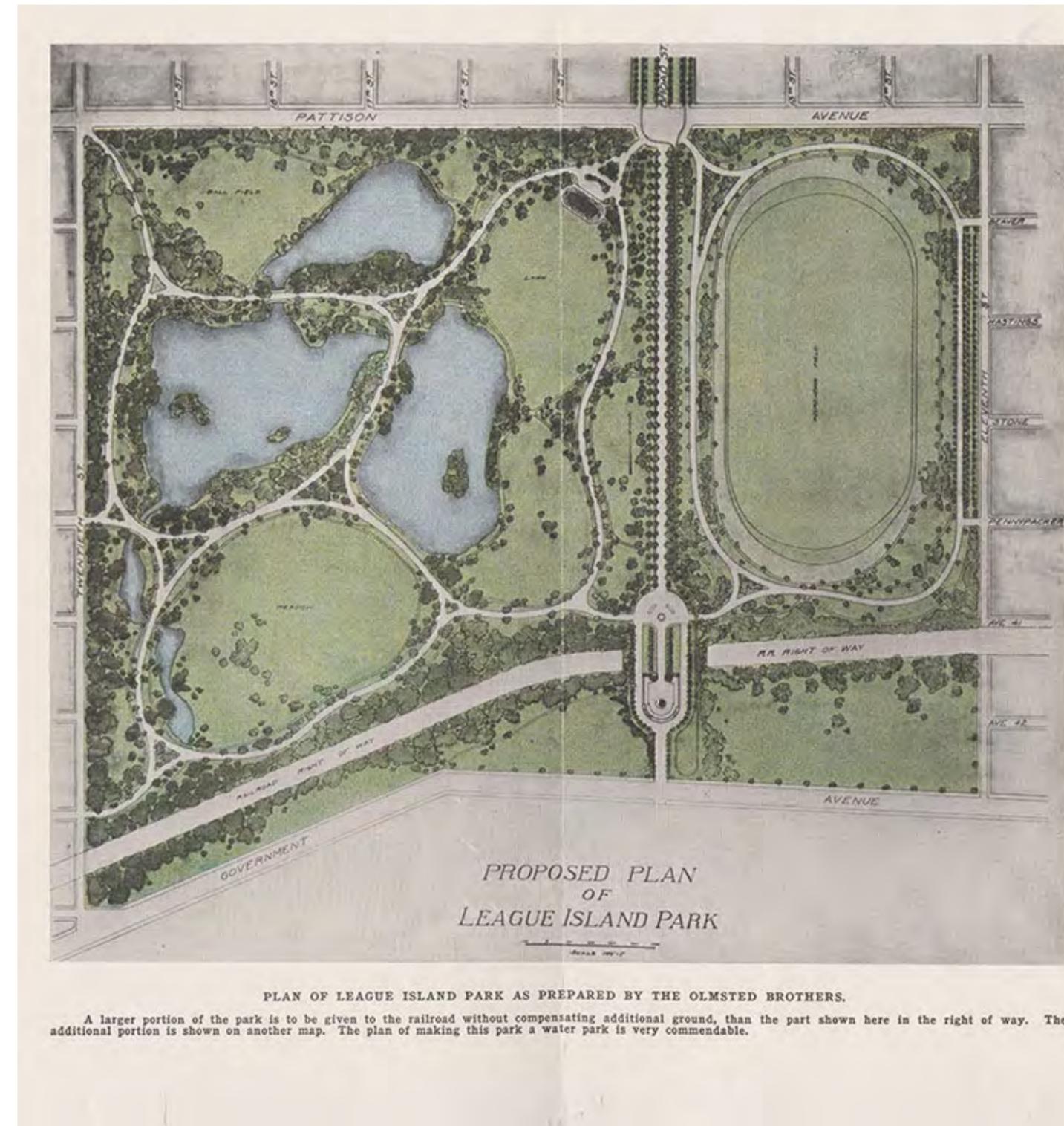
## AN OLMSTED PARK

In 1914, the City commissioned the Olmsted Brothers – sons of the famed American landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted – to design the park. The new park, named League Island Park, was partially built using earth excavated from the Broad Street Subway construction. The original design extended east of Broad Street encompassing land that is now part of the Stadium District. The Olmsted Brothers envisioned a "water park" with a network of picturesque lakes and lawns, connected by a network of carriage and foot paths.

The original plan called for a long allée of trees that extended up Broad Street connecting the park to a new landscaped residential square, now known as Marconi Plaza. At the park entrance, the rigid axial symmetry melded into expansive views of the park, which brought nature into the city. Scenic views, curvilinear circulation routes, open spaces known as "play steads" containing open fields and sports fields for both active and passive recreation, and a series of lakes, lagoons, and creeks are the cornerstone of the original design. The park was richly planted with many tree species in 1923.



⊕ The original plan for League Island Park included a tree-lined boulevard along Broad Street that extended north to Marconi Plaza.



⊕ The original Olmsted plan of League Island Park, the city's "water park."

## CHANGE OVER TIME

Over the last 100+ years, the park has changed as recreation trends shifted, new development emerged, and investment priorities altered. Although the park has undergone substantial changes, the lakes and open spaces remain the hallmark of the park which is a testament to the original vision laid out by the Olmsted Brothers.

While the original areas designated for active recreation were eliminated from the park, the need for such areas remained. Over time, athletic fields and courts have been added and moved around the park to accommodate shifting recreational needs. Natural and forested areas have matured, creating surprisingly rich and beneficial habitats for a wide range of wildlife.



⊕ Left: Vintage postcard of the park showing the Boathouse in use as the Russian Tea Room during the Sesquicentennial.

Above: Fishing and rowing in Edgewood Lake, Summer 1968 (Temple Archives).

Right: Aerial image of the park taken during the Sesquicentennial (Temple Archives).



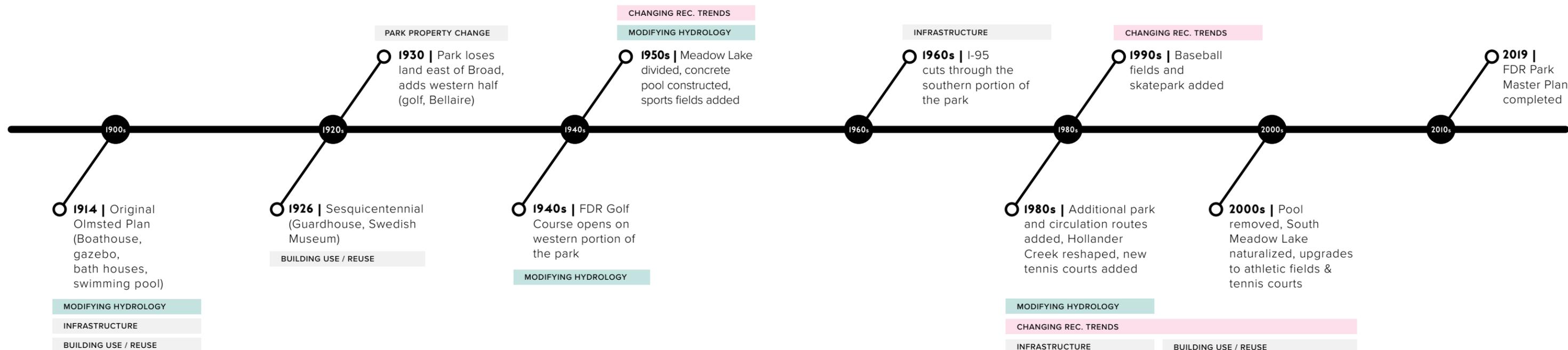
⊕ Top Left: Kids pitch a tent on the banks of Edgewood Lake, 1972 (Temple Archives).



⊕ Top Right: Enjoying a bike ride along the park road, 1975 (Temple Archives).



⊕ Left: A swimmer takes a break to sunbathe near the pool, 1941 (Temple Archives).



**League Island Park & the Sesquicentennial, 1900s – 1920s**

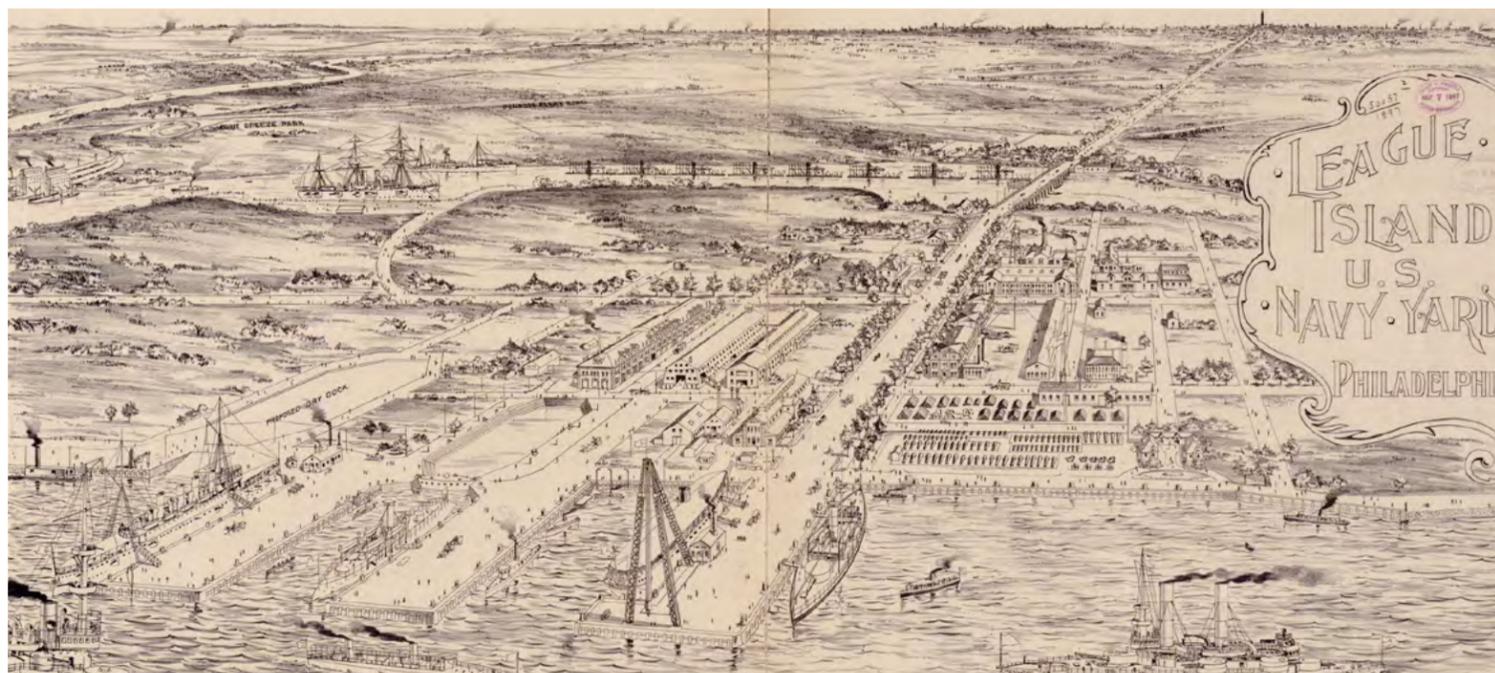
In their 1914 design for League Island Park, the Olmsted brothers designed first and foremost a “water park” that had space for active and passive recreation. They effectively created two parks divided by Broad Street: the eastern side of the park was meant for active recreation, while the western side with its lakes, carriage trails, lawns, meadows, and “playsteads” was meant for passive recreation. League Island Park was initially intended to be linked to Marconi Plaza via a stretch of Broad Street known as Southern Parkway. Collectively, Marconi Plaza and League Island Park were intended as an attractive terminus for Philadelphia’s grand boulevard, Broad Street. Park construction was completed in 1923.

The park was significantly modified shortly after it was opened to accommodate the Sesquicentennial. While most of the 1,000-acre fair grounds were north of Pattison Avenue, where the Naval Hospital would eventually be built, the Sesquicentennial led to the construction of a number of structures within the park and to the loss of park land east of Broad Street, which became the site of a municipal stadium. This effectively eliminated the entirety of designated active recreation areas from the park and set in motion the beginning of the development of the stadium district, the development of which had severe impacts on the evolution of the park.

A number of significant historic buildings were built in the park for the Sesquicentennial, including the John Morton Memorial Building (which became the Swedish American Museum) and the Boathouse, which housed the Russian Tea Room. Much of the park’s original utility infrastructure comes from this time as well.



Left: Sesquicentennial gardens (Free Library Archives).  
Above: An official poster for the Sesquicentennial (Free Library Archives).



Above: Artistic rendering of League Island U.S. Navy Yard before the construction of the park, circa 1897 (Library of Congress).

Below: Philadelphia Record article clipping from 1939 describing lack of funding needed for completion of the course (PPR Archives).

Below Right: Swimmers sit on the edge of the lake, 1935 (Temple Archives).



**The Great Depression & the Golf Course, 1930s – 1940s**

A long while passed between the time when the City made plans to acquire the land west of 20th Street for a new golf course in the 1920s and its official opening on July 13, 1940. The land acquired for the golf course included the historic Bellaire Manor, a home built in the 18th century. The fact that the site was once a marshland has always been a challenge for the course. Newspaper accounts from the time described the land acquired for the course as “desolate swamps.” Fill was brought in to raise parts of the course that were prone to constant inundation. This included fill from demolished Sesquicentennial Exposition structures and the construction of the Broad Street Subway extension.

The Depression caused significant delays in the construction of the course. Original drawings for a 27-hole course date back to 1930 and more than 50% of the clearing, grading, and drainage work was complete by the end of 1935. Yet it took another five years to finish and was only built out as an 18-hole course. Most of the funds and labor for the project came from the Works Progress Administration (WPA). When money was particularly limited, progress on the course was either significantly slowed with mandatory restrictions on working hours or brought to a complete halt when there was no money to pay workers. Following the completion of the golf course in 1940, the park once again became a park with two distinct halves.

League Island Park was renamed Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Park in the late 1940s to honor the late President of the United States.



**Post-War Development, 1950s – 1970s**

During this period, economic growth stimulated development adjacent to and surrounding the park. As a result of America’s involvement in World War I and II, the Navy Yard along the Delaware River grew exponentially. Major changes included the construction of the Navy Hospital and new housing just north of the park, extensive development of the Navy Yard to the south, new sports stadiums to the east, the extension of Penrose and Pattison avenues, and the construction of the Delaware Expressway (I-95).

The project that had the largest impact on the park was the construction of I-95. The new highway cut through the park between 1968 and 1975 resulting in the loss of 32 acres of land from the southern portion of the park, as well as the destruction of 650 mature trees. A master plan completed by Adleman, Siegal & Associates in 1968 estimated that this represented a loss of \$296,150. Park amenities moved or lost during the construction of the expressway included the running track, picnic areas and shelters, a soccer field, a volleyball court, playground, the Melville Memorial, and some sections of the park road and sidewalk.

The arrival of I-95 into the southern part of the park also brought with it new stormwater issues that affect the park to this day. About 3,500 linear feet of the dual bridge structure drain into the park. This untreated stormwater enters the park through scuppers from the top of the bridge and from downspouts connected to the support columns. The runoff flows from the highway, across the park road, and into Hollander Creek. This constant flow of water over the road surface is the main cause of the multitude of potholes along the park road that cause so much trouble today.

Further changes within the park included the construction of a concrete-lined swimming pool adjacent to Meadow Lake. When the park opened in 1923, Meadow Lake and the adjacent beach area, helped make the park a popular swimming destination for residents of South Philadelphia. In 1958, a concrete lined swimming pool with filtration was constructed to replace the natural swimming area. A citywide plan for swimming facilities completed in 1968 estimated that this 220-foot by 150-foot pool would meet one-third of South Philadelphia’s swimming needs. In peak times, the pool served about 3,000 visitors a day. However, structural and maintenance issues, including groundwater pressure, began to arise not long after its construction.



*Above: The Navy Hospital can be seen beyond Edgewood Lake and the Boathouse, circa 1974 (Temple Archives).*

*Below: A father gives his son a fishing lesson in FDR Park, 1972 (Temple Archives).*



*Top: A boy has his first encounter with nature at FDR Park (Temple Archives).*

*Middle: A police dog greets children at the park (Temple Archives).*

*Right: Kids play on new baseball fields (Temple Archives).*



**A Move to Active Recreation, 1970s – 1990s**

During this period, a shift in recreation trends led to the construction of new tennis courts, baseball and softball fields, and a skatepark at FDR Park. These new program elements allowed FDR to offer the widest range of active recreation facilities in one concentrated area of any of the parks in the city. However, these investments further reduced passive recreation space in the park. In addition to the new fields and courts, a u-shaped bandstand is constructed to facilitate events. Development around the site and expansion of adjacent roads led to a redesign of the original Olmsted circulation system to include more expansive parking and vehicular circulation. Additional pedestrian pathways were added to allow park users access to new athletic programming throughout the site. The historic Guardhouse was reused as a stable for mounted police patrols.

During this time, nearly 2,000 trees were planted in the park and a series of infrastructure projects to improve drainage were completed. Pumping stations were installed at Pattison Avenue, South Meadow Lake (called the Bathing Lake at the time), and North Meadow Lake (called Meadow Lake at the time). Sluice gates were installed on Hollander Creek to remove excess water.

Throughout the park’s history, fill has been added to help alleviate flooding issues and raise the elevation of park features. The earliest records indicate filling from railroad construction in the 1800s. The largest amount of fill was deposited in the southwest corner of the park in the 1980s. The fill came from the demolition of the Southeast Water Pollution Control Plant and ranges from five to fourteen feet in thickness.

Outside of the park, new housing was constructed in the Packer Park neighborhood to the north and the Gateway Apartments just west of the park. During this time, the stadium complex on the east side of Broad Street starts to take shape with the construction of a new multipurpose baseball / football stadium (Veterans Stadium) north of Pattison Avenue and a new basketball/hockey arena, The Spectrum, south of Pattison Avenue.

**A Renewed Focus, 2000s**

In response to the increasing cost of maintenance, groundwater mixing with chlorinated water, and changing recreation needs, the pool was removed and the edge of Meadow Lake was naturalized, providing additional habitat space. New tennis courts were added to the northeast corner of the park and a portion of the older tennis courts in the southern portion of the park were decommissioned. The Philadelphia Phillies invested in the park and youth sports development by upgrading existing baseball fields, now known as the Richie Ashburn Fields. These fields and their facilities are mostly used by youth baseball leagues. In addition, a youth golf program – First Tee – began operating out of the golf course, furthering the park’s role in youth sports development. Parks and Recreation’s maintenance and operations staff for districts 7 and 8 moved into the park, occupying the historic Guard House and Bath Houses.

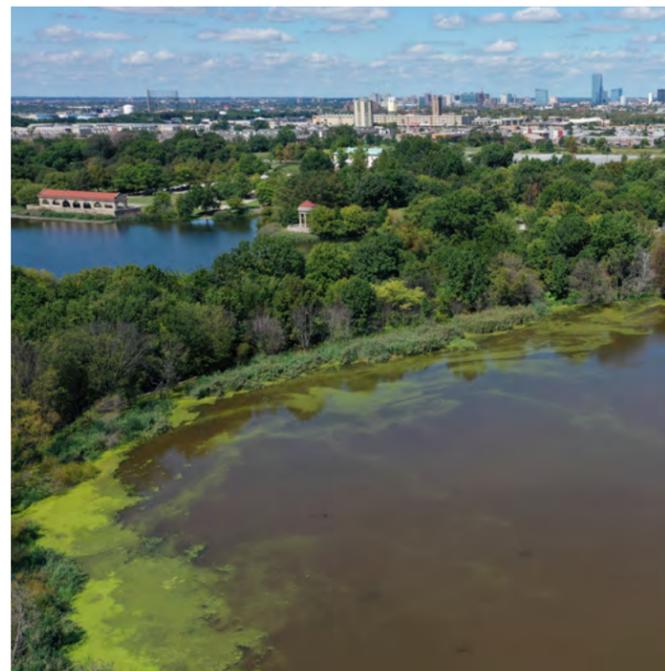
The Stadium District continued to grow during this period with demolition of Veterans Stadium and the Spectrum and the construction of the Wells Fargo Center (basketball, 1996), Lincoln Financial Field (football, 2003), and Citizens Bank Park (baseball, 2004). The new stadiums led to the development of additional surface parking lots that now front much of Pattison Avenue and Broad Street. A new entertainment complex, Xfinity Live! was constructed adjacent to the stadiums in 2012 and a new casino broke ground in 2018. Investment in the Navy Yard also surged during this period with the creation of a new business campus replete with entertainment and dining options. As these areas continue to develop, hotel investments, and new housing north of the park and in the Navy Yard, the park is well-positioned to continue its role as an urban oasis.



Top: New development at the Stadium District – Wells Fargo Center, Lincoln Financial Field, Xfinity Live! (The Philadelphia Citizen, Online).

Top Right: PIDC’s investment in the historic Navy Yard draws companies and employees (Navy Yard).

Below: Natural edge of Meadow Lake.



Above: FDR Park, circa 2019.

Right, Middle: Phillies MLB Urban Youth Academy at the Richie Ashburn Fields (MLB).

Right: First Tee operates youth sports development programs at the FDR Golf Club (First Tee).



# The Park Today

The park includes an 18-hole golf course, baseball and softball fields, tennis courts, a playground, the American Swedish Historical Museum, and historic buildings and structures. Together, the buildings and structures, the athletic fields, and the growth of natural areas throughout the spaces the Olmsted brothers originally designed as lawns and “playsteads” have severely reduced the areas of the park that visitors can use for passive recreation. Active recreation uses dominate the spatial utilization of the park. With passive or “flex” space at a premium in the park, the scale of programmed space makes it hard to program for larger events. The space is also used for a parking concession during major events in the adjacent Stadium District to generate revenue for the ongoing maintenance of the site. This complex mix of uses along with the park’s increasing popularity has created new challenges and opportunities.

## BY THE NUMBERS

<b>CIRCULATION</b>	PARK ROAD	2.1 MILES	
	PARKING <i>Paved Spaces</i>	900 SPACES	
	TRAILS	2.4 MILES	
<b>WATER + NATURE</b>	WATER BODIES	40.4 ACRES	
	GSI FACILITIES <i>Green Stormwater Infrastructure</i>	1	
	MEADOWS	0 ACRES	
	WOODLANDS	55 ACRES	
<b>ACTIVITY + AMENITIES</b>	MULTIPURPOSE FIELDS	2.5 FIELDS	
	BASEBALL/SOFTBALL	8 NATURAL TURF	
	TENNIS	15 COURTS	
	BASKETBALL	0 COURTS	
	PICNIC TABLES / PAVILIONS	21 / 0	
	PLAYSPACES	0.3 ACRES	
	PUBLIC RESTROOMS	1	
	CONCESSIONS	6	
	<b>STAFF</b>	FULL-TIME STAFF	0



# A WALK THROUGH THE PARK

Many of the structures and buildings within the park date back to or pre-date the Sesquicentennial, including the Olmsted Overlook, six historic bridges, and the Boathouse.



*Right: The American Swedish Historical Museum was built 1926 as part of the Sesquicentennial event on land that was once part of a 17th-century land grant from Queen Christina of Sweden.*

*Middle: The Bathhouses, adjacent to Meadow Lake, were once used as changing rooms for the park's swimming pool. These structures, constructed in 1921, are currently used as park maintenance facilities.*

*Below Left: The Bellaire Manor pre-dates the park. It was constructed around 1735, almost 180 years before the park was opened. This historic home was added to the park with the acquisition of the land needed for the golf course. It is currently leased to a caretaker.*

*Below Right: The park's only playground is located near Meadow Lake and experiences frequent flooding.*



*Top Right: The park's six stone bridges are some of the most iconic and historic structures in the park.*

*Middle Left: The Guardhouse was constructed in 1926 for the country's Sesquicentennial. It is now used as park maintenance offices and storage.*

*Left: The Olmsted Overlook was one of the park's original structures, constructed in 1914.*

*Above: Edgewood Lake is framed by the Boathouse and the Olmsted Overlook. The Boathouse was constructed in 1916 and used as a Russian Teahouse during the Sesquicentennial.*



## THE PARK IN CONTEXT

FDR Park is effectively an island of green in a sea of industrial land uses and stadiums with limited direct connections to the surrounding neighborhoods. Residential neighborhoods to the north of Pattison Avenue include Packer Park and the Sienna Place housing development, which is currently under construction. The vacant Naval Hospital site, owned by PIDC is primed for redevelopment and the adjacent Novacare Complex, where the Philadelphia Eagles practice, is considered part of the ever-growing Sports Stadium Complex Special District east of Broad Street.

To the south of FDR Park is the CSX / Norfolk Southern railroad linking to the Ports of Philadelphia and railways to the west. I-95 frames the southern edge of the park near the railroad tracks. Below the railroad tracks and I-95, lies the Navy Yard, a site that is undergoing a massive transformation from an active naval base to a high-tech mixed-use campus that offers synergistic opportunities with the park. The western side of the park is framed by the Gateway Apartments and condos. Beyond these apartments and condos, lies the large-scale industrial district of oil and gas refineries that have developed along the Schuylkill River.

## LEVERAGING STRENGTHS

The park fits within a rich tapestry of existing initiatives and plans currently being implemented. There are numerous opportunities to align with many of the City's existing complete streets (designed for safety and support mobility for all users), green infrastructure (designed to manage stormwater runoff), and community health programs. Infrastructure improvements recommended in the City's 25-year green infrastructure plan, "Green City, Clean Waters," the redesign of I-95, and the expansion of the airport create an opportunity to leverage mutually beneficial opportunities.

As the only large park in the city directly connected to the Broad Street Line, a city subway line, there is an opportunity to make the park a destination for walkers and bikers by creating welcoming gateways, improving crosswalk safety, and strengthening green street and trail connections into surrounding neighborhoods.

While the neighborhoods within walking distance are predominately white, its position on the Broad Street Line and connection to major thoroughfares also allows the park to serve a large swath of the region, extending the reach of the park's impact beyond South Philadelphia all the way to North Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey. The accessibility of the park furthers its role in serving as a critical open space that provides much needed green space for diverse and underserved neighborhoods throughout the city.



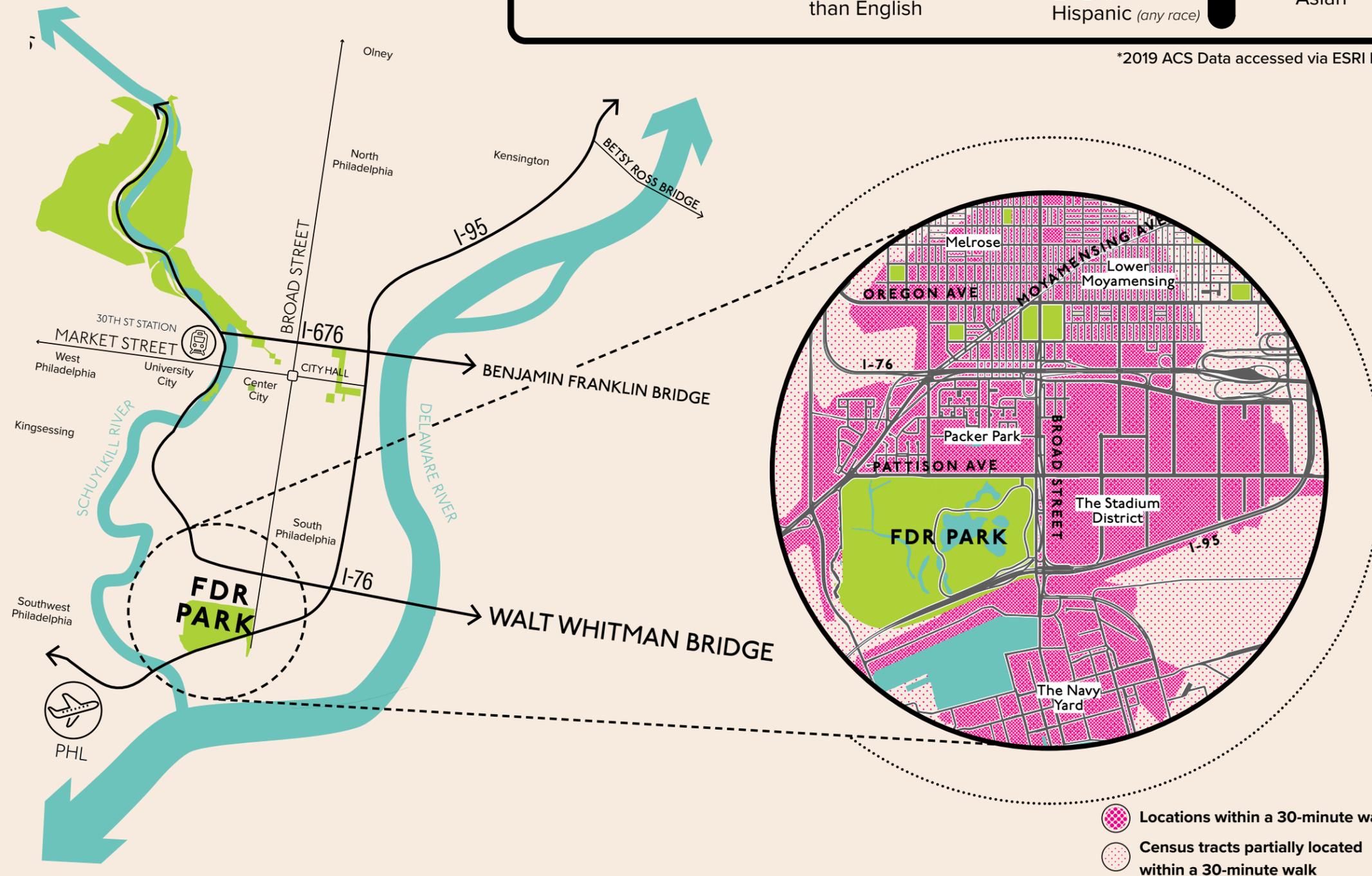
Right: The park is accessible by existing bike, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure including I-95, the Broad Street Line, and the Schuylkill Trail. Many of the surrounding neighborhoods are experiencing growth, increasing the relevance of the park as important civic infrastructure.

## WHO THE PARK SERVES

at a glance:



\*2019 ACS Data accessed via ESRI BAO



Locations within a 30-minute walk  
 Census tracts partially located within a 30-minute walk

## HOW THE PARK IS USED

FDR Park is an extremely well-used and well-loved park. The park, one of the largest in the city, is a hidden gem hiding in plain sight, separated from the surrounding neighborhoods by industrial uses and the Stadium District. FDR Park is a regional park that draws users from all over the city, suburbs, neighboring states, and even other countries.

As it has over the last 100 years, the park continues to serve Philadelphia’s ever-changing population, providing open spaces for gathering, fellowship, and sport. The park has always been and continues to be a welcoming space for high-need populations including immigrant and refugee communities and underserved communities. The park today continues to be a natural oasis that provides much needed green space for communities with limited access and educational opportunities for students throughout the city.

FDR Park offers a variety of activities for a diverse set of users. From morning joggers, dog walkers, birders, and American Swedish Historical Museum visitors to fishermen, tennis players, golf, and baseball/softball players, the park offers many things to do and see.

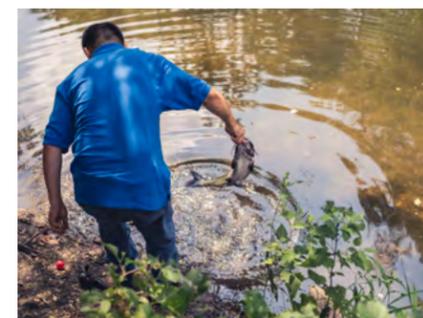
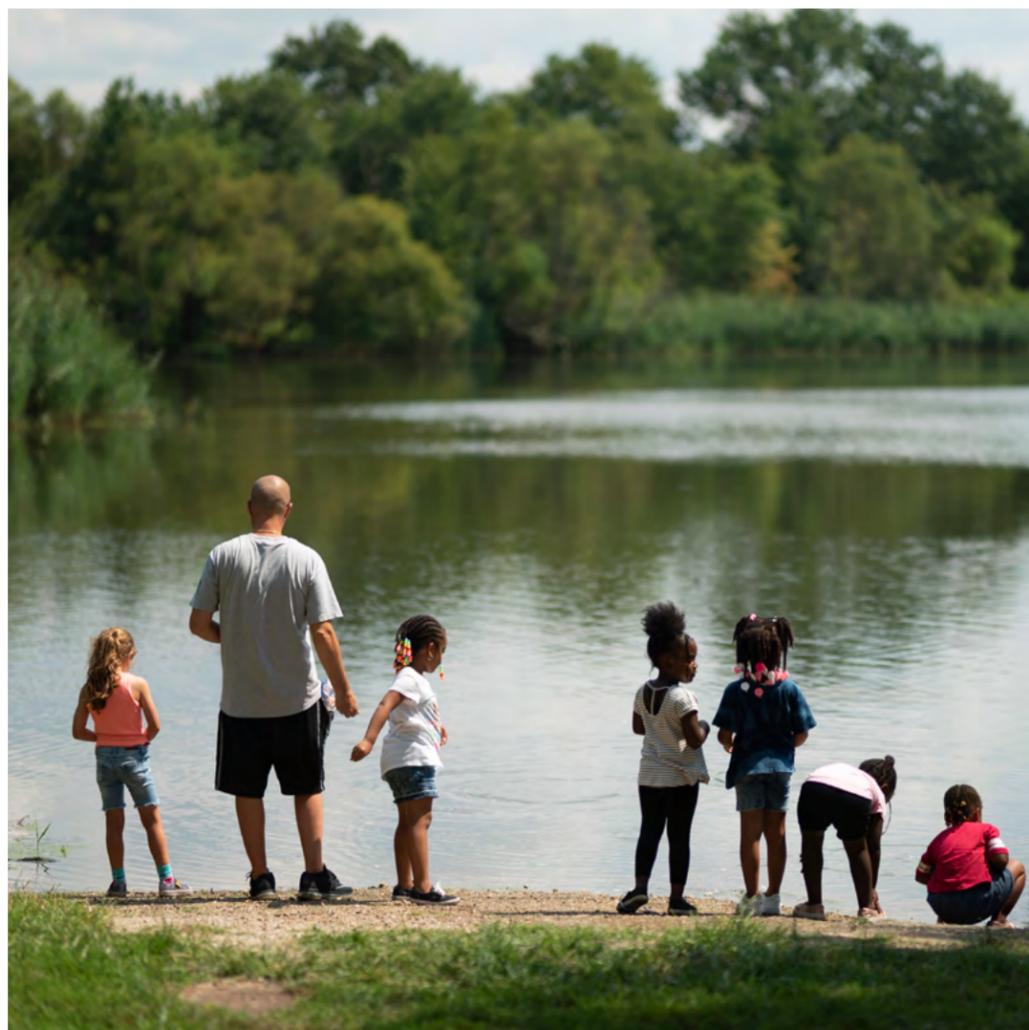
### Nature

The park offers many ways to experience and enjoy nature. The park is a designated Important Bird Area (IBA), an area that is certified by the National Audubon Society as being globally important for biodiversity and the conservation of bird species. Over 195 species of birds, including rare migratory birds, have been spotted in the park. In addition to birds, many other species including fish, reptiles and amphibians, and mammals call the park home, making it a hotspot for birders and other wildlife enthusiasts. Two endangered species of plants – the Many Flowered Mud Plantain and Walters Barnyard Grass – and the endangered Northern Red-Bellied Turtle can be found in certain areas of the park.

### Activity

The majority of park users delight in the passive activities the park offers. From dog walking, jogging, or biking to enjoying an afternoon by the lake, the natural beauty of the park provides a serene backdrop for a number of activities.

In addition to more traditional recreation activities like tennis, golf, and baseball/softball, the park hosts several permanent and temporary activities including a market, the FDR Skatepark, Parks on Tap, picnicking, and tailgating. The market is a community-run pop-up that occurs along the southwest portion of the park road on the weekends. The market features a diversity of authentic Southeast Asian foods and goods for sale and has become a popular destination for locals and tourists alike.



Left: Kids play by the water’s edge.

Top: A fisherman hauls in the daily catch.

Middle: FDR Golf Course cart path bridge.

Below: A family enjoys a day of picnicking.



The American Swedish Historical Museum, founded in 1926, is located in one of the park’s most iconic structures. The museum’s 20,000-square-foot building hosts a variety of special events from weddings to cultural celebrations and offers exhibition galleries, a library, archives, a store, and a large conference room.

Located beneath I-95, the FDR Skatepark is a popular, DIY park created by skaters, for skaters. It has received national attention by professional skaters and magazines like *Thrasher* and *Skateboarder* who have described it as a “skateboard paradise.” The park is the most picnicked park in the Philadelphia park system. On the weekends it is not unusual to see multiple large picnics, birthday parties, and family reunions throughout the 21 picnic sites in the park. These sites are also utilized as part of the parking concession during special events and games in the Stadium District as tailgating sites.

### Water

Many long-term users still refer to the park as “the Lakes,” which honors the significant role water bodies continue to play in the park as a recreational amenity and scenic asset. They provide fishing opportunities for groups like the Youth Anglers, a nonprofit group that teaches young people about the pleasures and ethics of fishing.

### The Experience

Despite the diversity of activities offered, there is an underlying sense that the park does not provide a comprehensive user experience. Most park users come to the park for one event or activity and then leave. Rarely do park users extend their stay in the park by partaking in multiple activities. Park users and activities are generally siloed. This is can partially be attributed to the park’s limited amenities – lack of seating, water fountains, food and drink venues, and restrooms. Rather than being a collection of individual programs, the park needs to provide incentives for park users to stay longer and experience the beauty and natural oasis that characterize the park.

# WILDLIFE IN THE PARK

The park is home to varied species of birds, fish, mammals, and amphibians. Here are some you might spot in the park!

## REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

*Pseudemys rubriventris* | Northern Red-Bellied Turtle\*  
\* threatened species



*Thamnophis* | Garter Snake



*Rana clamitans* | Green Frog

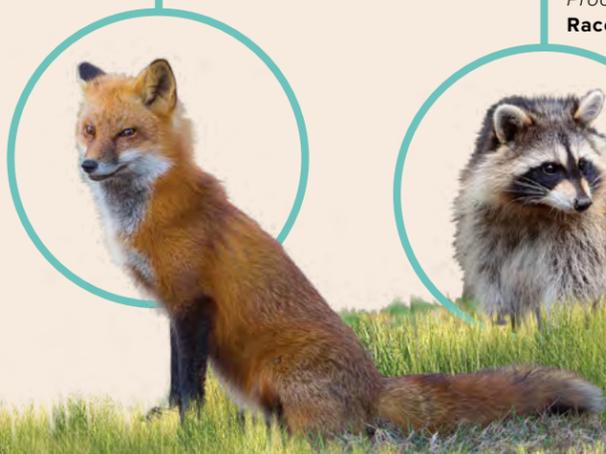


*Lithobates catesbeianus* | American Bullfrog



## MAMMALS

*Vulpes vulpes* | Red Fox



*Procyon lotor* | Raccoon



*Marmota monax* | Groundhog



*Sciurus carolinensis* | Eastern Gray Squirrel



## BIRDS

*Agelaius phoeniceus* | Red-winged Blackbird



*Tyrannus tyrannus* | Eastern Kingbird



*Setophaga petechia* | Yellow Warbler



*Podilymbus podiceps* | Pied-billed Grebe



*Ardea herodias* | Great Blue Heron



## FISH

*Notemigonus crysoleucas* | Golden Shiner



*Dorosoma cepedianum* | Gizzard Shad



*Micropterus salmoides* | Largemouth Bass



*Ameiurus catus* | White Catfish



## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

FDR Park sits within some of Philadelphia’s most diverse and fast-growing communities. While the historic plan successfully created a beloved destination for generations of Philadelphians, the park today struggles with underfunding, deferred maintenance of historic assets and infrastructure, and frequent flooding.

While the park faces many challenges, the opportunities at this site are unique and unlike any other park in the region. FDR Park is the only large-scale park in the city with a direct connection to a subway line and minutes from Center City. It is the only estuary park in the City of Philadelphia’s system, creating the opportunity for a marsh landscape and diversity of species. It is designated as an important bird area, and is one of the top three hot spots for a number of species found on-site in Philadelphia. It is the city’s most permitted site for picnics and events from users across the region, reflecting its popularity and importance to residents.

### Immediate Issues

#### Potholes

The quality of the park road is one of the key visitor concerns. Without additional trail routes, both vehicles and bicyclists utilize the road as the main way to traverse the park. Large potholes and uneven pavement have plagued the park for years with little done to address the issue and improve the safety of the road. Many of the potholes and pavement issues on the southern portion of the park road are caused by untreated stormwater from I-95.

#### Trash & Debris

While litter is an issue throughout, dumping seems to be concentrated in the southern area near I-95. Waste throughout the park is not only unsightly, it also compromises the ecosystem’s integrity. Monitoring and managing illegal trash dumping and reducing litter are key issues for maintenance crews and partners to address.

#### Maintenance

The park lacks a full-time dedicated maintenance staff. A full-time, on-site crew is needed to address immediate maintenance issues like downed trees and tree limbs and graffiti, as they arise. More aggressive and responsive maintenance will help shape park user’s perceptions and change the culture of park abuse that has continued at FDR for too long.

#### Visitor Experience & Amenities

Visitors are challenged by a lack of basic amenities like restrooms, seating, water fountains, and food and drink opportunities that would make longer visits to the park possible. There is one publicly-accessible maintained restroom at the Guard House. An additional facility at the Richie Ashburn fields in the southern portion of the park is only in use during games.



Top: Decommissioned tennis courts sit in the shadow of I-95 and are used as an illegal dumping ground.

Middle: A biker navigates one of the many potholes on the park road.

Right: Graffiti defaces the historic Olmsted Overlook.



Top: Porta potties provide a temporary solution to the park’s lack of restroom facilities.

Middle: The current pedestrian entrance to the park includes minimal signage and no wayfinding information.



There is no central welcome center or information kiosk that provides visitors with information about the park. There is a lack of identification or wayfinding signage throughout the park. Therefore, there is a general lack of clear understanding about park events, activities, and programming.

### Long-term Challenges

#### Funding

Like many urban parks, resources that fund the park’s maintenance and operations are strained. The City of Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Department manages the park with support from the Fairmount Park Conservancy, a 501(c)(3), and the Friends of FDR Park, a non-profit volunteer organization. FDR Park does not have a dedicated park manager or an events coordinator. Additionally, there is no specific budget or a maintenance and operations plan for the park. Revenue generated from park activities are limited. Current revenue includes Eagles game day parking, picnic and field use permit fees, and lease agreements with vendors.

**Flooding**

Flooding at FDR is a complex issue that includes a partially functioning tide gate, high groundwater issues, untreated stormwater, and poor drainage in existing soils. The park's tide gate, located in the Navy Yard Reserve Basin, is intended to close at high tide, and open at low tide, allowing the park to drain excess water from the lakes, lagoons, and creeks. However, it no longer functions as intended, creating significant drainage challenges on site. This flooding makes many of the park's primary recreation facilities like the golf course, playground, and walking paths inaccessible. Additionally, the park receives a massive amount of untreated stormwater from I-95, Broad Street, and areas north of Pattison Avenue that impairs the water quality in the lakes and creeks and damages park infrastructure. Furthermore, the surface elevations of water bodies in the park are below the mean high tide level of the Navy Basin meaning that most of the park lies below sea level. As the region's weather becomes hotter and wetter, these issues will only be exacerbated as the park experiences more frequent wet weather events.

**Highest & Best Use Park Programming**

Many of the park's key features are either fenced off, single use, or have the perception of exclusive use. More than half of the park, 180 acres, is fenced off. This area includes the golf course and unmanaged woods. While golf was a once popular program, it is no longer in high demand and the course itself is both financially and physically under water. This opens up an opportunity to reimagine the western half of the park and provide more access and programming for visitors.

Adding to this division are the many areas that are dedicated to a single use or have the perception of exclusive use like the Richie Ashburn fields, tennis courts, and the lawn between the museum and the Boathouse. Many of the historic structures like the Guardhouse and Bathhouses have been closed to the public due to lack of funds for ongoing maintenance and activation.

**Infrastructure**

Park infrastructure, including water, sewer, and electric lines, are nearly a century old, dating back to temporary installation for Sesquicentennial events. The lack of high-quality infrastructure limits certain programming and activation of the park. In addition, the key circulation routes within the park are in a state of disrepair.

The main park road and smaller pedestrian circulation pathways are crumbling causing safety issues and limiting access for many park users. The lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure (e.g., trails, sidewalks, bike paths) causes conflicts between motorists and bicyclists and pedestrians.



*Above: Flooding from Meadow Lake encroaches on the park's only playground.*

*Top Right: Few visitor amenities like benches, play equipment, water fountains, and restrooms exist in the park.*

*Right: Flooded walking paths days after a storm.*



**Climate Change**

FDR Park faces a multitude of immediate and long-term threats from climate change as it faces a hotter and wetter future. Sea levels are expected to rise two feet by 2050 and four feet by 2100, which will impact the drainage capacity and duration of time it takes to drain the park. Any infrastructure that requires pumps will be expensive and vulnerable. The salinity of the groundwater beneath the park will increase and salt spray from intense storms will both threaten the existing and proposed vegetation. Whereas increased CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere can help accelerate the growth of forests, it can also accelerate the spread of pests and invasive species. Stronger and more frequent storms mixed with higher temperatures pose potential damage to the built and historic structures.



# THE PARK'S HYDROLOGY

Many factors influence how water moves through the park impacting how the park's functions.

## GROUNDWATER

- + The park's groundwater is subject to tidal influence.
- + Groundwater creates a landscape that acts as a saturated sponge.
- + Salinity in groundwater affects the planting above.
- + High groundwater limits infiltration options for green stormwater infrastructure (GSI).

## TIDE GATE

- + The park only exists because of the tide gate – it keeps the Navy Basin from flooding the park.
- + The tide gate is meant to act as a drain for the park, however, the tide gate only partially functions.

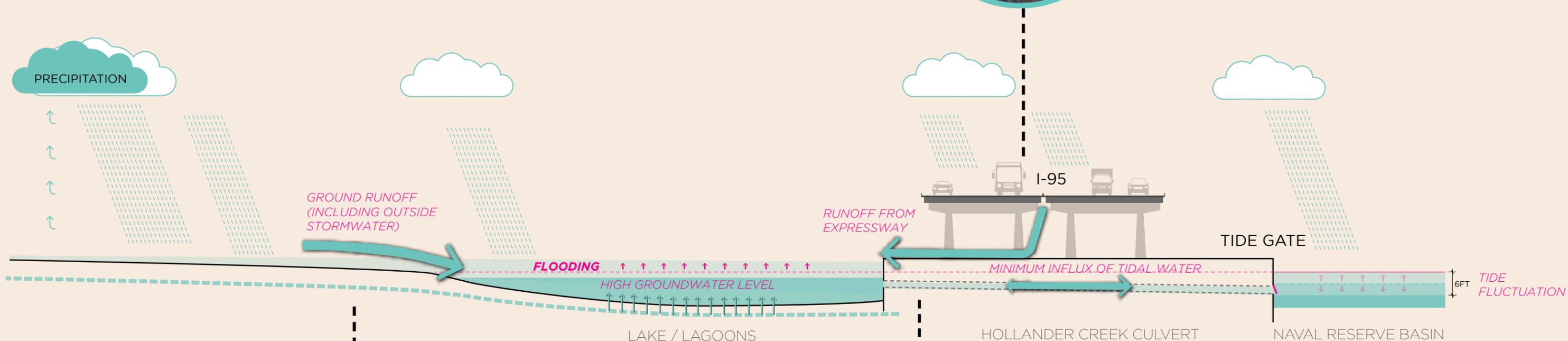
## WATER FLOWS & FLOODING

- + Untreated stormwater enters the park through numerous sources (inlets, I-95, sheet flow from impervious surfaces).
- + Clogged inlets and improper weir (*engineered barriers/dams designed to control the release of water*) connections slow water flow between water bodies.
- + Much of the water quality issues in the park result from untreated urban stormwater runoff.
- + Some of the worst flooding occurs around the park's major active programs (baseball, golf, playground).



# WHY DOES THE PARK FLOOD?

Flooding in FDR is a complex issue caused by three factors – high groundwater levels, unmanaged stormwater, and a partially functioning tide gate.



## I-95 RUNOFF



+ stormwater from I-95 flows directly into the park, damaging the park road and allowing untreated stormwater to enter water bodies.

+ stormwater from the park's impervious surfaces (roads, parking lots, etc.) and stormwater from outside sources (Broad Street, Pattison Avenue, etc.) flow untreated into the park's water bodies.



## STORMWATER



## CULVERT

+ the park's tide gate no longer functions as designed, allowing some tide water to enter the park.



## TIDE GATE

### WHAT IS A TIDE GATE?

+ it is an opening that allows water to drain out of the park freely at low tide, but then closes automatically to prevent water from flowing into the park during high tide.



# A Community-Driven Process

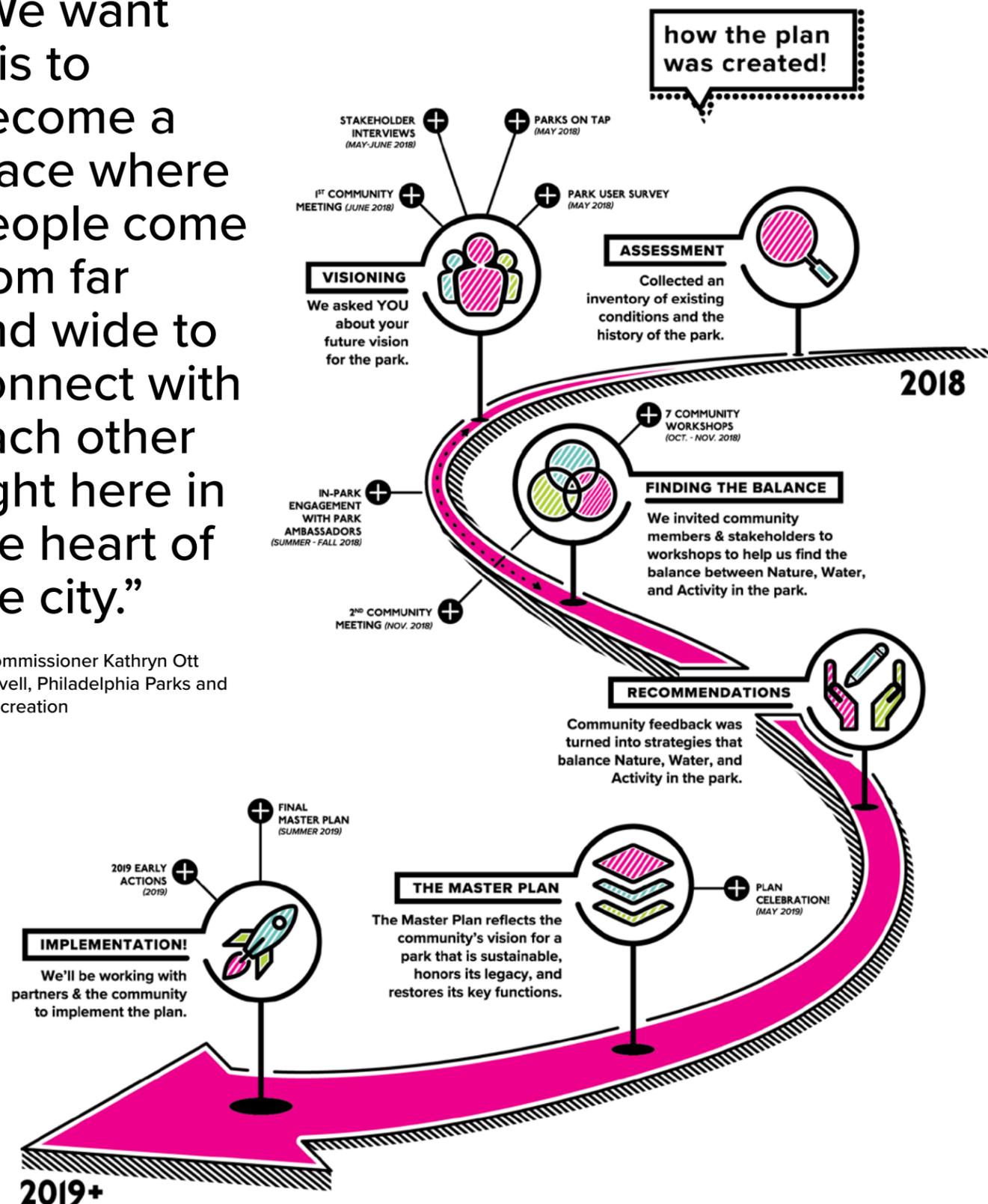
During the year-long planning process, the project team engaged over 3,000 community members and stakeholders. Community engagement was a critical component of the master planning process. With FDR Park being one of the most heavily used parks in Philadelphia, the master plan process was structured to ensure that all park users and communities were invited and had the chance to weigh in on the future of the park.

The team engaged community members through public meetings, hands-on workshops, and surveys with opportunities for residents to give feedback by designing their ideal park. In-park engagement included a mobile planning booth. The project team also hired five park ambassadors from the surrounding neighborhood, to engage park users and their fellow community members. With 19 different languages spoken in the census tracts bordering FDR Park, much of the engagement work was done across multiple languages and cultures.

The project team learned that FDR Park is a critical green oasis in one of South Philadelphia's most densely populated and diverse neighborhoods. Philadelphians look to the park when they want to celebrate life through picnics and special events. They value opportunities to connect with nature and to enjoy safe walking and biking trails. **By aligning these community priorities with the realities of a changing climate and a low-lying park, the planning process was oriented toward finding the right balance of activity, nature, and water.**

“We want this to become a place where people come from far and wide to connect with each other right here in the heart of the city.”

– Commissioner Kathryn Ott Lovell, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation



# Park User Engagement

## PARK USER SURVEY

The team launched a park user survey to gather information about how people use the park today, what they value, and how they would like to see the park change over time. The survey was distributed online and in print in four different languages over the course of more than a month. Over 1,200 park users responded. Most users walk, bike, or hike and picnic in the park. They value cleanliness, beauty, and opportunities to be active and connect to nature. They would like a park that contains more basic user amenities like restrooms and food and beverage options, more trails and paths for walking and biking, improved picnic facilities, and observation and overlook areas to view nature.



“Improve bike and pedestrian access and circulation within the park.”

– Community Resident, 2018

## IN-PARK ENGAGEMENT

To find out how people use the park and what they want to see for the future, the team needed to reach people who use the park today. What better way to do that than to meet them in the park! The team attended planned events, used the mobile planning booth, and deployed park ambassadors to help canvass the park and find out what users want to see in the FDR Park of tomorrow.

### Special Events

The team attended Parks on Tap and the Broad Street Run to find out more about what park users love about the park and what they felt should change. Many wanted more special events like Parks on Tap and more amenities like restrooms and water fountains.

### The Mobile Planning Booth & Park Ambassadors

To facilitate even more engagement in the park and provide park ambassadors with a home base, the team created a mobile park planning booth. The booth provided ambassadors with an eye-catching space to engage with park users and served as an information kiosk for community members seeking more information about the plan. The booth and the survey were used as tools to help spread the word about FDR Park and gather feedback about what people want. The Park Ambassadors served a crucial role in helping spread the word in their communities. They canvassed the park and conducted paper surveys in seven languages – Lao, Thai, Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Khmer, and English!



Top Left: The Planning Team engages with participants at Parks On Tap.

Bottom Left: Park Ambassadors canvass the park during an Eagles game.

Top Right: Park Ambassadors using the Mobile Planning Booth.

Bottom Right: The Planning Team hands out flyers and surveys at the Broad St. Run.



# MEET OUR PARK AMBASSADORS!

Our five ambassadors explain why FDR Park is important to them!

“All my life I’ve been coming here. When I was little in the Sixties, my step-dad used to make sandwiches and bring us here after school to do our homework, have picnics, and go swimming at the pool.”

— **KAREN HARRIS**

Life-long Point Breeze Resident

“People have such nostalgic roots to the park, including myself. But the main thing they want is to just make it better. When I say ‘better,’ I mean immediate issues like safety, keeping it clean and the grass cut, and curbs paved—basic maintenance.”

— **KRISTEN RICCHIUTI**

Packer Park Resident

“The park is important to me because it’s diverse and I get to meet fantastic people. I get to talk to different people about things that’s happening in the park. It gives me peace. It gives me so much peace aside from everything else that’s happening to me. It’s a friend zone for me. I get to be myself—I get to open up. What’s that called? Being an extrovert? I get to be that in the park.”

— **MARTHA HOWARD**

Ambassador Coordinator and Park Ambassador for the last 3+ years

“For me, the park is important because we get to be together on the weekends - mostly Asian people. It’s important for the people that come out to the Spectrum (park) to see the stuff selling; a chance for people to meet each other and try different foods. We have picnics over there on the weekends—to celebrate birthdays, parties, or graduations. I grew up in South Philly most of my life so the Spectrum (park) is the biggest thing that we did because we didn’t have a car. We’d take the bus to go there, meet each other, and play when I was a kid.”

— **VINA SOK**

South Philly Resident, vendor, and Khmer speaker

“I think the biggest thing is that people don’t really know that much about FDR Park. It’s a humongous space and it’s gorgeous, but it’s kind of undervalued...I know for Latinos, they love to be outside and be with their families, so going to the park is a big family event. Whatever we can do to make this park committed to their vision will be super important.”

— **CAROLINA TORRES**

South Philly Resident + Spanish speaker



# Stakeholder Interviews

A key goal of the engagement process was building excitement and support in surrounding communities and stakeholder groups. During this process, the team interviewed and met with more than 30 key stakeholders to help set the stage to mobilize the community's involvement in making the vision a reality and gaining support for implementation through local organizations, institutional partners, and funders.



# Community Meetings

In addition to park stakeholder interviews and in-park engagement sessions, three larger, community-wide meetings were held during the process at three critical points – visioning, potential alternatives, and the reveal of the draft master plan. Each event featured interactive stations, food, and activities for all ages.

**150+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDED**

## COMMUNITY MEETING #1 - THE COMMUNITY'S VISION

June 14, 2018; 6-8pm at the Calvary Temple

Over 150 community members attended the first community meeting. The meeting started with a brief presentation by the project team that provided an overview of the project goals, partners, the park's history, and current challenges the park is facing. The end of the presentation focused on framing the vision for the park under three umbrella themes: restore the function, reclaim the vision, and renew the impact.

The final portion of the meeting was an interactive open house with four stations organized around the topics of visioning, nature, water, and activities.

### Key Takeaways:

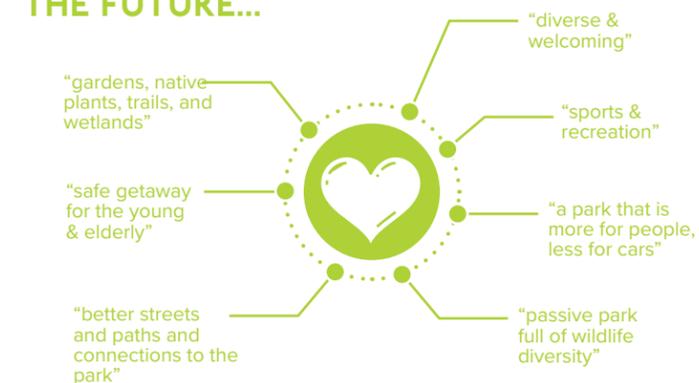
- + **Pedestrian and bike safety** – 42% of users drive to get to the park today. Even though the Broad Street Line is a mere 300 feet from the park entrance, wide roads with high volumes of auto traffic and a lack of safety at crosswalks discourage people from utilizing other means of transportation. Walking paths within the park are not well maintained or ADA-compliant.
- + **People use the park in a variety of ways** – biking, running, golf, picnics, bird watching, walking, fishing, attending the market on the weekend.
- + **Better maintenance and care of the park** – the majority of attendees wanted better drainage to reduce flooding, repairs to the park road, well-maintained restrooms, and better management of litter and trash.
- + **A renewed vision** – vision elements for the park included: sports and recreation; safe spaces; more landscaping; wildlife diversity; better trails and connections; and regular ongoing maintenance.

The full summary of Community Meeting #1 can be found in the appendix of this document.

## WHAT SHOULD CHANGE?



## VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE...



## COMMUNITY MEETING #2 – FINDING THE BALANCE

November 14, 2018 at South Philly High

Over 200 community members attended the second community meeting for the FDR Park Master Plan. Food was provided by SEAMAAC and childcare was provided by Let's Go Outdoors. The meeting provided an opportunity for community members to engage in interactive stations where they were asked to help prioritize investments for the park. The first station provided a comprehensive overview of the engagement activities completed to date (photo contest, first community meeting, stakeholder interviews, user surveys, community charrettes, and workshops).

The second station "Let's Dial it Up," asked participants to review maximum activity, maximum water, and maximum nature schemes and vote on what projects they would prioritize. The three schemes represent what happens when you increase activity, nature, or water in FDR Park. Each scenario included a series of goals, a conceptual plan, and a series of 15 projects that fit within each scheme.

The third and final station "Finding the Balance," asked community members to help determine the right balance between each theme (activity: "Let's Play," water: "urban oasis," and nature: "clean & green") by using FDR bucks to invest in the theme(s) of their choosing and select one "gold star" project to fund.

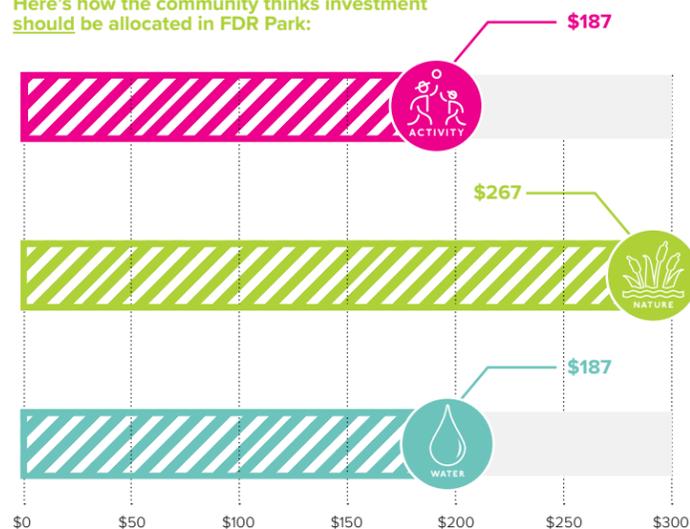
### Key Takeaways:

- + Favorite Activity Projects – multi-use trail, boathouse café, active playground, market picnic grove, and a new gateway with public art and a plaza.
- + Favorite Nature Projects – hiking and biking trail, nature overlooks, nature playground, and forest habitat restoration.
- + Favorite Water Projects – boardwalk trails, water playground, tidal marsh, fishing piers, and canoe/kayak launch.
- + "Gold star" projects – multi-use trail nature, boathouse café, market picnic grove, multi-use trail exercise.

The full summary of Community Meeting #2 can be found in the appendix of this document.

## FINDING THE BALANCE

Here's how the community thinks investment should be allocated in FDR Park:



## COMMUNITY MEETING #3 – FDR CELEBRATION!

May 22, 2019 at FDR Park

To celebrate the launch of the community vision for the future of FDR Park, on Wednesday, May 22, Fairmount Park Conservancy, in partnership with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, WRT, and Friends of FDR Park, unveiled the FDR Park Master Plan. Hundreds of park users, South Philly residents, stakeholders, and community members came together to celebrate and view the master plan in person, enjoy food trucks, lawn games, a photo booth, and a speaking program with partners and city officials.



Above: Community members review the "maximum nature" scheme at Community Meeting #2.

Left: A family checks out the reimagined Boathouse Lawn during the FDR Park Celebration event.

Top: Swoop; Todd Pride, President of Friends of FDR Park; Senator Larry Farnese; John Gattuso, Board President of the Fairmount Park Conservancy; Kathryn Ott Lovell, PPR Commissioner; Soledad Alfaro, CAO of PHL; and the Philly Fanatic unveil the final plan.



⊕  
 Top Left: Chew Recreation Center workshop participants discuss the location of trails.

Top Right: A group at the Passyunk Community Center debates where to put athletic fields.



# Community Workshops

The team wanted to provide community members with the opportunity to take FDR Park's future into their own hands! A "Workshop in a Box" was created as a hands-on tool to help the community create their FDR Park of the future. Each box contained an existing map of the park, tracing paper, markers, program cards with information about potential amenities, and paper cut-outs or game pieces in the shape of various amenities.

The team took the "box" around to different communities and park stakeholders and held 2-hour sessions where they were asked "How would you design FDR Park?" They used colorful markers to create new nature trails, brainstormed what kind of programming would be the best investments for the park, and contemplated the best place to install nature boardwalks or basketball courts in the park. Through the course of the exercise, groups worked together asking key questions about program trade-offs, where to locate new items, and how circulation should work. Overall, the team hosted seven community workshops with a diverse group of stakeholders and park users, including sessions with communities where English is a second language and youth groups.

## 7 Community Workshops:

- + Oct 11, 2018 / Chew Recreation Center
- + Oct 13, 2018 / American Swedish Historical Museum
- + Oct 17, 2018 / East Passyunk Community Center
- + Oct 20, 2018 / Aquinas Center Youth Researchers
- + Oct 25, 2018 / Project Stakeholders
- + Oct 25, 2018 / Community Sports Stakeholders
- + Nov 3, 2018 / SEAMAAC

⊕  
 Bottom Left: Workshop with Southeast Asian communities in partnership with SEAMAAC.

Bottom Right: Drawing in some new nature trails.



“Connect habitat corridors in the park”

– Workshop Participant, Passyunk Community Center, 2018



# Our Community Partners

To improve our community outreach, the team set up partnerships with two South Philly-based organizations to establish relationships with groups. These organizations – SEAMAAC and the Aquinas Center – were compensated for the time and expertise they provided throughout the process.

## SEAMAAC

Southeast Asian Mutual Assistance Association Coalition (SEAMAAC) provides services and support to immigrants and refugees in South Philadelphia. Throughout the process they provided key services to help reach underserved and under-represented populations including recent immigrants and non-English speaking residents.

Some of their key activities included:

- + **Hosting a design workshop on Saturday, Nov 3, 2018**  
SEAMAAC recruited participants with translated outreach materials. The meeting was hosted in a space familiar to the community. To ensure maximum participation, they organized language interpreters for Vietnamese, Nepali, Indonesian, Burmese, Cambodian, Laotian, and Spanish. Food was provided by a local Southeast Asian vendor. This workshop was an essential step in forming a connection with this key park user community and making sure they feel welcome in the park.
- + **Guidance on language needs and outreach methods.**  
SEAMAAC provided input on how best to reach the underserved and under-represented park user groups. This included helping with translation and distribution of flyers for community meetings in multiple languages. They also actively recruited members of their organization to attend meetings and have their voices heard.
- + **Helping during community meetings.**  
In addition to identifying and recruiting interpreters for community meetings, SEAMAAC also organized food vendors for the second and third community meetings. Their SoPhiE food truck (which features exclusively Southeast Asian and Latino immigrant vendors) provided food for attendees of each meeting.



Left: After school group talks about trail placement at the Aquinas Center.

Bottom Left: Aquinas Center's International Food Fest, 2018.

Bottom: Workshop with non-English speakers in partnership with SEAMAAC.



## AQUINAS CENTER

The Aquinas Center is a faith-based community organization that also serves a largely Southeast Asian and Latino population. Throughout the process they provided key services to help reach underserved and under-represented populations including recent immigrants, youth, and non-English speaking residents.

Some of their key activities included:

- + **Hosted design workshop with their Youth Researchers program on Oct 30, 2018**  
The Aquinas Center invited the planning team to conduct a design workshop at the regular weekly meeting of their youth program, comprised of high school and college youth, many of whom are immigrants or children of immigrants.
- + **Shared details about the master plan during their Spanish-language CCD classes on Saturday, Oct 20, 2018**  
Our team presented the master plan in Spanish and gathered input from community members.
- + **Sponsored and hosted a table at their International Food Fest event on Saturday, Oct 20, 2018**
- + **Helped us promote and recruit attendees for community meetings and one of our Community Ambassadors**  
The Aquinas Center also actively recruited members of their organization to attend meetings and have their voices heard and recommended a Spanish-speaking community ambassador.

# Engagement through Art & Nature

## CUSP GRANT

The planning team received a \$6,000 grant from CUSP (Climate & Urban Systems Partnership) at The Franklin Institute to do climate change education. Our team partnered with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation and Let's Go Outdoors, a local Philly nonprofit focused on engaging people of color in the outdoors, to create art and exploration activities as part of the grant.

### + Art Installation

After putting out a call for proposals, artist Nicole Donnelly was hired to create a temporary installation in the park that educated people on the park's natural history, focusing on changes in the park's hydrology and impending sea-level rise. The installation was primarily made out of plants, both the actual stems as well as paper she made from paper mulberry.

### + Exploration Day

The team hosted an event on October 20, 2018, centered around the installation. Nicole taught participants how to make paper using paper mulberry plants, while Let's Go Outdoors provided kids activities focused on climate change education and guide a guided walk around the park looking at wetland plants.

## GUIDED WALK ON THE GOLF COURSE

Fairmount Park Conservancy hosted a guided walk on the golf course side of the park on Sunday, February 24, 2019. About 15 community members participated and had the opportunity to explore a part of the park many had never seen. This guided walk helped community members envision what this part of the park could be in the future!



Top Left and Bottom Left: Participants learning to make paper.

Top Right: The final installation.

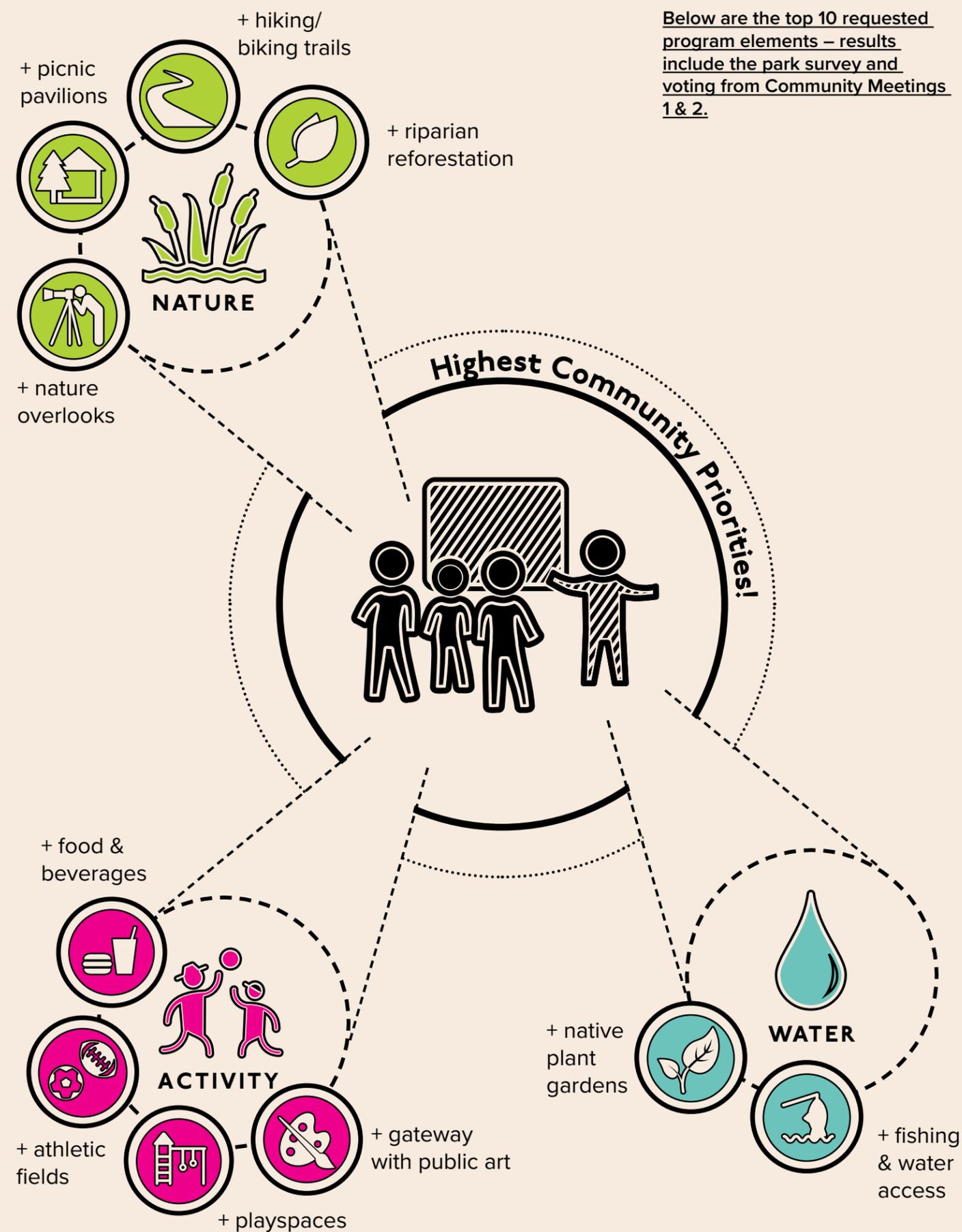
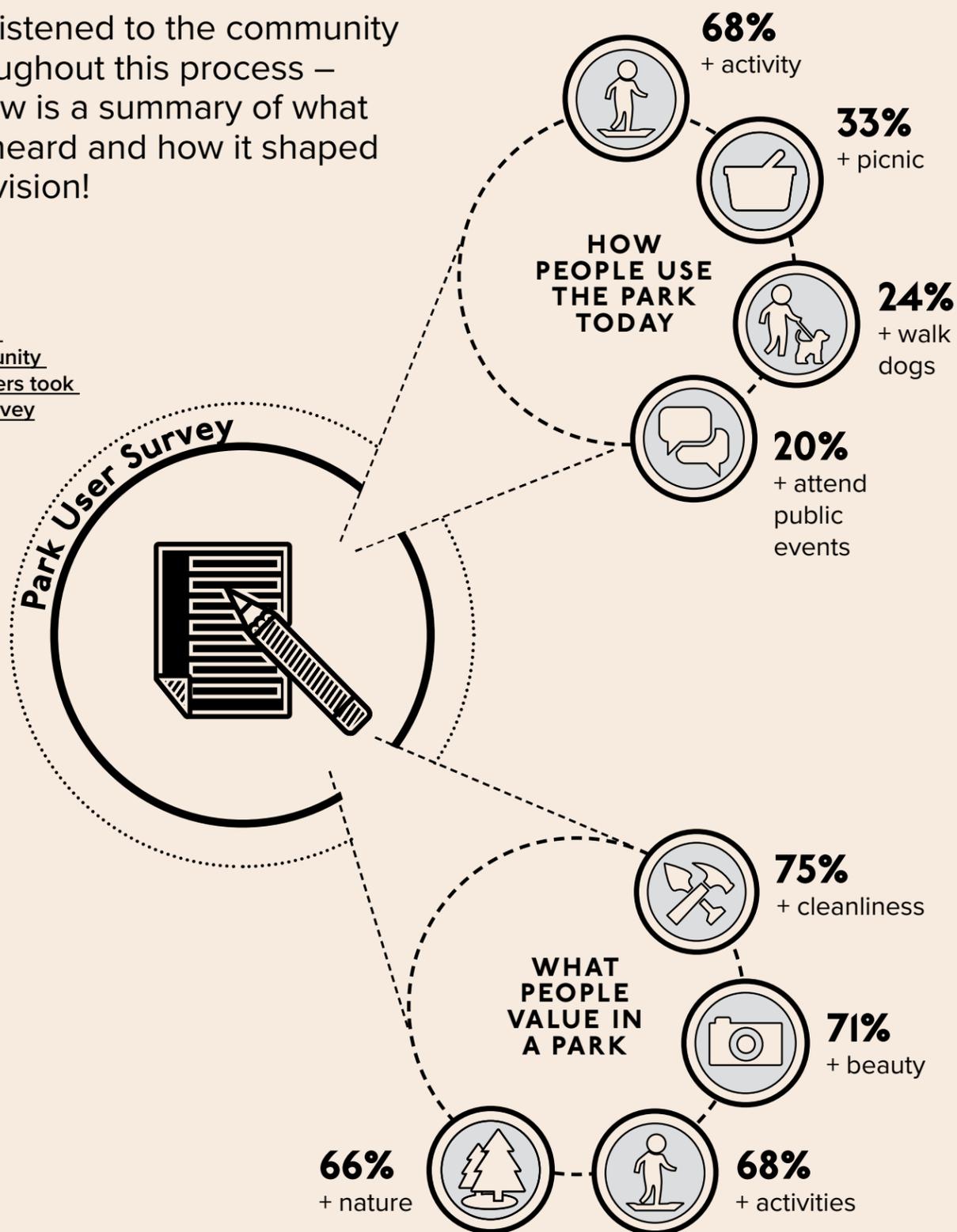
Bottom: Images from the guided tour through the western portion of the park.



# THE COMMUNITY'S PRIORITIES

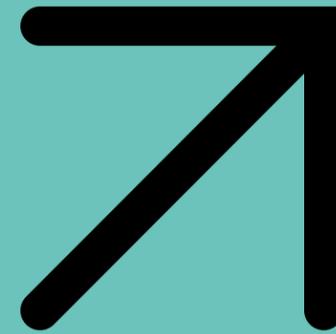
We listened to the community throughout this process – below is a summary of what we heard and how it shaped the vision!

1,200+ community members took the survey



Below are the top 10 requested program elements – results include the park survey and voting from Community Meetings 1 & 2.

# 02



## THE VISION

The FDR Park Master Plan offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine a historic Olmsted park to serve 21<sup>st</sup>-century Philadelphians. Just as park visitors experienced a remarkable feat of landscape architecture and civil engineering during the Sesquicentennial, future park users will come to know FDR Park as Philadelphia's centerpiece of recreation, art, ecology, and design.

# a *resilient* future for a historic park.

The FDR Park Master Plan brings nature, water, and human activity into balance in one unified system. In order to achieve this vision, the master plan focused on three goals: Restore the Function, Reclaim the Vision, and Renew the Impact. Together, these three goals reinforce that FDR Park has always been a product of human invention and imagination and it will continue to be in this resilient vision for the historic park.



# RECLAIM THE VISION

FDR Park occupies a significant role in the history of the city. It is unique in that it is the only park plan in Philadelphia carried out by the landscape architectural firm of Frederick Law Olmsted. It was also part of the site of the 1926 Sesquicentennial to honor the country's one hundred and fiftieth birthday. Over the past 100 years, a strong cultural and emotional attachment to the park has grown that is rooted in the collective consciousness of multiple generations of park users. FDR Park has also been placed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places by the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Original Olmsted park designs were based on the ideology that nature not only lifts human spirits, but strengthens it such that every person – regardless of social or economic status – has a right to share in that experience. Olmsted's vision, which was carried out by his sons, was to move citizens throughout their man-made space and still have them feel the rhythm of natural life. The original 1914 Olmsted Brothers plan envisioned a park with large swaths of open space for passive recreation and athletic events, picturesque lakes and water

features, interconnected trails and roads, and an extensive horticulture expression. Changes to land uses, recreation trends, park infrastructure, park property, historic building use, and modifications to the park hydrology have resulted in a park that contains only glimpses of that original vision.

The FDR Park Master Plan reclaims the original vision for the park for a modern audience by working within the original framework and design intent of the Olmsted Brothers. The proposed plan does not try to replicate the original design, but rather take cues from it and honor its significance and impact. The plan reintegrates key elements of the park with an evaluation of the park's contemporary needs and realities. An historic urban park with functional wetlands, lakes, creeks, and lagoons intermixed with stormwater management is unique from other urban or national parks. The original Olmsted playsteads are re-envisioned as a system of active and passive recreation spaces serving the contemporary needs of users. The circulation system traces the original layout, but is updated to serve vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians in a way that allows the park to

maintain its stormwater management functions. The horticultural expression of the park is displayed at key entranceways, stormwater management facilities, gardens, and tree groves throughout the park in ways that maximize the habitat potential for a wide variety of species as well as the human enjoyment of being out in and connecting to nature.

## The master plan reclaims the original vision – to lift the human spirit and connect people to the rhythm of natural life – for a new generation of park users.



A comparison of the original vision for the park (left) and the proposed master plan showcasing the consistency of primary design elements (right).

# RESTORE

# THE FUNCTION

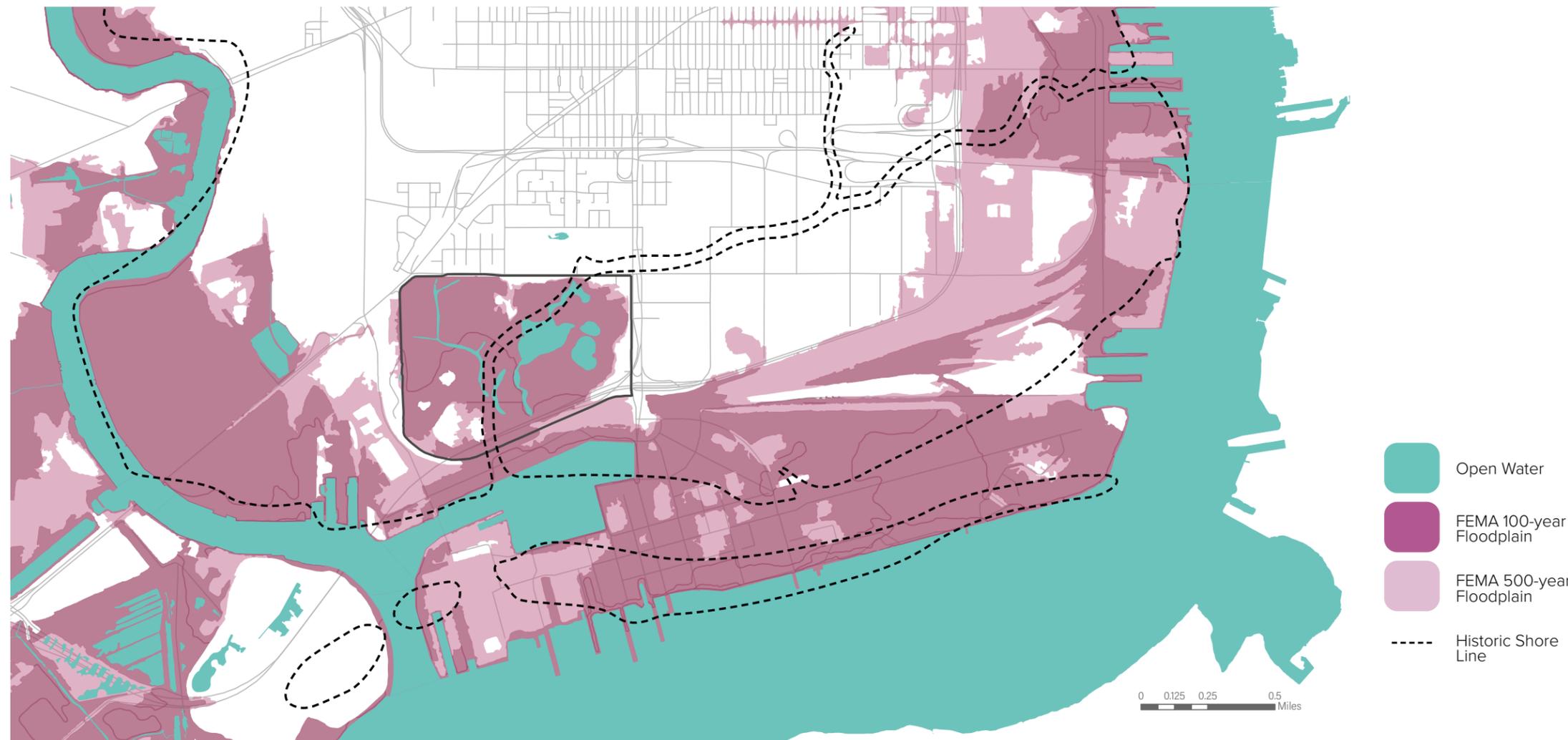
Reclaiming the vision of the park can only work if we can restore the function. To restore the function of the park, the master plan leverages nature-based solutions such that the entire park can fulfill its promise as a critical piece of civic, public health, and ecological infrastructure. Without intervention, FDR Park will revert to a tidal marsh in the hotter, wetter futures Philadelphia faces. As such, the master plan prioritizes the need for the park to flood and is designed to limit the impacts to park events and activities by calibrating the topography of the park to allow for certain parts to flood while elevating parts of the park with high programming needs. The park plays an important role in creating a resilient ecosystem for the city by functioning as a vibrant coastal plain habitat for local flora and fauna and acting as a sponge supporting water and stormwater functions. The master plan aims to reduce the impacts of development around the site by increasing biodiversity, restoring the ecological and hydrological function of the landscape, and improving the efficiency of park operations.

Currently, the park operates as two halves of one park with the FDR Golf Course, added to the park in the 1930s, on the western side and the rest of the historic portion of the park on the east side. Separating the two is a chain link fence running south of the 20<sup>th</sup> Street entrance. The park's division is reinforced by the park road – a one-way loop around the lakes. With the closure of the golf course, the park will be able to function as one large 348-acre park. The master plan recommends that the circulation systems, open space systems, and hydrologic systems extend into the western portion of the park such that the original vision of the park can be reclaimed as one park.

Over time, the park has suffered from land use decisions that fractured the park into individual parcels of activities. Park "carve-outs" and selective use facilities, as well as the repurposing of historic structures for non-compatible uses (e.g., utilizing the historic Bath Houses as a maintenance facility), have excluded certain park features from public use. Failing park infrastructure dating back to the Sesquicentennial and

maintenance funding challenges have left the park functions operating at a deficit. The master plan process engaged the community to identify the highest and best use programming to allow the park to maximize its true function. **By aligning community priorities with the realities of a changing climate and a low-lying park, the planning process was oriented toward finding the balance of activity, nature, and water.**

To restore the function of the park, the master plan uses nature-based solutions such that the entire park can fulfill its promise as a critical piece of civic, public health, and ecological infrastructure.



Comparison of historic shore line with the current 100-year and 500-year floodplains.

**RENEW**  
**THE IMPACT**

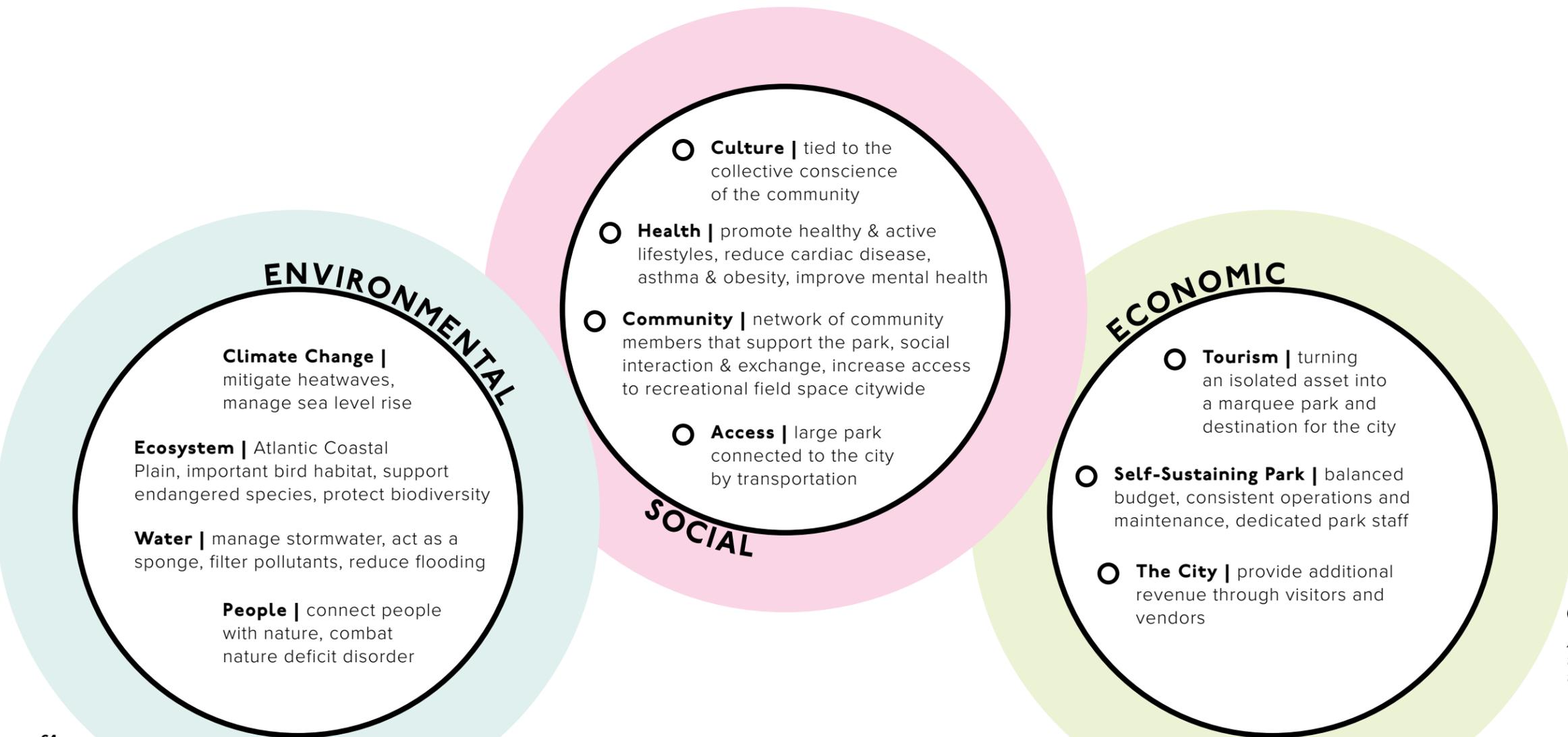
Parks are not just recreation spaces. They improve people's lives and bring communities closer together. They are agents of social, environmental, and economic transformations. Parks are also powerful places that shape the identity of a city and provide meaningful experiences for all park users. They are spaces where communities come together and forge connections with nature and with each other. The FDR Park master plan builds on the park's existing assets (iconic lakes, nature, diverse user groups, an oasis in the city, etc.) to create a space that meets the needs of its diverse users and adds value to the community and the city. The inclusive master planning process renews the park's impact by nurturing a sense of ownership that encourages a new generation of park stewardship.

FDR Park occupies a unique address as South Philadelphia's back yard, the Navy Yard's front yard, and the Stadium District's green neighbor. It is a southern gateway to the city, visible from the air near the Philadelphia International Airport, and connected to I-95 and Broad Street. With development occurring in the surrounding area, FDR Park will need to serve an even larger role

in an ever-changing city. FDR Park is an important ecological site considering the scarcity of coastal habitat in the Delaware Estuary as well as the fact that it is a city-managed park in one of the last undeveloped sections of the Atlantic Coastal Plain. The revitalization of FDR Park is an important statement about the value of parks in sensitive environments and their ability to provide value beyond everyday programming and activities.

FDR Park is more than a neighborhood park. As one of Philadelphia's greatest public spaces it must be at the forefront of climate and community resilience. The FDR Park Master Plan is driven by the knowledge that strategic investments in our civic assets can connect people of all backgrounds, cultivate trust, and counter the trends of social and economic fragmentation in cities and neighborhoods.

The master plan renews the park's impact by nurturing a sense of ownership that encourages a new generation of park stewardship.



⊕ A summary of the restored park's impact on the environment, quality of life (social), and the economy.

# The Plan

The master plan vision reflects a network of water courses enclosed by swaths of reforestation, encircled by a network of trail systems and tree-lined parkways, framed by fields of active recreation. Playgrounds, restrooms, picnic pavilions, overlooks, and concessions are systematically distributed throughout the park to enhance the visitor experience. Enhanced gateways, expanded event lawns, and increased programming activate the fields at the park's edge, while restored lakes, creeks, wetlands, and riparian reforestation provide an immersive nature experience with enhanced habitat connectivity at the park's core. This **"Ecological Core"** and **"Urban Edge"** are the product of a creative fitting process that acknowledges the man-made environs that shape the identity of the park; with the *Ecological Core* acting as a natural sponge that supports and enhances the hardened *Urban Edge* and programming. *Each component of the plan is described in detail in section 04 - The Experience.*

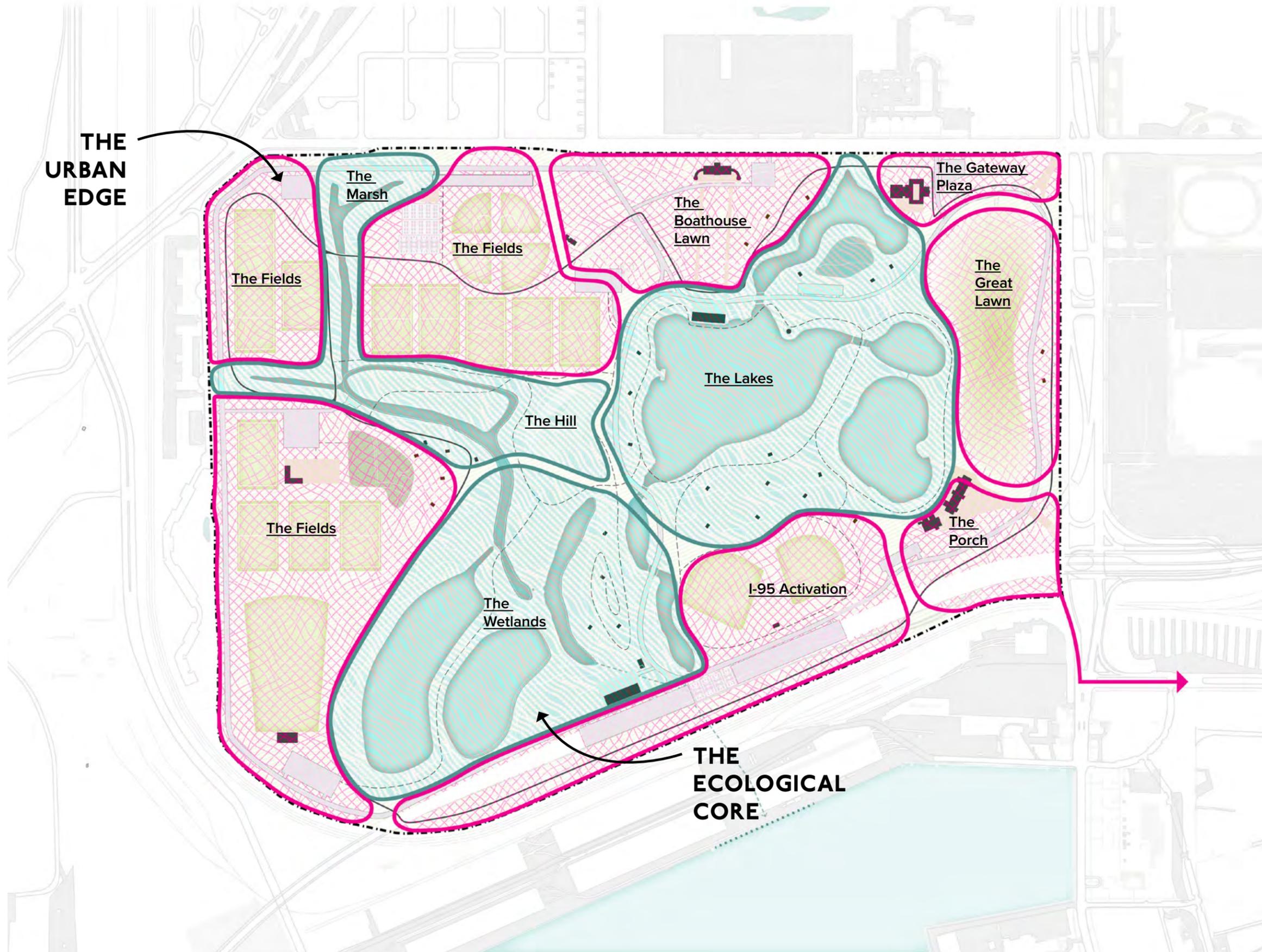
## ECOLOGICAL CORE

The intrinsic resources of FDR Park are the natural systems at the heart of the park. Since natural system fragmentation is such a challenge at FDR, a key to creating a renewed vision is maximizing their connectedness and quality of habitat to grow and flourish. Expanding the natural systems improves the ecosystem services that the park offers to all park users.

The *Ecological Core* contains some of the most iconic elements of the park – Edgewood Lake, Meadow Lake, Pattison Lagoon, Hollander Creek, the Boathouse, and the Olmsted Overlook – which are also the areas of the park most susceptible to flood risk. The master plan recognizes this risk by increasing the park's capacity to manage water which, affords the added benefit of providing opportunities for park users to connect with nature.

## URBAN EDGE

The *Urban Edge* encircles the *Ecological Core* and frames the perimeter of the park, providing an attractive and welcoming interface with adjacent communities. Major gateways at Broad Street and Pattison Avenue – "The Gateway Plaza," 20<sup>th</sup> Street and Pattison Avenue, and the Porch – reconnect FDR Park with the Navy Yard, the Sports Complex, SEPTA's Broad Street subway line, and adjacent neighborhoods. A gateway is recommended at Pattison Avenue and Penrose Avenue with eventual trail links to the Schuylkill River Trail. The *Urban Edge* contains a network of green stormwater infrastructure designed to manage runoff from surrounding urban areas. Natural filtration systems ensure that the park can accept stormwater from the roadways without degrading water quality in the park's lakes or impacting park infrastructure.



# A Resilient Future

The master plan vision builds on FDR Park’s resiliency by designing a system that meets the needs of its diverse users and adds substantial value to the community while positively impacting the larger city identity.

FDR Park’s existence is a testament to the resilience of urban open space and the community’s need for a healthy environment. The FDR Park of the future is a unique park that is flexible and functional, can adapt to changing conditions and remain resilient in the face of challenges, and is unified behind a community-supported vision for the future.

The park is an important natural asset for the city and has been identified as a resilience hub by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Resilience hubs are open spaces located near infrastructure and population density, where communities can maximize return on investment and achieve multiple community resilience and conservation outcomes.

FDR Park will serve as a local and national model for stormwater management and resilient design, showcasing low-impact development and green infrastructure projects. The master plan anticipates the projected impacts of climate change and envisions a park that not only retains its recreational value in a hotter, wetter future, but also actively mitigates the impacts of higher temperatures and more frequent flooding. The park’s mitigative capacity extends beyond its borders, providing essential services to the surrounding area.

At a large-scale, resiliency is defined by three principles: **1) The ability to maintain structure and function in the face of disturbance, 2) The ability to be self-sustaining, and 3) The ability to learn and adapt.** Specific strategies for each of these principles is outlined in the following section.



## THE ABILITY TO MAINTAIN STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION IN THE FACE OF DISTURBANCE

- + **Rebuild the tide gate to improve water flow** in the park and allow the park to drain faster after flood events
- + **Balance the cut and fill** on site to allow certain parts of the park to flood and raise critical programming out of the floodplain
- + **Widen Shedbrook Creek and create a sedge meadow** to allow for additional stormwater storage and recreation opportunities
- + **Manage unfiltered stormwater** entering the park while not disturbing park activities
- + **Manage all impervious surfaces**, both existing and proposed, within the park with best management practices that exceed the Philadelphia Water Department’s minimum requirements
- + **Create places of refuge** by physically elevating key programming elements and reinforcing structures
- + **Expand the natural areas of the park** in order to enhance maximum habitat areas and stormwater storage potential



## THE ABILITY TO BE SELF-SUSTAINING

- + **Provide opportunities for the park to generate its own revenue** to offset operations and maintenance costs
- + **Create a destination** that provides additional revenue for the city through visitors and vendors
- + **Create a strong coalition for the park** including institutional, public-private, and park user partnerships in order to improve park stewardship in an integrated and inclusive manner
- + **Connect to regional trail systems** to link green open spaces and make access easier
- + **Increase ecological diversity and create healthy ecosystems** that support populations of native flora and fauna



## THE ABILITY TO LEARN AND ADAPT

- + **Create a maintenance staff** that is flexible and responsive to changing conditions
- + **Ensure flexible programming** to allow for changing recreation trends
- + **Combat nature deficit disorder** by increasing access to a variety of natural areas within the park for play and educational opportunities
- + **Plant vegetation that is adaptable** to hotter and wetter futures
- + **Encourage public health** through recreational opportunities including a network of multi-use and nature trails, multipurpose fields and courts, and open spaces

# Network of Benefits

The master plan uses an inclusive range of considerations – environmental, economic and social – to maximize the benefits for the park and to measure the park’s health and resiliency. The network of benefits outlined in this plan will contribute to meeting the city’s contemporary challenges in a wide variety of ways while becoming a unique model for the city and the region.

	ECONOMY				QUALITY OF LIFE / SOCIAL									ENVIRONMENT											
	SAVE ENERGY	GENERATE CITY/REGIONAL TOURISM	GENERATE REVENUE FOR THE PARK	CREATE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	IMPROVE PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES	ENSURE EASE OF MAINTENANCE	IMPROVE ACCESS	PROVIDE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	INCREASE ACCESS TO RECREATION	CREATE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES	CREATE PLACES FOR RESPIRE	REDUCE NOISE POLLUTION	IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH	INCREASE USABILITY OF THE PARK	MANAGE STORMWATER	INCREASE STORMWATER STORAGE (VOLUME)	SEQUESTER CARBON & REDUCE EMISSIONS	INCREASE ACCESS TO & VIEWS OF WATER	REDUCE POTENTIAL FLOODING	IMPROVE WATER QUALITY	REDUCE HEAT IMPACTS	INCREASE BIODIVERSITY	IMPROVE AIR QUALITY	RESTORE ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS	
the Ecological Core	THE WETLANDS	○	◐	○	○	●	◐	◐	◐	●	●	●	●	◐	○	◐	●	●	◐	●	●	●	●	●	●
	SHEDBROOK CREEK RESTORATION	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	●	◐	◐	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	SEdge MEADOW	○	◐	○	○	◐	●	◐	◐	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	THE HILL	○	●	○	○	◐	●	◐	◐	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
	EDGEWOOD LAKE	○	●	◐	◐	◐	●	◐	◐	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	MEADOW LAKE	○	◐	○	○	◐	●	◐	◐	●	●	●	●	◐	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	PATTISON LAGOON	○	○	○	○	◐	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	◐	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	PICNIC WOODS	○	◐	●	○	◐	●	◐	◐	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	PATTISON PLAYGROUND	○	○	○	○	◐	●	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	TREEHOUSE WOODS/PAVILION	○	◐	◐	○	◐	○	◐	◐	●	●	◐	◐	●	○	○	●	◐	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
the Urban Edge	FRANKLIN 5K	○	◐	●	○	●	◐	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	●	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	GATEWAY/WELCOME CENTER	◐	●	●	●	◐	○	●	◐	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	◐	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	GREAT LAWN	○	●	●	●	●	◐	●	◐	◐	●	○	◐	◐	●	○	◐	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	THE PORCH	◐	●	●	●	◐	○	●	◐	●	●	◐	◐	●	●	○	◐	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	I-95 ACTIVATION	○	◐	○	○	●	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	○	◐	●	●	●	◐	○	●	●	○	○	○	○	○
	THE BOATHOUSE LAWN	○	◐	◐	○	◐	●	◐	◐	●	●	●	◐	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	SHEDBROOK PLAYGROUND	○	●	○	○	●	○	●	◐	●	●	○	●	●	○	○	◐	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	THE FIELDS	◐	●	●	●	●	◐	◐	◐	●	●	◐	●	●	●	●	●	◐	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	PARK ROAD/PARKING	○	○	●	◐	◐	○	○	◐	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE	●	○	○	○	◐	◐	◐	○	○	○	○	◐	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

## OUR ECONOMY

The FDR Park Master Plan provides many strategies to integrate natural resources into a citywide network of recreational space and cultural amenities. The plan’s recommendations to allow for revenue generation will help offset the parks operations and maintenance while also benefiting the city’s tourism efforts. The benefits of balancing the revenue and operations create a self-sustaining park unlike any other in the Philadelphia Parks system – a park with a balanced budget, consistent operations and maintenance, increased tourism and park visitation, and new employment and concession opportunities. The master plan process identified opportunity costs – costs avoided by taking a certain action – in order to understand the balance between competing park uses such that the benefits would create win-win scenarios for the short and long-term life of the park.

## OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

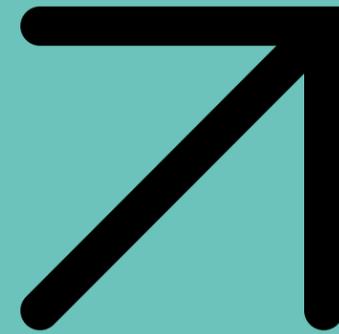
Social benefits – also known as quality-of-life benefits – are instrumental to a park’s vitality and longevity. With local bus, subway, bike paths, street and highway access, FDR Park offers users convenient access to recreation and nature in the city’s only estuary park. Parks are key to promoting active, healthy lifestyles. The recommendations in the master plan help improve public health by promoting clean air and healthy watersheds, combating nature deficit disorder, providing a broad range of fitness challenges that encourage physical health, as well as provide a respite for mental health and rejuvenation.

The recommendations in the master plan will allow park users of all ages and abilities to play, exercise, access nature, and become active participants in creating a greener city. A survey by the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation (Think Outside – 2009) found that the top five outdoor activities for residents and out-of-town visitors included walking, visiting historic landmarks or historic sites, jogging and rollerblading, biking, and picnics or cookouts – all of which are activities currently available in FDR Park that will be greatly enhanced by the master plan recommendations.

## OUR ENVIRONMENT

A key objective of the master plan is to gain the most benefits from a well-managed environmental infrastructure, benefits not limited strictly to environmental health but social and economic as well. Environmental benefits are part of a larger ecosystem that absorb floodwaters, clean the air and water, moderate temperature and climate, and offer plentiful habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna – including local and migrating species for which FDR park is a destination. An effective environmental infrastructure strategy is the key to minimizing overall infrastructural cost while maximizing benefits. Establishing a way of identifying all the benefits associated with each of the master plan areas / major projects, while also keeping in mind their associated costs, provides a framework for setting priorities and making planning and design decisions.

# 03



## HOW IT WORKS

The master plan organizes nature, water, and human activity to adapt to the needs of a changing city and environment. Together, these systems benefit urban life by positively influencing environmental quality, physical and mental wellbeing, and Philadelphia's economic development.

# The Systems

The vision for the park is made possible by balancing systems of water, nature, activity, and circulation to create a holistic park that meets the needs of its users and the environment.

## THE FUTURE FDR, BY THE NUMBERS

<b>CIRCULATION</b>	PARK ROAD	3.5 MILES
	PARKING <i>Paved Spaces</i>	1,700 SPACES
	TRAILS	6.8 MILES
<b>WATER + NATURE</b>	WATER BODIES	56.9 ACRES
	GSI FACILITIES <i>Green Stormwater Infrastructure</i>	5
	MEADOWS	10.8 ACRES
	WOODLANDS	75 ACRES
<b>ACTIVITY + AMENITIES</b>	MULTIPURPOSE FIELDS	12 FIELDS
	BASEBALL/SOFTBALL	4 SYNTHETIC 2 NATURAL TURF
	TENNIS	10 COURTS
	BASKETBALL	8 COURTS
	PICNIC TABLES / PAVILIONS	36 / 12
	PLAYSPACES	4 ACRES
	PUBLIC RESTROOMS	5
	CONCESSIONS	11
	<b>STAFF</b>	FULL-TIME STAFF

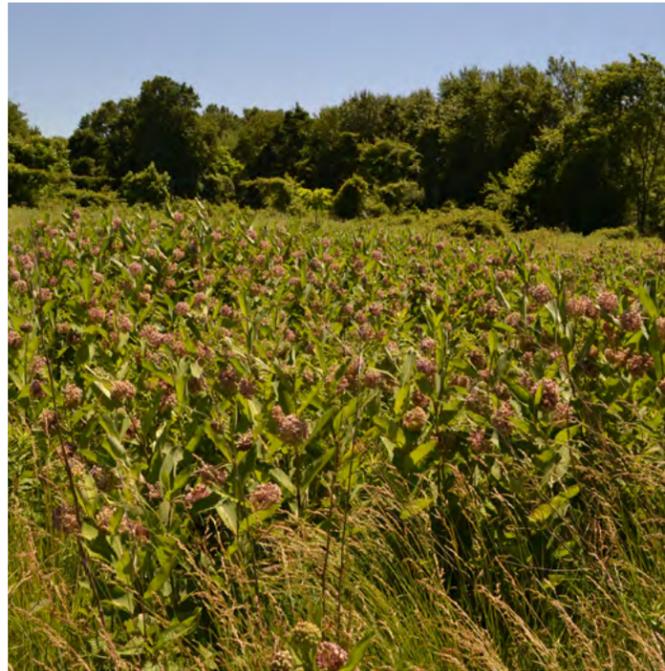


TODAY

# NATURE



FDR Park is Philadelphia's only park in the Atlantic Coastal Plain, an area that has been designated as one of 36 global biodiversity hotspots for its abundant and unique, yet highly threatened, diversity of plant and animal species. Very few natural fragments of this ecological zone remain in the state, making FDR Park critical for supporting species that rely on resources unique to this zone. Today, natural lands make up about 77 acres of the total 348-acre park.



**+** Top Right: Old field successional landscapes in the park like this stand of milkweed near the riparian edge, provide habitat for monarch butterflies and migratory birds.

Center Left: Edgewood Lake is home to several species of waterfowl.

Center Right: Invasive species, like this phragmites stand, pose an imminent threat to the park by outcompeting with native species.

Bottom Right: Current riparian reforestation restoration efforts near Pattison Lagoon.

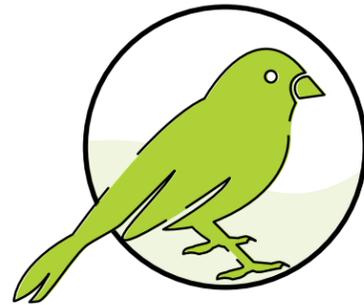


## KEY CHALLENGES

- + Fragmented patches of habitat.**  
Existing patches of habitat include the area in and around the existing lakes, lagoons, and ponds as well as about 45 acres of woods, wetlands, and field areas in the southern portion of the park. The quality of these habitat zones varies with some of the highest quality wooded habitat existing along the banks of Hollander Creek. These habitat areas are not connected with bridges, roads, parking lots, and other park programming, isolating habitat areas from each other. This fragmentation, known as habitat fragmentation, occurs when larger habitats are divided into smaller ones, separating species that live there and depend on each other. It can reduce the quality of the habitat, threaten certain species, and even result in a loss of total habitat.
- + Continued impact of climate change.**  
Hotter, wetter futures and sea-level rise combined with existing sedimentation, pollution from stormwater runoff, and high levels of salinity in the groundwater will only serve to increase the risk to plant and animal communities.
- + Threat of invasive species (non-native plants that threaten the natural ecosystem).**  
Much of the natural area in the park is considered as low to moderate quality due to the extensive presence of invasive and exotic species (e.g., phragmites), reduced presence of native species, and contaminated water flows. Yet even those challenged ecosystems are remarkably valuable for the habitat they provide for key rare species that make FDR Park their home and for the park visitors who come to FDR Park seeking a bit of nature.
- + Lack of variety in gardens and plantings.**  
One of the original components of Olmsted's original plan was a series of gardens and areas for horticultural expression. Over the years, the park has lost much of this quality with no attention given to increasing the variety and quality of plant species in the park. The park is almost entirely planted with large specimen trees (both native and exotic) and natural vegetation is present mainly in and around the water bodies.

TOMORROW

# NATURE



## Expanding the *Ecological Core* to create an immersive nature experience and climate refuge.

### Create and enhance habitat areas.

The master plan expands the *Ecological Core* of the park – the lakes, lagoons, creeks, ponds, and wetlands – to provide a more expansive and connected habitat for plant and animal life. The continuity of the *Ecological Core* allows for the expansion of native planting that supports the unique biodiversity of the Atlantic Coastal Plain and allows the park to serve as critical infrastructure to reduce the effects of heat and flooding on surrounding communities.

### Increase access to nature and programming for an immersive nature experience in South Philly.

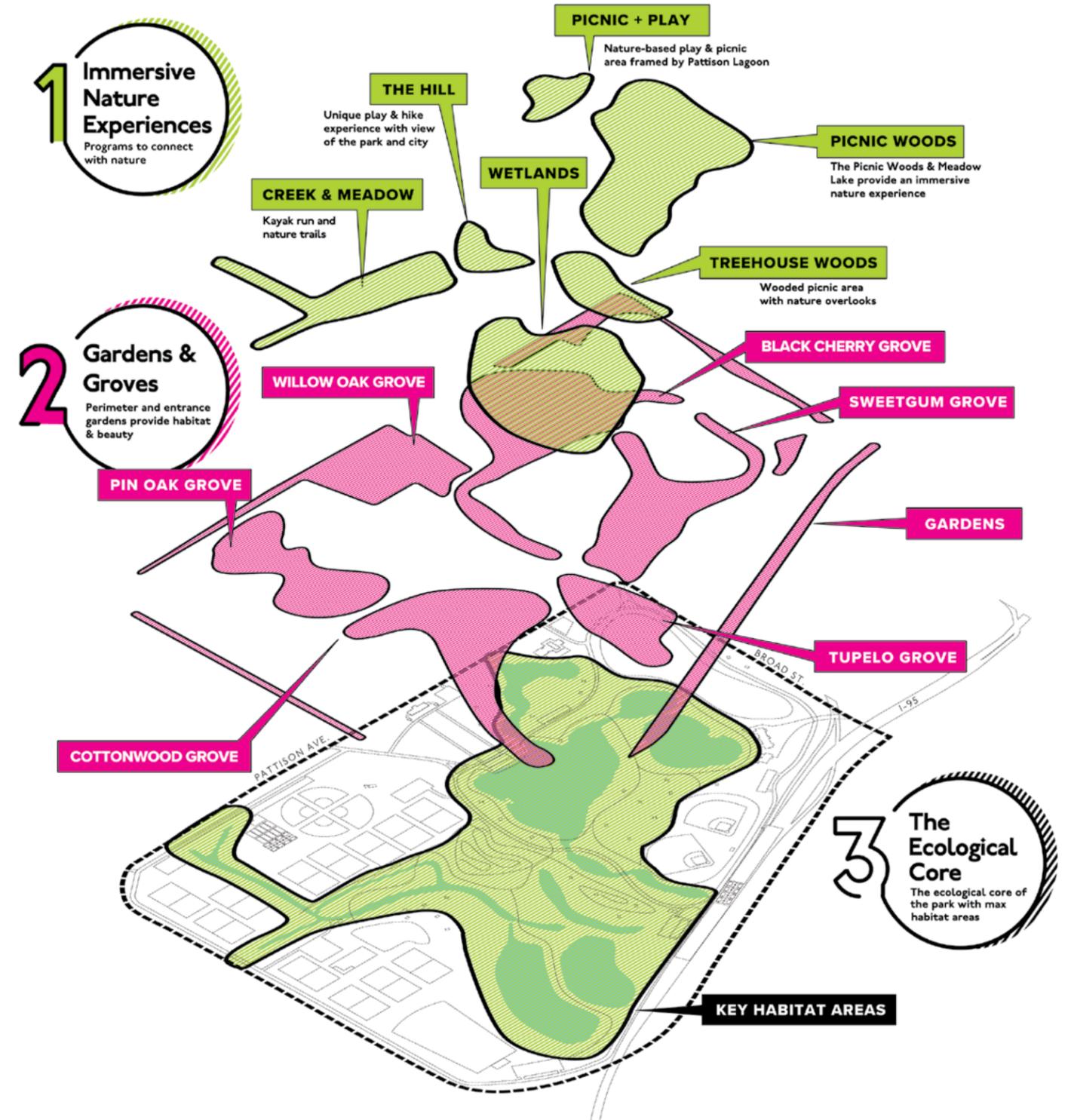
The community has always valued FDR Park for its ability to provide a respite from the city and connection to nature. The master plan builds on the park's role as a natural oasis by providing even more opportunities to play, socialize, and enjoy nature in the park.

### Showcase FDR Park as a model of horticultural identity.

New program areas and an expanded *Ecological Core* provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a series of gardens and groves that celebrate and uplift the park's historic roots by expressing a more distinct horticultural identity. Utilizing native and adaptive species that require less maintenance and monitoring can serve as a model for other city parks and green spaces.

### Use the park to combat nature deficit disorder.

"Nature Deficit Disorder," a term coined by Author Richard Louv, highlights how the densification of cities and our tendency to spend more time indoors makes us feel alienated from nature and can potentially lead to negative behavioral outcomes. The master plan provides more access to nature and nature-based programming to restore the connection to nature and improve physical and mental health.



Throughout the park immersive nature experiences will take place at the intersection of active programs and ecology.

## NATURE STRATEGIES

### 1 Create and enhance maximum habitat areas.

The development of the park transformed the land from tidal marshlands to a series of man-made lakes with large lawns and lushly planted groves of trees and gardens. Over time, the forest areas in the park have evolved and changed with the changing uses of the park. Deferred maintenance and limited interventions have resulted in the influx of invasive species. However, these areas have created surprisingly rich and beneficial habitats for a wide range of wildlife. While reforestation efforts around the meadow lakes have contributed to these expanded natural lands, much of the growth has been spontaneous. The biodiversity of the park, represented in plant and animal species, makes FDR Park a critical natural resource. The introduction of an expanded *Ecological Core* for the park will provide new spaces for these ecosystems to grow and thrive by balancing human activity and ecological needs. Supporting natural habitats within the park also increases resilience to flooding and reduces the effects of extreme heat for the park and surrounding communities.

#### Flora

Currently, the spontaneous regrowth of the forests in the highly disturbed ecological context of the park has allowed the spread of invasive species, at the cost of native species that would provide more sustenance and better shelter for much of the wildlife that already relies on and could use the park. Two state-listed endangered species (*Heteranthera Multiflora* and *Echinochloa Walteri*) grow along the edges of Hollander Creek and Edgewood Lake. As the park develops, great care should be given to ensuring that these species are allowed to flourish through a more extensive monitoring and invasive removal program. In addition to monitoring invasives, the master plan recommends reducing or eliminating mowing in the *Ecological Core* and reducing the amount of built land to support higher densities of wildlife.

#### Fauna

A variety of wildlife, including birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians, and mammals call FDR Park home. The majority of these species are concentrated in the lakes, lagoons, wetlands, and forest areas that make up the 77 acres of natural lands in the park. The park is an Important Bird Area (IBA) welcoming over 195 species of both breeding and migrating birds each year and attracting avid birders. Frequent park users report seeing a variety of mammals including deer, fox, and rabbits in the more natural, wooded areas of the park. The unique marsh, lake, and wetland areas support

a variety of fish, including a number of recreationally important species and a variety of estuarine fish species including alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*), white catfish (*Ameiurus catus*), white perch (*Morone americana*), and American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*). However, invasive species like the snakehead fish (*channidae*), native to Africa and Asia, are considered apex predators and threaten to eradicate native fish species. Snakeheads can multiply quickly, mating as much as five times a year, and are able to migrate on land. In addition to the endangered plant species in the park, the red-bellied turtle, a state-listed endangered species can be found in water bodies within the park. The master plan enhances and expands habitat space for the diversity of species in the park by increasing natural lands, adding 20 acres of reforestation and 45 acres of wetlands and vernal pools, and creating a new sedge meadow.

### 2 Increase access to nature and programming for an immersive nature experience in South Philly.

A series of nature-based program areas will provide fully immersive nature experiences for all ages. Explorers will be able to walk through the new Sedge Meadow, paddle along expanded Shedbrook Creek, or hike up the Hill and take in views of the skyline. Children will be able to explore and frolic while parents prepare a lunch spread at the new nature-based picnic and play area. Friends will traverse boardwalk paths through groves of sweetgum trees to enjoy an afternoon of picnicking near Meadow Lake in the Picnic Woods. Families will climb up into nature overlooks nestled into the Treehouse Woods while birders traverse a nature trail that overlooks the wetlands.



Left: the Many Flowered Mud Plantain, *Heteranthera Multiflora* (PNHP).

Above: Walter's Barnyard Grass, *Echinochloa Walteri* (USGS).

### 3 Showcase FDR Park as a model of horticultural identity.

The park has experienced many significant changes and shifts in programming throughout its history. These shifts have impacted the quality and identity of the planting. The master plan repositions the park as a model of horticultural identity by introducing a series of gardens and groves that encircle program elements and enhance the overall beauty of the park. The trees, shrubs, and other plant species included in the park's gardens and groves will be selected based on their ability to thrive in hotter, wetter futures.

#### Gardens

The perimeter and entrances of the park are marked by a series of gardens that not only provide habitat space and enhance the park's aesthetic beauty, but also provide essential stormwater management functions. These gardens will be planted with pollinators and native and adaptive species that require less maintenance and reduce the overall need for mowing throughout the park. The gardens lining the park will filter stormwater runoff from adjacent streets (Pattison Avenue, Broad Street, and I-95) and park program elements.

#### Groves

Planting of native trees, shrubs, and other species is one of the primary habitat restoration tools the master plan recommends. To maximize tree canopy, a series of tree groves will be established with dominant species such as Willow Oak Grove, Pin Oak Grove, Cottonwood Grove, Tupelo Grove, Sweetgum Grove, and Black

Cherry Grove. Though planted with a dominant species, each grove will consist of an ecological mix of native and adaptive species. The tree groves will not only provide key habitat areas and shade, they will also act as visual cues or wayfinding landmarks for visitors to the park. As visitors move along the pathways, changing natural scenery, will mark the journey. Replanting in areas where exotic species have been removed will increase shade cover, decrease the reestablishment of exotics, and reduce the overall maintenance required.

### 4 Use the park to combat nature deficit disorder.

As cities continue to grow and the variety of indoor activities expands, communities feel alienated from nature. This condition, which can lead to negative behavioral and health outcomes, is commonly known as Nature Deficit Disorder. The master plan provides more access to nature and nature-based programming to help restore and strengthen the connection between people and nature and improve physical and mental health.

The park's multitude of immersive nature experiences, gardens, groves, and natural areas will provide much needed space for the surrounding community to fully connect to nature and reap the many benefits associated with more time spent outdoors.

# PLANT SPECIES BY HABITAT ZONES

The following is a sample palette of proposed plant species for typical habitat zones found in the master plan. A larger plant palette of ecologically-diverse plants will be needed for each of these habitat zones.

## HOW THEY WERE SELECTED

+ These native plants were chosen for their site adaptability to hotter and wetter conditions, tolerance of urban conditions, relatively low maintenance requirements, and aesthetic interests.

### WETLAND + SEDGE MEADOW



*Populus deltoides* | **Eastern Cottonwood**



*Typha latifolia* | **Common Cattail**



*Carex stricta* | **Tussock Sedge**



*Juncus effusus* | **Soft Rush**



*Asclepias incarnata* | **Swamp Milkweed**

### RAIN GARDENS



*Quercus bicolor* | **Swamp White Oak**



*Aronia melanocarpa* | **Chokeberry**



*Eupatorium fistulosum* | **Joe-Pye Weed**



*Iris versicolor* | **Blue Flag Iris**



*Lobelia cardinalis* | **Cardinal Flower**

### RIPARIAN RESTORATION / REFORESTATION



*Liquidambar styraciflua* | **American Sweetgum**



*Nyssa sylvatica* | **Tupelo**



*Quercus palustris* | **Pin Oak**



*Lindera benzoin* | **Spicebush**



*Cornus amomum* | **Silky Dogwood**

### UPLAND / MEADOW



*Quercus phellos* | **Willow Oak**



*Prunus serotina* | **Black Cherry**



*Viburnum dentatum* | **Arrowwood Viburnum**



*Rudbeckia hirta* | **Black-eyed Susan**



*Andropogon virginicus* | **Broom Sedge**

TODAY



# WATER

The area that is currently occupied by the park was originally a tide marsh in the floodplain of the Delaware River. Today, water bodies make up about 40 acres of the total 348-acre park. Although much of the park has been filled in over time, much of the park is poorly drained. High groundwater that is subject to tidal influence, a partially functioning tide gate, areas below sea level, and an influx of untreated stormwater mean that the park essentially functions as a “bathtub” – with more water entering the park and its water bodies than is able drain out. This condition has led to many parts of the park regularly flooding during rainstorms.

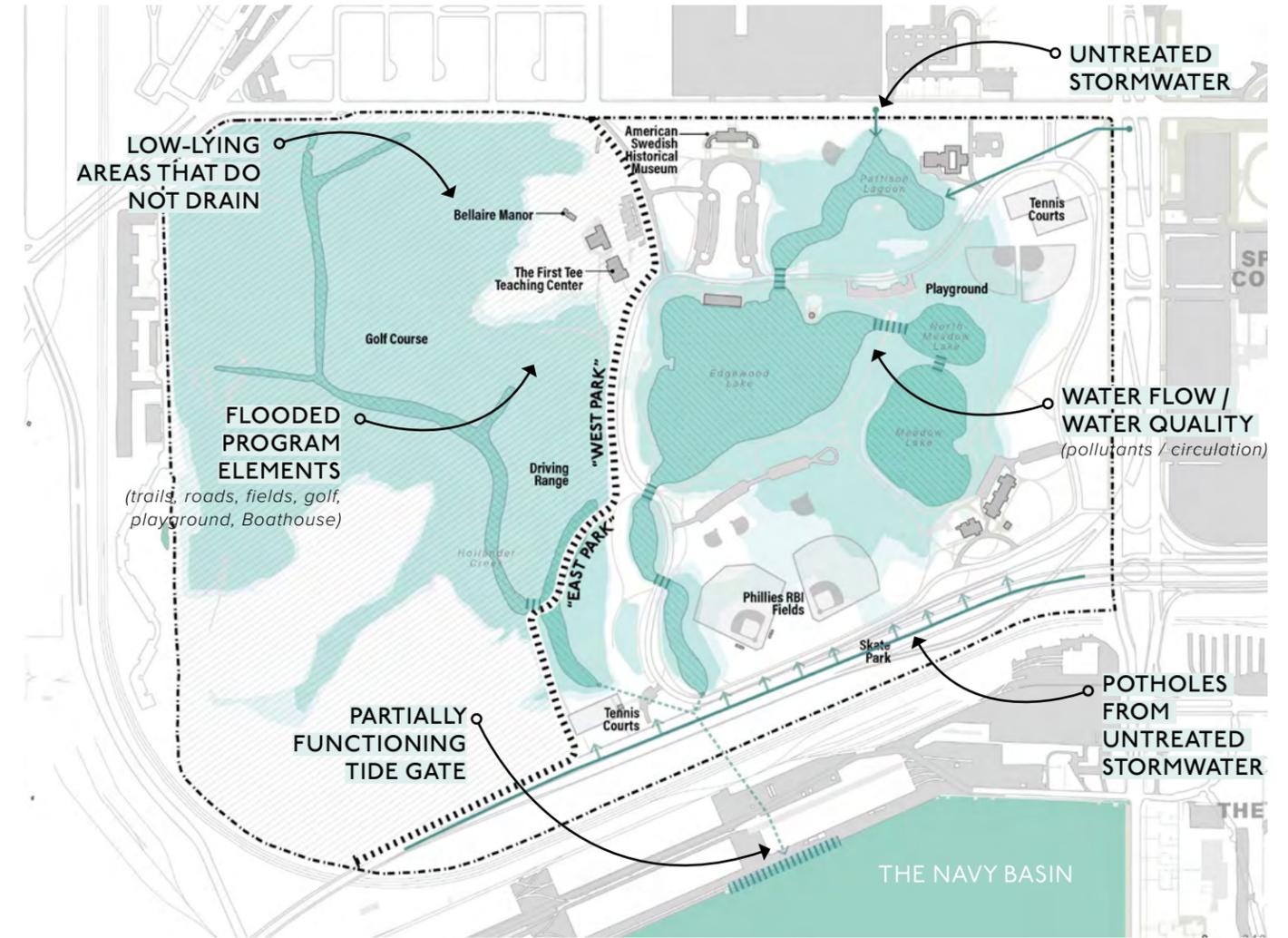


Top Right: Untreated stormwater from I-95 inundates portions of the southern park causing extensive erosion.

Center Left: The culvert opening at Hollander Creek leads to a tide gate at the Navy Basin that is responsible for draining the park.

Center Right: Water quality in the Lakes is impaired by unfiltered runoff, nutrient loading, and high PH readings which lead to excessive algal communities.

Bottom Right: The restoration of the Meadow Lake wetland provides exceptional food, shelter, and breeding sites for a variety of animals.



## KEY CHALLENGES

- + **Low-lying areas that do not drain.**  
 Much of the park is at or below sea level. During rainstorms, especially consecutive or “piggyback” rainstorms, the lakes, lagoons, and creeks swell and overtop their banks, flooding low-lying areas of the park, which is natural in a tidal marsh. Extensive flooding occurs when excessive runoff coincides with high tide and the Hollander Creek culvert ceases to function, backing the tide into the park.
- + **Untreated stormwater runoff.**  
 The intensity of development around the park has resulted in an increase of stormwater runoff flowing directly into the park’s water bodies from I-95 and surrounding streets. This stormwater not only degrades the quality of the park’s water bodies, it also erodes key pieces of infrastructure. The numerous potholes on the main park road are the result of untreated stormwater. This is most evident in the southern portion of the park adjacent to I-95 where stormwater pours off of the deck above onto the park road below resulting in substantial potholes.
- + **Flooded activity areas and a partially functioning tide gate.**  
 The park’s tide gate effectively allows the park to exist, closing the influx of water at high tide and draining the park at low tide. However, the tide gate no longer fully functions, allowing some water to flow from the Basin into the park. Higher recorded tides mean that the gate opens for shorter amounts of time resulting in understandable flooding of activity areas when the park is unable to fully drain. Clogged culverts leading to the tide gate only exacerbate this flooding.
- + **Water quality and water flow issues.**  
 Flooding, increased runoff, and lack of flow between water bodies have all contributed to poor water quality. Silt from low-water-flow velocity, connections between water bodies, and untreated stormwater have resulted in increased levels of pollution in the park’s water bodies. Lack of water flow also contributes to park users’ perception of water quality in the park with many assuming the quality of stagnant water to be poor.

TOMORROW

# WATER



Create a balanced system of water bodies and stormwater management to reduce flooding.

### Improve storage capacity and water quality and flow.

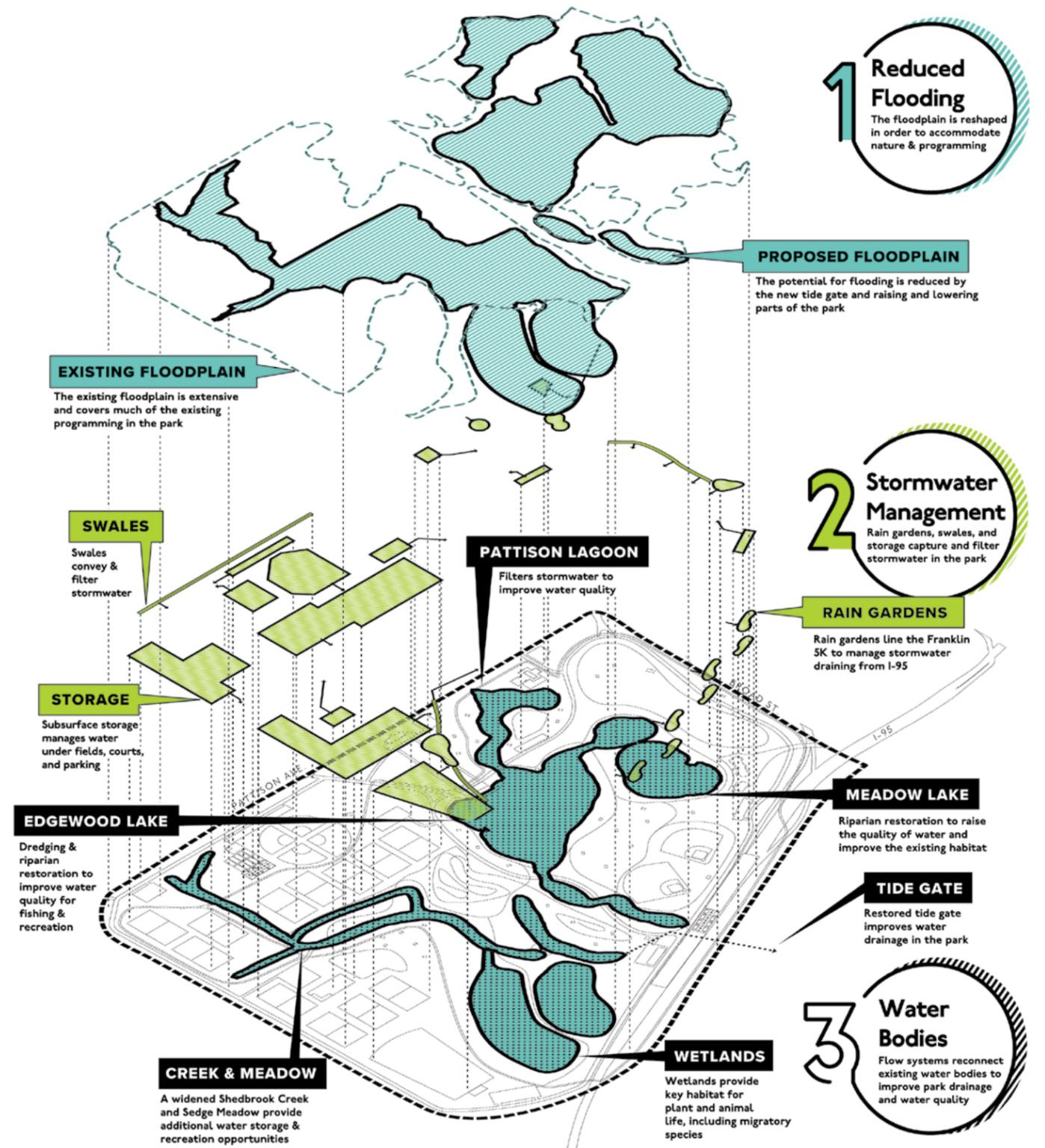
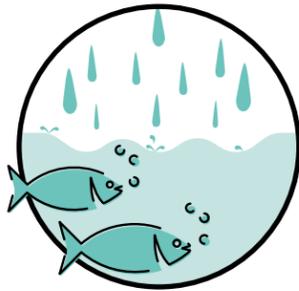
Adding acres of water bodies to the park by widening creeks and increasing wetlands, improving the circulation of water bodies by repairing flow connections, and filtering untreated stormwater will improve the capacity of the park to store and treat stormwater and improve the quality of water in the park.

### Connect people to the water and provide educational opportunities to understand its function in the park.

Selectively widening Shedbrook Creek and creating a new sedge meadow will allow for additional storage and increase the amount of water-based recreation opportunities in the park. Interpretive signage and immersive nature programming will educate the public about the hydrology and functions of the park.

### Use the park as a model for climate change resiliency and adaptive management.

The *Ecological Core* and *Urban Edge* will work together to create a resilient park. Expanded creeks, wetlands, and stormwater management systems are designed to facilitate storage, filtration, and movement of water through the park while providing opportunities to connect with nature.



Water is an essential component of the park's ecosystem. The master plan addresses flooding, water quality, and sea-level rise by enhancing the park's ability to store, filter, and release excess water.

## WATER STRATEGIES

### 1 Improve storage capacity and water quality and flow.

#### Increasing storage capacity

The park is currently unable to store the amount of water it receives from rainstorms, groundwater, and stormwater runoff. During back-to-back rainstorms, the water entering the park exceeds the storage capacity of the water bodies causing them to swell and flood low-lying areas of the park. Exacerbating this situation is the fact that the culvert is clogged with debris and the tide gate is semi-operational. This means it typically takes the park several days to drain. And even after the lakes, lagoons, and creeks drain down, there is still excessive ponding in low-lying areas – the golf course, playground, and the area near the Taney fields – that may only dry out by slow infiltration into the ground or by gradual evaporation. The realities of climate change and hotter, wetter futures will likely mean an increase in the intensity and frequency of rainstorms, which will only exacerbate current flood conditions.

New wetlands and vernal pools, an expanded Shedbrook Creek, and a new sedge meadow will provide additional water storage capacity for the park by adding over 17 acres of new water bodies. These new water bodies will serve multiple functions by also providing habitat areas and opportunities for water-based recreation. Fill material (cut) from the wetland and creek restoration projects will be used to lift key active programming areas – the fields, playgrounds, and the hill – out of the floodplain. In order to accommodate natural flows and park programs, the floodplain will be reshaped, allowing selective areas of the park to flood while protecting more active program elements.

#### Improving water quality

New systems of stormwater management and treatment will allow the park to manage existing untreated stormwater as well as additional volume from Broad Street and new program elements. A series of rain gardens lining the park edge, a new filtration forebay at Pattison Lagoon, and underground stormwater storage systems under the fields will provide an ample amount of additional storage. Dredging of existing water bodies, installation of floating islands, new aeration fountains, and improved flow connections will work together to help improve water quality and filter out pollutants and excess silt.

#### Improving water flow

When the park was first created, the lakes, lagoons, and creeks were connected by a series of weirs and pumps. However, over time, these mechanisms have broken down or only partially work. As a result, the average flow velocity of the park’s water bodies is very low and the system drains very slowly leading to considerable silt build up throughout the system. Untreated stormwater further reduces the water quality throughout the park with increased levels of pollution recorded in certain areas.

The tide gate is intended to act as a drain, allowing water that enters the park to flow into the Reserve Basin at low tide and close fully at high tide. However, the tide gate no longer fully functions, allowing some water to flow from the Basin into the park. Furthermore, the current six-foot tidal range of the Basin results in a water surface elevation that is often higher than that of the water bodies and areas within the park. In fact, the typical high tide water surface elevation of the basin is 6.2 feet while the typical surface elevation of the water bodies in the park is -5.6, which is well below the high tide level of the Basin. This means that even when the tide gate is working, the time it can remain open to drain is limited leading to additional flooding of program elements, like the golf course and playground, during “piggyback” rainstorms.

Removing debris from existing culverts and selectively reducing the height of weirs will reconnect the system of water bodies in the park to improve water flow. This will work in conjunction with a new tide gate to improve the park’s ability to drain. A new tide gate will help ensure that after back-to-back rainstorms the park’s water bodies and low-lying areas are able to drain effectively into the Reserve Basin, reducing overall flooding.



### 2 Connect people to the water and provide educational opportunities to understand its function in the park.

Many park users cite the natural beauty of the park and its water bodies as key characteristics that should be preserved and celebrated. The master plan increases access to and views of water throughout the park. New wetlands with nature trails will provide views of the natural water systems. A restored Boathouse and fishing piers will provide greater access to Edgewood Lake. A new sedge meadow and expanded Shedbrook Creek will provide visitors with the opportunity to hike along the water’s edge or paddle through the creek by canoe or kayak. Boardwalk trails and pockets of picnic areas will allow forested views of Meadow and Edgewood Lakes while the Hill will afford stunning views of the entire system of water bodies in the park. The Porch will provide serene, terraced views of Meadow Lake for wildlife enthusiasts and diners. Interpretive signage throughout the park and increased nature-based programming will explain how the natural areas and water bodies function in the park.



*Top: For over 100 years, the Lakes have been the iconic feature of FDR Park, drawing park users to its shores to cool off and appreciate the views.*

*Left: Shedbrook Creek has the potential to be widened to increase stormwater storage on the western part of the park.*

### 3 Use the park as a model for climate change resiliency and adaptive management.

Climate projections estimate Philadelphia could see an increase in average summer temperatures of up to nine degrees, average annual precipitation of up to five inches, and sea level of up to four feet by 2100. The master plan responds to the reality of climate change projections for Philadelphia and the promise of hotter, wetter futures. Water bodies and water storage play a key role in ensuring that the park is resilient in the face of climate change and able to strengthen the resiliency of the surrounding community by acting as a place of refuge. An additional 17 acres of water bodies provides much needed storage for additional precipitation. Stormwater management in the form of rain gardens, wetlands, and underground storage will help improve water quality and allow the park to act as a sponge, accepting additional stormwater from the communities surrounding the park and exceeding stormwater capture goals. These gardens will also provide space for new shade trees and plant species that are able to adapt to hotter and wetter climate conditions and provide respite from the heat. Aging and outdated utility, mobility, and transportation infrastructure will be replaced, creating a more energy efficient, reliable, and safer park experience. Facilities, including restored historic structures, will be reoccupied with community-facing programs and serve as places of refuge.

# STORMWATER MANAGEMENT IN THE PARK

A system of subsurface storage, rain gardens, swales, and wetlands will capture, filter, and store stormwater until it can be slowly released into the park's water bodies.

+ subsurface storage manages water under the fields, courts, and parking lots

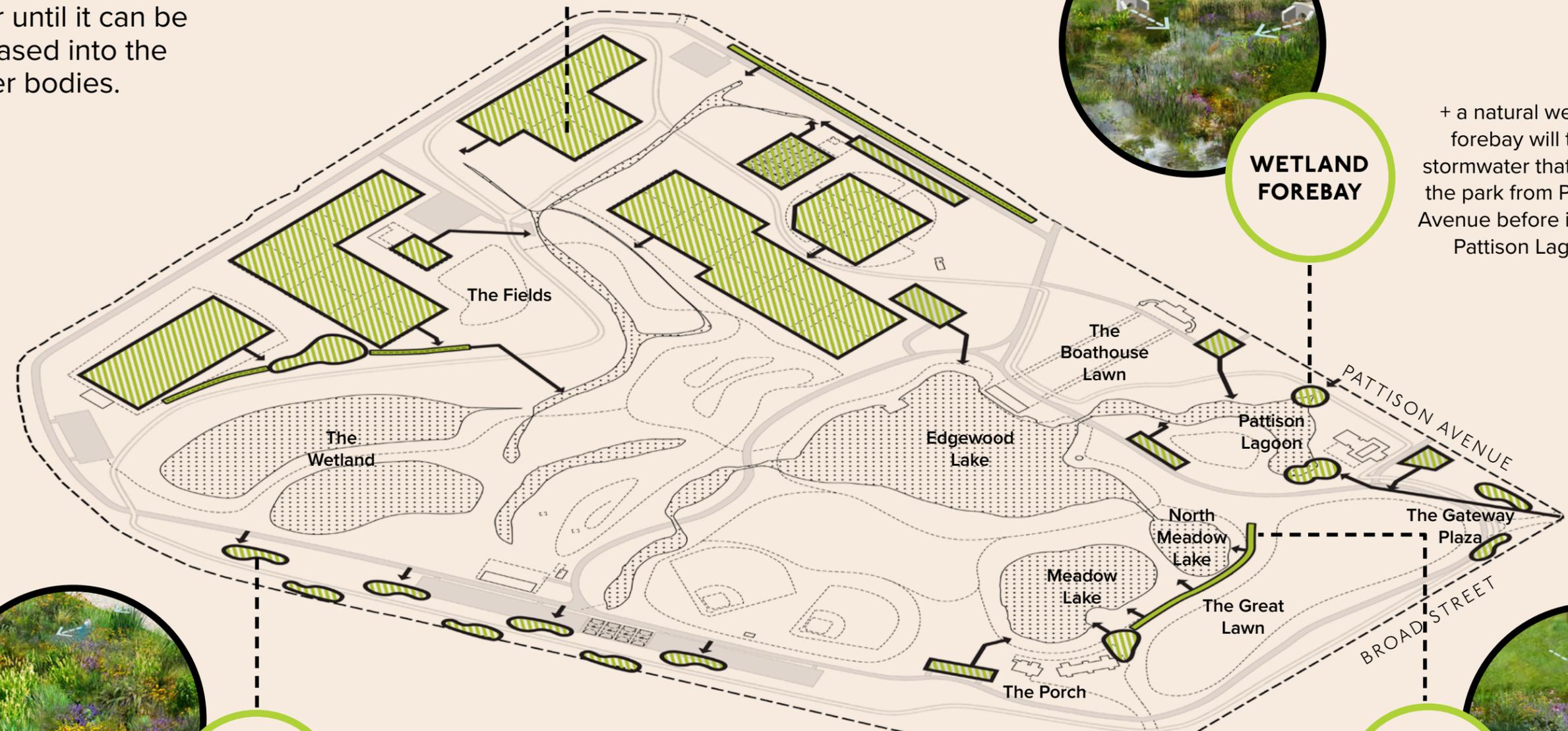


**WETLAND FOREBAY**

+ a natural wetland forebay will treat stormwater that enters the park from Pattison Avenue before it enters Pattison Lagoon

at a glance

- 13** subsurface storage bays
- 5** rain garden & swale systems



**RAIN GARDENS**

+ a series of rain gardens will manage stormwater from I-95, the Porch, and The Gateway Plaza



**SWALES**

+ gently sloping swales will capture and filter runoff from the Great Lawn and portions of the park road

TODAY

# ACTIVITY



FDR Park is one of the largest parks in the city, providing a variety of activities for a diverse set of users. From joggers, birders, golfers, and skateboarders to tennis and baseball players, the park offers many things to do and see. Despite the many experiences the park offers, there is a lack of a comprehensive user experience. Most users come to the park for a specific event or activity and then leave as these uses are generally programmatically and physically isolated, with the park acting as two separate halves. In addition, limited visitor amenities, underutilized historic structures, and the perception of exclusive uses detract from the overall experience of the park.

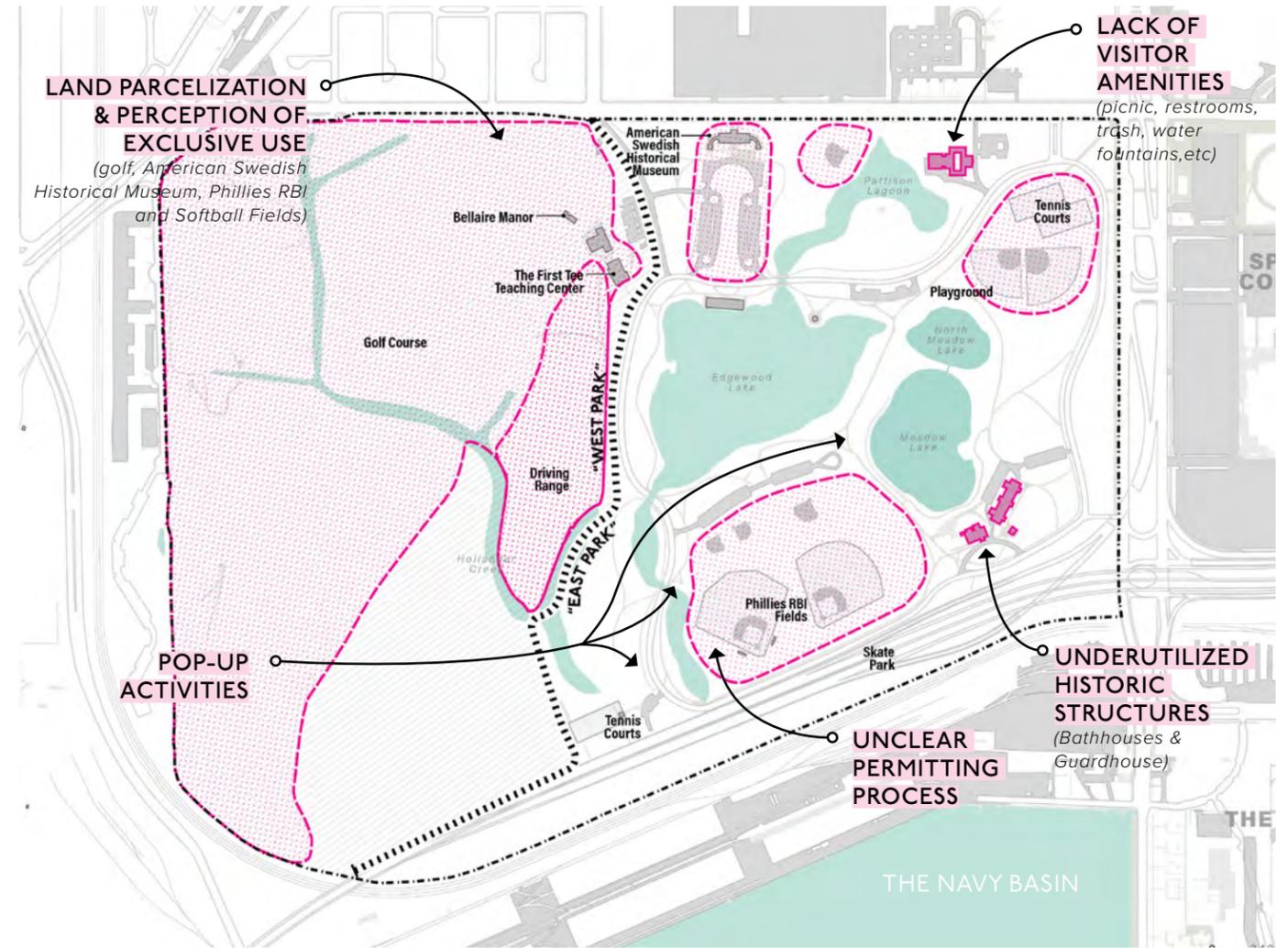


Top Right: Striking a pose on the Boathouse Dock before a summer stroll around Edgewood Lake.

Center Left: Built by skateboard enthusiasts, the FDR Skatepark brings visitors from all over the world to experience its ramps and jumps.

Center Right: Families have fished in FDR's lakes and creeks for generations.

Bottom Right: FDR offers one of the few places to play tennis in South Philadelphia.



## KEY CHALLENGES

- + **Many single-use areas and the perception of exclusive uses.** While the park provides a variety of active programming – two multipurpose fields, eight baseball/softball fields, 15 tennis courts, an 18-hole golf course, 21 picnic sites, and a playground – many of these areas carry the perception of exclusive use with confusion around permitting for these facilities. Given the number and collective size of these programs, there are few areas of the park that are not already occupied by a specific, single-use program or activity meaning that there are few flexible areas of the park available for passive recreation or special event programs. In addition, park closures for certain events further exclude park users. Many of these events and pop-up activities also occur without adherence to park rules.
- + **Lack of athletic fields citywide.** As the popularity of sports like lacrosse and soccer continue to grow, the need for multipurpose, high-quality athletic fields becomes more pressing. The majority of the existing fields in the park are not well defined and located in areas that are subject to intense flooding during rainstorms, reducing the amount of playing time they are able to accommodate.
- + **Program that no longer reflects current recreation trends.** There are no basketball courts, and limited spaces for football and soccer, which are popular sports. On the other hand, golf occupies a large area of the park despite a decline in popularity.
- + **Underutilized historic structures.** Apart from the American Swedish Historical Museum, the historic structures in the park are all underutilized and in need of restoration. The Bathhouses and Guardhouse are currently used as office and workspaces for park maintenance operations. However, the Olmsted Overlook, the Boathouse, the Bathhouses, and Guardhouse all provide opportunities for adaptive reuse that utilize these structures for their highest and best use.
- + **Few visitor amenities.** The park offers limited amenities for visitors. The lack of seating, water fountains, food and drink vendors, and restrooms limits both the enjoyment of visitors and the amount of time they can stay in the park. Restroom facilities are limited to scattered port-a-potties and one permanent facility at the Guardhouse.

TOMORROW

# ACTIVITY



## Create recreation experiences for all of the park's diverse users.

### Increase access to high-quality recreation fields and courts citywide.

The master plan expands access to high-quality recreation fields by creating four new synthetic turf baseball/softball fields and 12 synthetic turf multipurpose fields. These fields not only manage their own stormwater, but also provide a more reliable playing surface that can be used multiple times per day and after major rainstorms.



### Provide a diversity of experiences and programs (both active and passive).

The new FDR Park will remove barriers to access, creating one unified park with a comprehensive visitor experience. New active and passive programs and experiences will be distributed throughout the park and linked by extensive nature and multi-use trail systems and visitor amenities.



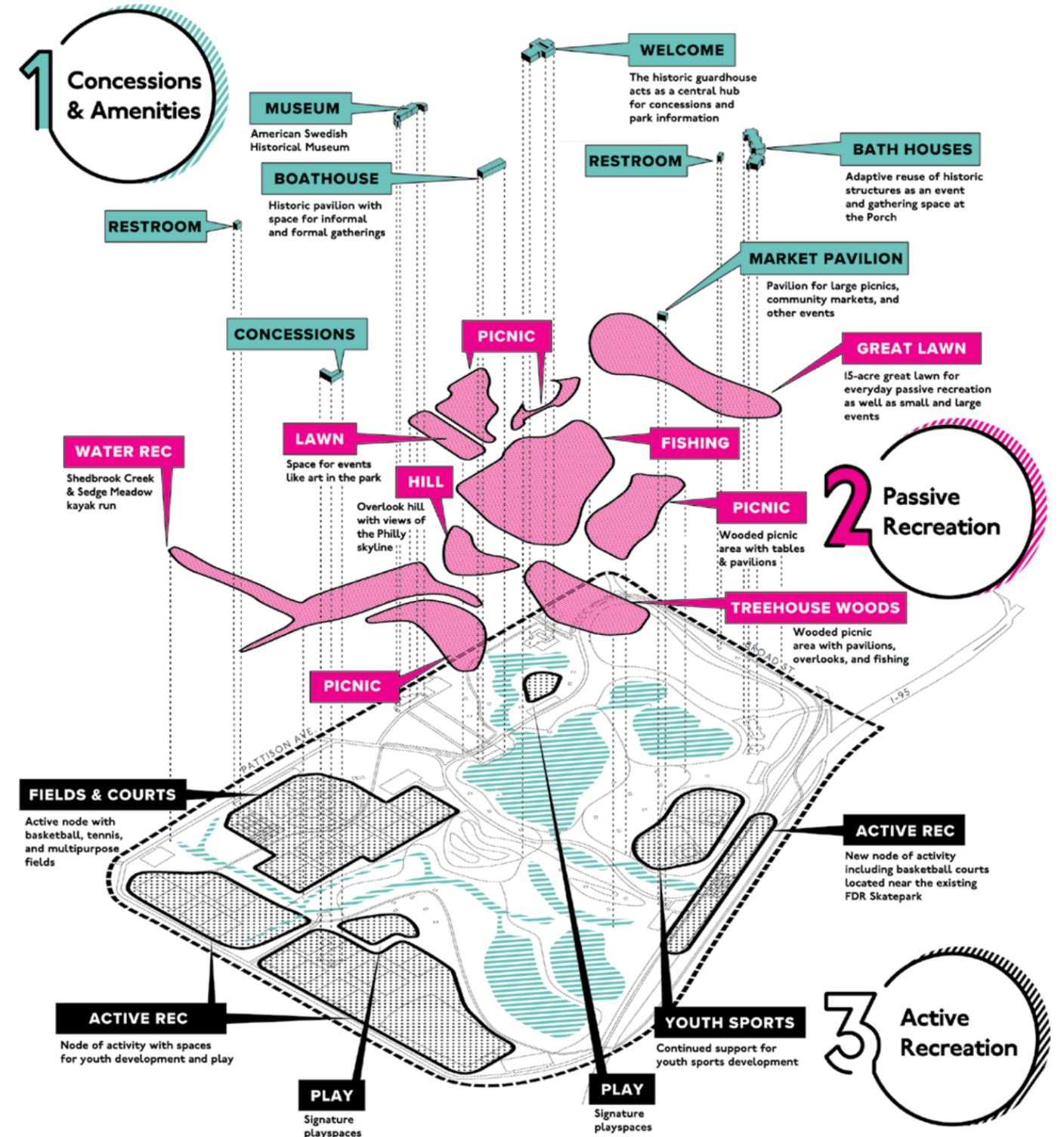
### Provide additional sources of revenue for the park.

The master plan reflects the importance of creating a self-sustaining park that balances opportunities for revenue generation with access and equity. This revenue will be used to help pay for a park manager, additional maintenance, and programming of activities in the park.



### Build on the park's role as a center for youth development and activities.

The park is already seen as a center for youth development through fishing, soccer, and baseball/softball. The master plan builds on these existing uses and provides additional opportunities for youth development with more athletic fields and courts, immersive nature experiences, golf concessions, new fishing piers, and other program elements.



The new slate of active programming in the park will provide a diversity of experiences to suit the needs of all park users.

## ACTIVITY STRATEGIES

### 1 Increase access to high-quality recreation fields and courts citywide.

Athletic fields are in high demand throughout the city. The size and convenient location of FDR Park provides an opportunity to improve access to high-quality fields. The park will have 12 new multipurpose fields and four new baseball/softball fields that are open for public use with a clear permitting system. Unlike the current fields in the park, and in many parks throughout the city, the synthetic turf of these new fields will provide a reliable playing surface that is able to accommodate multiple games per day and rebound almost immediately from flooding and rainstorms. The larger, tree-lined field complex will incorporate other complementary program elements like trails, playgrounds, restrooms, and food and drink concessions to improve the overall visitor experience.

### 2 Provide a diversity of experiences and programs (both active and passive).

The master plan provides a diversity of experiences and programs that satisfy the needs and desires of the park's varied users. By opening up the entire western half (180 acres) of the park that was once only used as an 18-hole golf course, the plan creates a series of passive and active program elements unified by a system of nature and multi-use trails, lush gardens and groves, and visitor amenities.

#### New active experiences

The FDR Park of the future will offer even more opportunities for active recreation. The park's new system of fields will combine baseball/softball fields, multipurpose fields, tennis and basketball courts, a golf driving range, and playspaces to afford a variety of active programming to suit almost any visitor. New programming under I-95 builds off of the strength of the Skatepark, creating a node of activity with basketball courts and better connections to the Richie Ashburn Fields. An expanded Shedbrook Creek, sedge meadow, and Edgewood Lake will include new opportunities for water-based recreation like kayaking, canoeing, and fishing. The Pattison Playground and Shedbrook Playground will provide immersive nature-based play areas for all ages and all abilities. The Franklin 5K multipurpose trail will weave through the park, intersecting almost every major program element and providing visitors with a paved trail for biking, walking, or running.

#### New passive programs and visitor amenities

The current landscape of the park provides few areas that are not fully programmed. Creating more space for passive recreation and providing needed visitor amenities helps create a more varied and enjoyable park experience for users. Passive recreation spaces like the Great Lawn and the Boathouse Lawn envisioned as large, flexible spaces that can be used for everyday passive programming from pickup games of soccer or picnics to larger planned events like art walks or festivals. The Boathouse Lawn will create a new, formal area that celebrates the American Swedish Historical Museum's location in the park and provide space for its programming to expand.

New picnic areas like the Treehouse Woods, Picnic Woods, and Pavilion build on the park's current standing as the city's most permitted park for picnics by providing enhanced picnic sites with covered pavilions and hookups for water and electricity. Interspersed within this tapestry of passive and active programming, will be new visitor amenities including five public restrooms, food and drink concessions, water fountains, benches and covered pavilions, and wayfinding and interpretive signage.



### 3 Provide additional sources of revenue for the park.

The park can only provide environmental, recreational, and economic benefits to the community if it is sufficiently funded and maintained. By creating additional revenue sources for the park, the plan creates a self-sustaining operations and maintenance model that balances the need for revenue generating programs with access and equity. A dedicated park programming and maintenance staff will be funded primarily by park revenue.

Revenue sources include park concessions (e.g., bike and boat rentals, athletic fields, adaptive reuse of historic structures, food vendors, golfing, and events hosted on the Great Lawn, Boathouse Lawn, and picnic pavilions). Adaptive reuse of historic structures creates revenue opportunities for the park by providing space for new food and drink concessions, entertainment and exhibit venues, and space for a park welcome center. These new programming elements and maintenance programs will not only improve the visitor experience for users, but also create new jobs and contribute to the citywide economy by bringing more visitors to the city.



Top: Food trucks are a great way to activate the park and generate revenue.

Left: New multipurpose recreation fields will help alleviate demand for athletic fields in the city (Austin PARD).

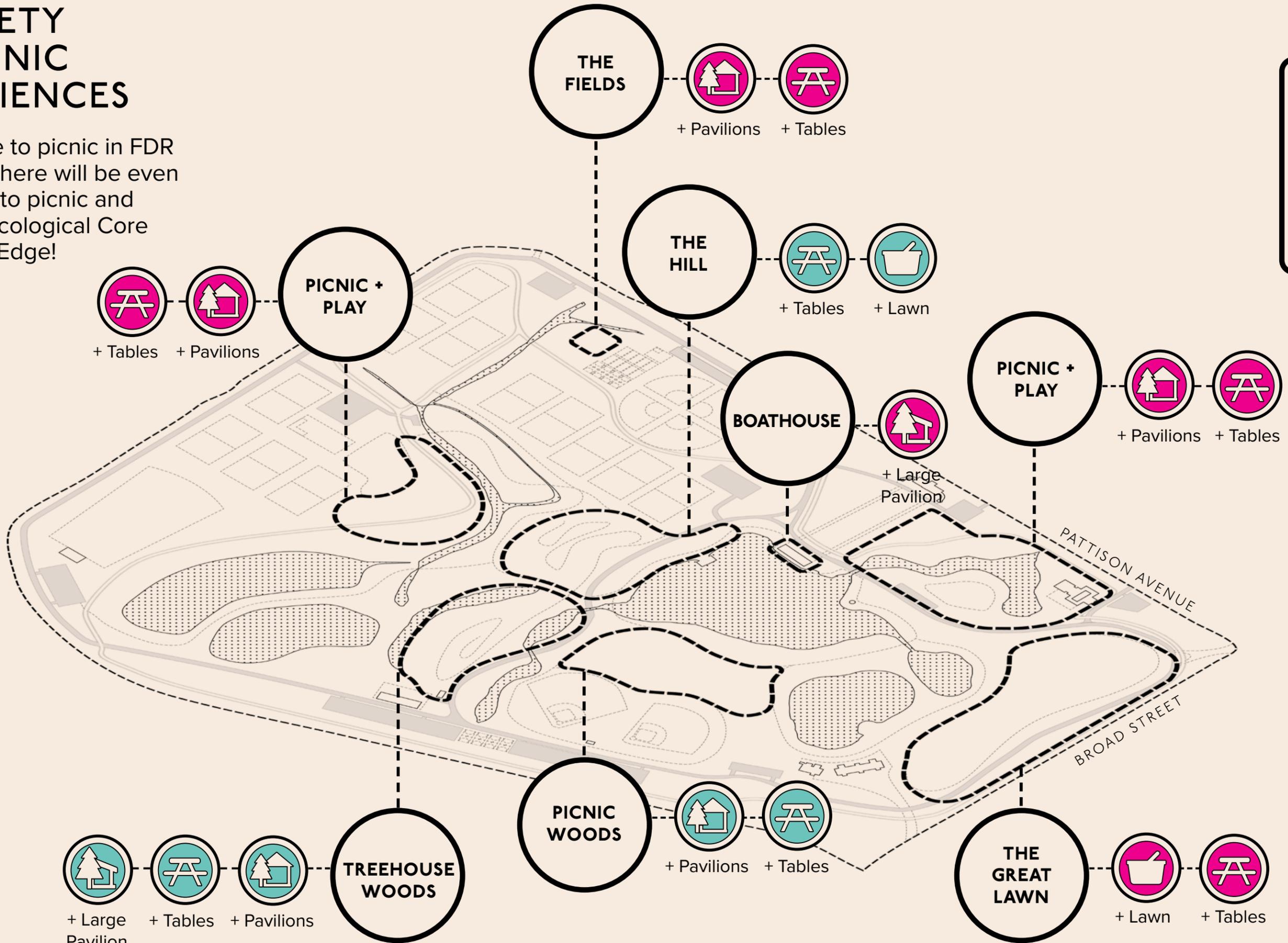
### 4 Build on the park's role as a center for youth development and activities.

The park has a long history of acting as a center for youth development through sports and nature. Youth development programs that focus on building life skills through teaching golf (First Tee), soccer, fishing, and baseball/softball (MLB Youth Academy, Taney Youth Baseball) have operated in the park for many years. These programs will continue to be a central part of the master plan with a dedicated state-of-the-art system of multipurpose fields, basketball and tennis courts, a golf driving range, baseball/softball fields, and additional fishing piers. The Phillies Urban Youth Academy and RBI programs will continue to operate out of the Richie Ashburn Fields.

Expanded access to water bodies will allow for expanded programming in the park and create new spaces for water-related youth programming to operate. Hiking, biking, and nature trails woven throughout the park will give ample space for nature-based youth programs to host birding walks, hiking excursions, and 5K runs/walks.

# A VARIETY OF PICNIC EXPERIENCES

People love to picnic in FDR Park. Now there will be even more ways to picnic and enjoy the Ecological Core and Urban Edge!



### at a glance

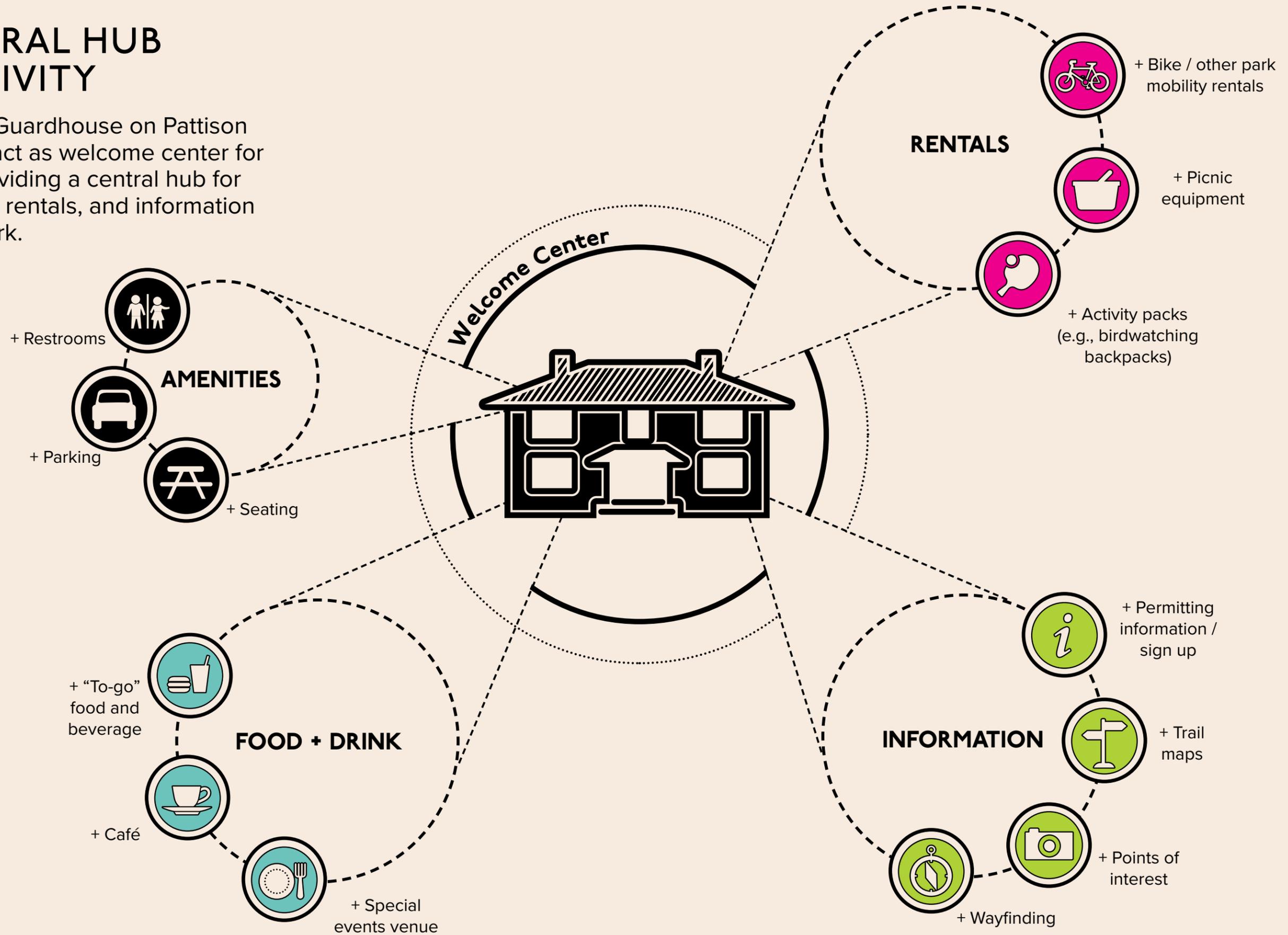
**36**  
tables

**12**  
pavilions

**2** large pavilions

# A CENTRAL HUB OF ACTIVITY

The historic Guardhouse on Pattison Avenue will act as welcome center for the park, providing a central hub for concessions, rentals, and information about the park.



TODAY

# CIRCULATION



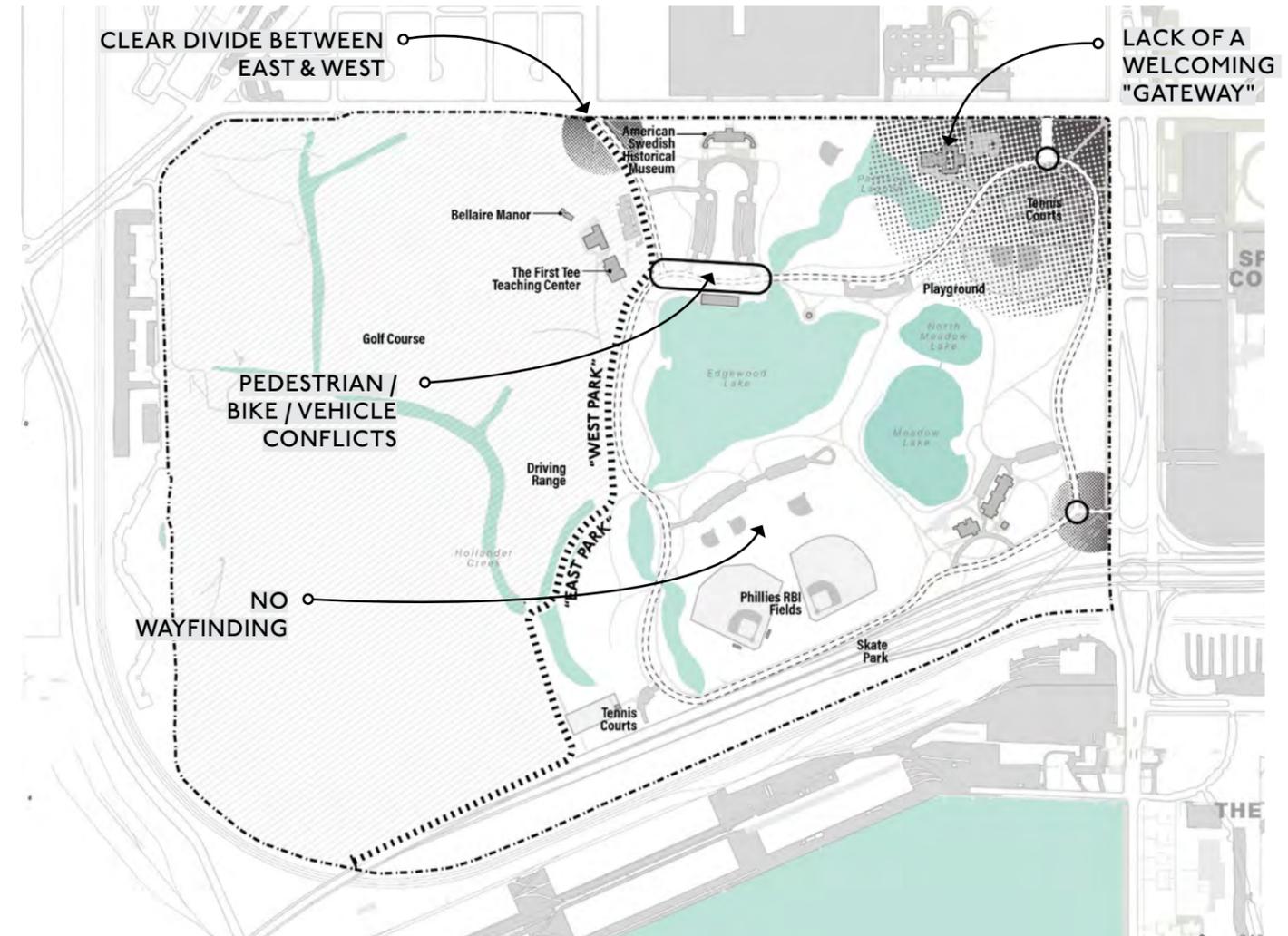
Circulation, how people move through the park, impacts the way visitors experience the park. The park's current circulation system consists of a one-way park road marred by potholes, a dispersed system of parking lots adjacent to program elements, and a deteriorated and disconnected system of trails and sidewalks. Entrances are not well identified or welcoming and there is minimal wayfinding and identification signage throughout the park to orient park visitors and help them navigate the park. Given the lack of adequate walking and biking paths and trails, pedestrians and bicyclists often resort to sharing the park road with both moving and parked vehicles, creating safety concerns.



Top Right: Low-lying asphalt trails are easily flooded, break apart quickly, and become unusable for pedestrians.

Center Left: Vehicular traffic frequently backs up due the numerous potholes along the park road.

Bottom Right: Park users appreciate the natural beauty of the park and would like to see more trails that offer an immersive nature experience.



## KEY CHALLENGES

- + **Lack of a complete trail system.**  
The park currently has about 2.1 miles of incomplete and disconnected trails and pathways. Many of the remaining pathways are in areas that frequently flood, which has led to their erosion and in some cases complete deterioration. Additionally, there is no discernible loop resulting in many walkers, joggers, and cyclists choosing to utilize the park road. As a result, many groups choose not to host 5K races or runs/walks in the park.
- + **Entrances are not well connected or marked.**  
There are four entrances to the park. Three of these entrances are accessible by vehicle (20th Street, Pattison Avenue by the Guardhouse, Broad Street) and one is pedestrian-only (Broad Street and Pattison Avenue). The signage and design of all entrances is minimal, providing almost no indication that visitors are entering one of the city's largest parks. The single pedestrian entrance does not capitalize on its location directly across from the last stop on the Broad Street Line to entice visitors to cross the street and enter the park.
- + **Wayfinding is not clear.**  
The park is rich with historic and natural assets. However, there is almost a complete lack of wayfinding and interpretive signage in the park to help orient visitors and assist them in exploring the landscape. Wayfinding and signage that does exist is in poor condition and not easily visible.
- + **Pedestrian and vehicle conflicts.**  
The park's incomplete trail system, deteriorating sidewalks, and unmarked crossings result in pedestrians coming in direct conflict with vehicles moving through the park.
- + **One-way loop road limitations.**  
With the current configuration of the loop road, it is not possible to keep certain parts of the park open or closed at different times of the day. This results in the need to close down the circulation for the entire park if a special event is occurring within the park. Many park users feel this limits use of the park, especially when the park is being used for special event parking.

TOMORROW

# CIRCULATION



## Improve bike and pedestrian access and circulation within the park.

### Increase the amount of pedestrian and bicycle trails and trail experiences.

Over four miles of new trails will be added to the park. Systems of interconnected nature trails and boardwalk paths will provide access to and views of natural areas in the park. The Franklin 5K multi-use trail weaves through the park, intersecting and connecting all of the program elements and providing a safe, paved surface for walking, jogging, and biking.

### Improve park gateways.

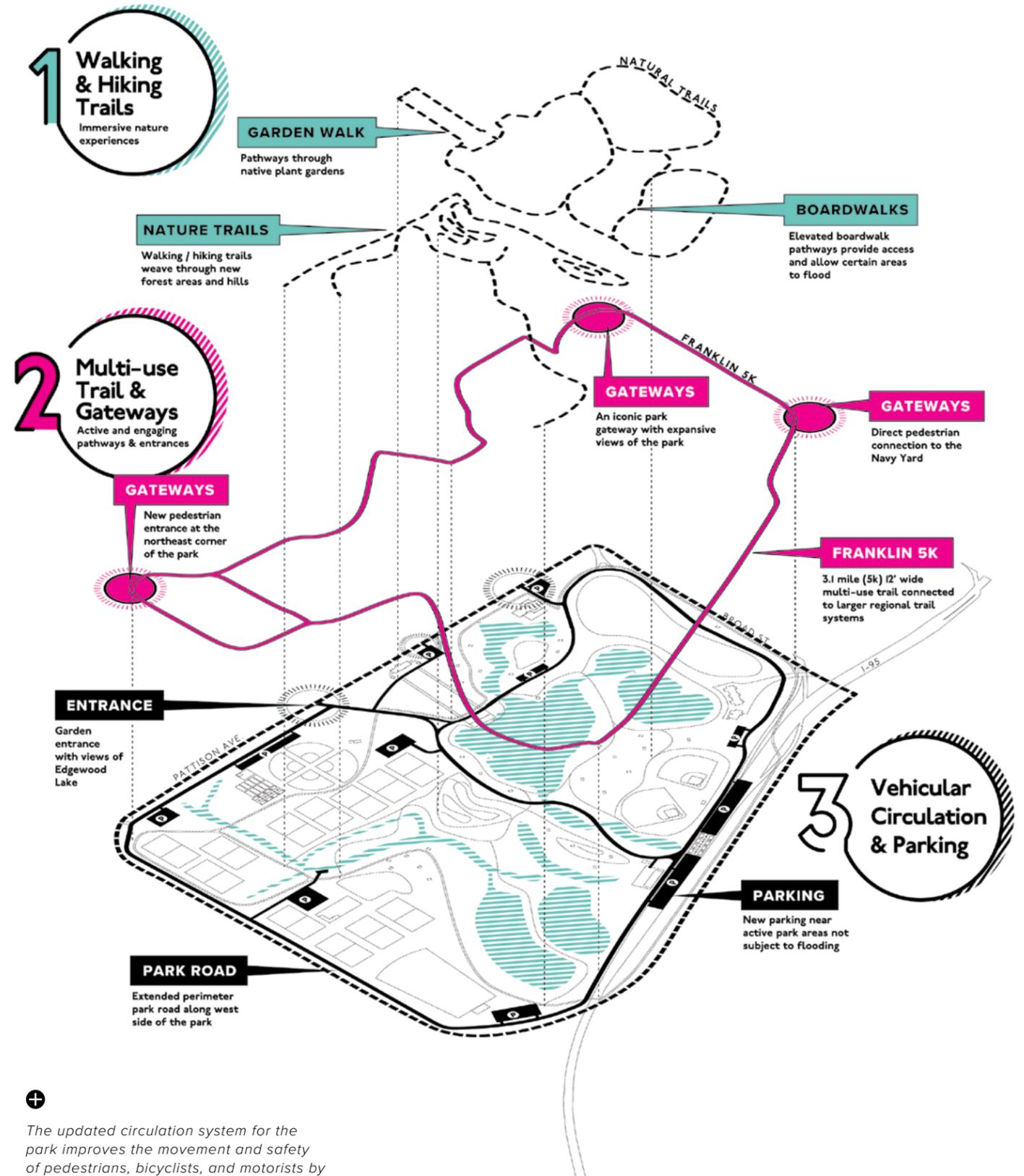
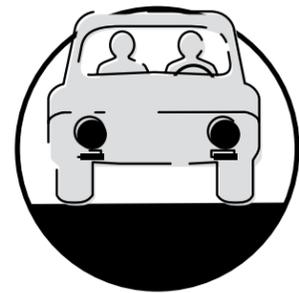
As the only large park in the city connected to the Broad Street Line, the plan aims to make the park a destination for walkers and bikers by creating welcoming gateways, improving crosswalk safety, and strengthening green street and trail connections into surrounding neighborhoods like Packer Park and the Navy Yard. Pedestrian gateways will be expanded and enhanced.

### Improve vehicular circulation.

To reduce conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists, vehicular access will be streamlined with main entrances at 20th Street and the Welcome Center and a secondary entrance near the American Swedish Historical Museum. The park road will be expanded adding 1.5 miles of new road and creating a figure eight that loops around the entire perimeter of the park, allowing access to new program elements on the western half of the park.

### Improve parking.

Parking will be removed from much of the *Ecological Core* and concentrated in logical proximity to program elements.



The updated circulation system for the park improves the movement and safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists by expanding the trail and road system, increasing parking, and creating new gateways.

## CIRCULATION STRATEGIES

### 1 Increase the amount of pedestrian and bicycle trails and trail experiences.

Trails were the primary community request. The master plan creates a diverse system of trails and trail experiences that weave through the park's new program elements.

#### Nature Trails & Boardwalk Paths

In the new FDR Park, visitors can traverse a variety of nature trails and boardwalk paths. Visitors can walk through and experience the natural beauty of the Wetlands, hike to the top of the Hill to take in expansive views of the skyline, take a gentle hike to enjoy the serenity of the Treehouse Woods, connect to the beauty of the lakes while walking along the boardwalk trails, and identify rare bird and plant species while crossing bridges into the sedge meadow. These new trails and pathways will be designed with nature in mind. Boardwalk paths will be installed in areas where flooding may naturally occur to allow visitors to continue to utilize the trails as the water recedes. The nature trails will range from three to five feet wide and be made from compacted natural surfaces. Boardwalk trails will be one of two types. Type 1 will cross four feet above a water body with a 10-foot-wide metal grate boardwalk and railings. Type 2 will cross areas prone to flooding with a 10-foot-wide wooden boardwalk 18-inches above the ground.

#### The Franklin 5K

The Franklin 5K, an expansive multi-use trail loop, will connect pedestrians and bicyclists to most of the park's *Urban Edge* programming and help reduce conflicts with vehicular circulation. The paved trail will provide a safe, reliable surface for joggers, runners, walkers, and bicyclists that generally follows the curves of the park road. Trail markers will provide distance information and important orientation information. The Franklin 5K will be a 10- to 12-foot-wide that is made primarily from concrete. Where the Franklin 5K crosses water bodies, manufactured steel bridges will be utilized to span the crossings.

### 2 Improve park gateways.

The park is the only large park in the city that is directly connected to a subway line. However, many park users currently drive the to the park. The master plan aims to improve walkability and bike-ability both to and within the park. New pedestrian-focused gateways at the corner of Broad Street and Pattison Avenue, Broad Street and Penrose Avenue, and at the Porch provide a variety of safe access

points and welcome visitors into the park. The pedestrian gateway at the corner of Broad Street and Pattison Avenue will be reimagined to include expansive views into the park, lush gardens, public art, and wayfinding signage. The entrance at Broad Street and Penrose Avenue will create a new access point for neighborhoods to the west of the park and allow for future regional trail connections. The Porch – the gateway in the southeast corner of the park by the historic bathhouse – will not only provide a welcoming gateway, but will also allow for a strengthened connection to the Navy Yard with a trail that extends south under I-95 along Broad Street. The pedestrian and vehicular entrance at 20th Street will be realigned to improve safety and allow for bicycle and trail connections that extend and connect to the Schuylkill Trail.

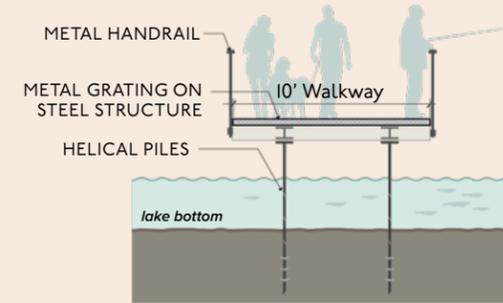
### 3 Improve vehicular circulation.

While the plan emphasizes the importance of providing a safe destination for walkers and bikers, the need for safe and convenient vehicular access remains. To reduce conflicts between modes, vehicular access points are limited to 20th Street and the Welcome Center (Pattison Avenue) and a smaller, secondary entrance to the American Swedish Historical Museum's parking lot. The main park road will be expanded, adding 1.5 miles of new road on the western side of the park to provide access to new program elements. In this new figure eight configuration, the center portion of the roadway, running north-south, will be converted to accommodate two-way traffic while the remainder of the loop remains open for one-way traffic. The park road will be a minimum of 20 feet and a maximum of 24 feet wide to allow for on-street parking and one-way traffic. Bioswales on each side of the road will manage the stormwater runoff.

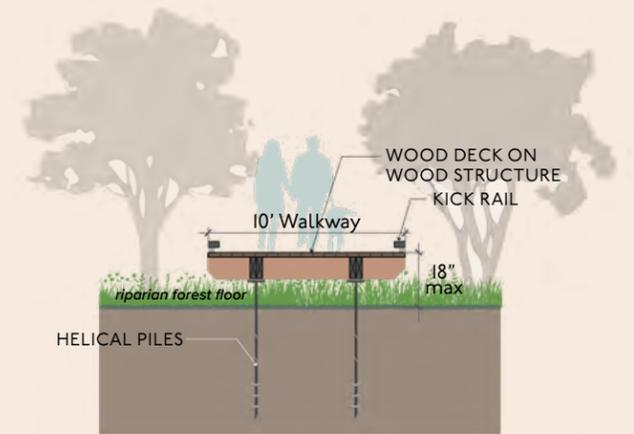
### 4 Improve parking.

The master plan creates about 800 new parking spaces in strategically located greened parking lots, under I-95, and on-street parking along the park road. This nearly doubles the amount of parking that exists in the park today. Current parking will be reconfigured, removing much of the parking from the *Ecological Core* and creating nodes of parking near activity centers. The current parking that lines the Boathouse Lawn and the lots adjacent to the Taney fields and current playground will be removed and reallocated to parking lots adjacent to main programming areas such as the museum, the playground, the fields, and under I-95.

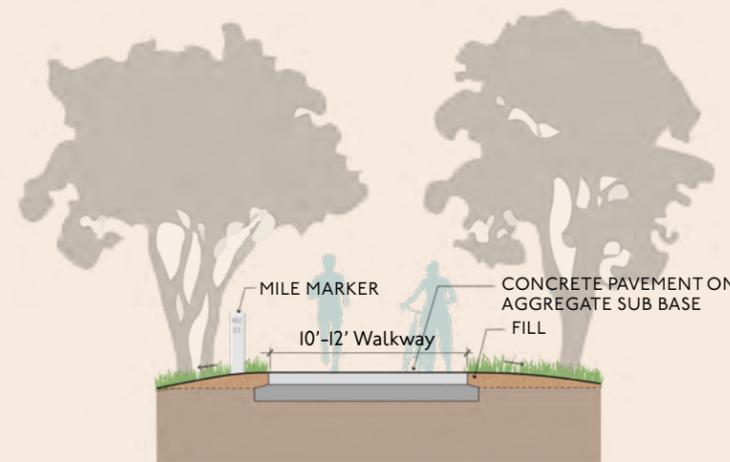
## DIVERSITY OF TRAIL EXPERIENCES



Metal Boardwalk Path



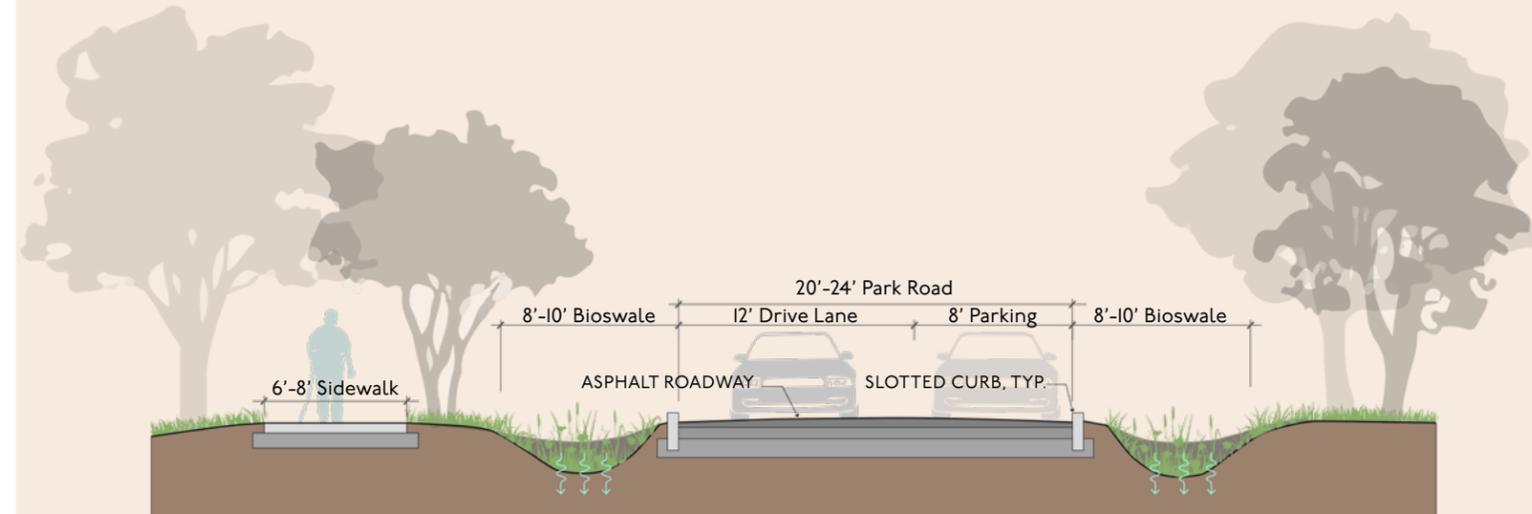
Wooden Boardwalk Path



Franklin 5K Multi-use Trail



Nature Trail



Park Road Typical Condition

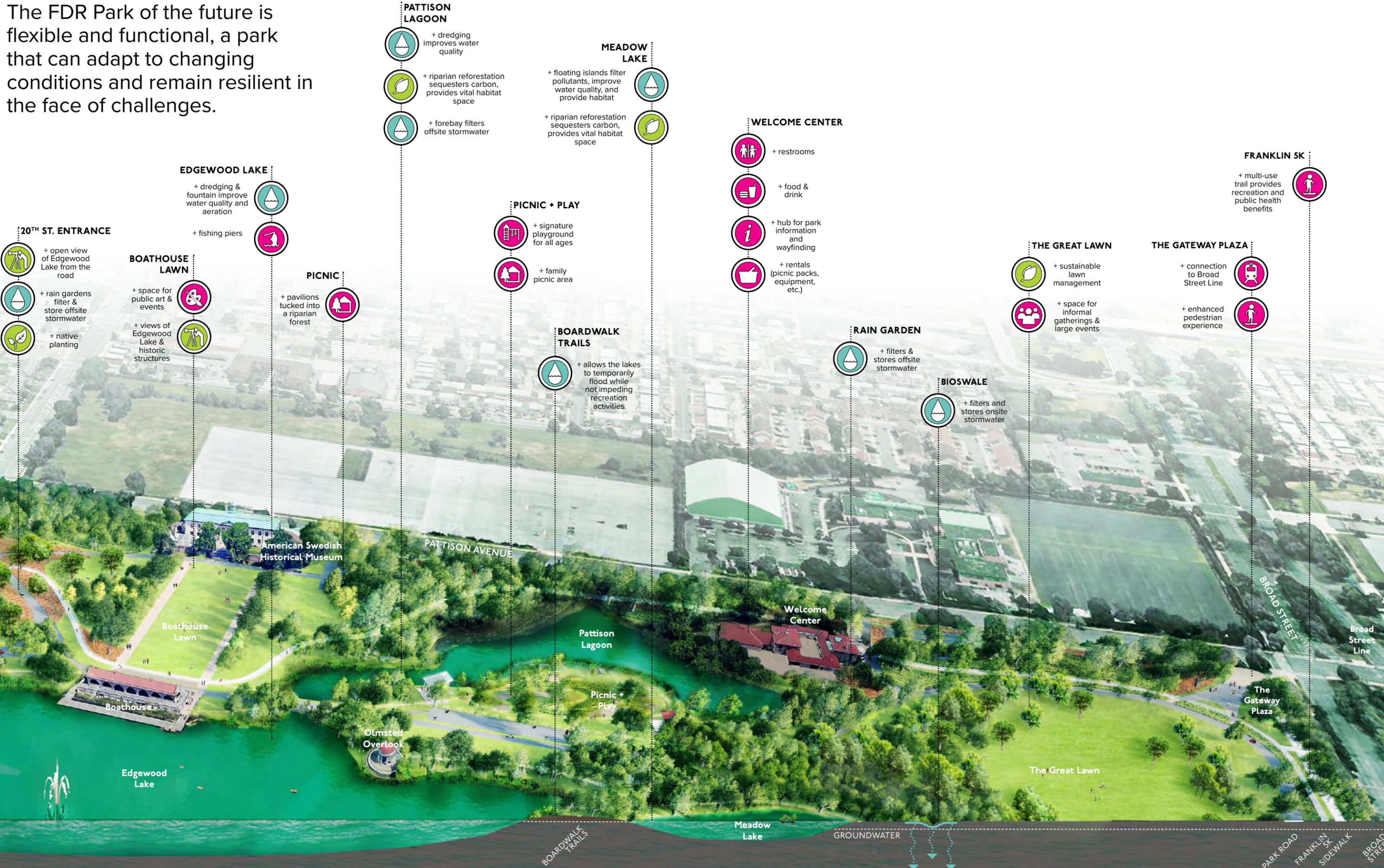


# Putting it all Together

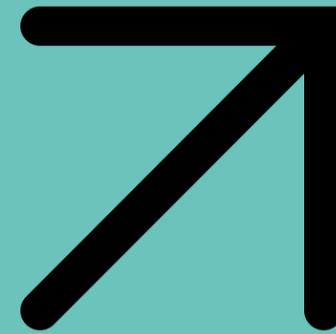
The master plan creates a system of creeks and lakes protected by forests. A network of trails and parkways connect athletic fields.



The FDR Park of the future is flexible and functional, a park that can adapt to changing conditions and remain resilient in the face of challenges.



# 04



## THE EXPERIENCE

The FDR Park of the future features a diversity of experiences that strike a balance between nature, water, and human activity. These experiences are organized into two zones: an *Ecological Core* that manages water, connects park users to nature, and provides critical habitat; and an *Urban Edge*, where new amenities such as state-of-the-art athletic fields and signature playgrounds attract visitors from across the street and around the country.

# The Ecological Core

The most interesting feature of FDR Park, and perhaps the areas that are the most biologically rich, are the system of lakes, lagoons, and creeks that weave through the central and southern sections of the park. Natural resources are particularly important at FDR Park because of the scarcity of natural lands in South Philadelphia, the link between the park and the Delaware Estuary, and the location of the park in the Atlantic Coastal Plain. Within the **Ecological Core** there are four key zones connected by a rich network of trails, water access, and unique varieties of plants and animals.

+ **THE LAKES**

Olmsted's historic lakes function as the ecological heart and shape the local identity of the park. The master plan celebrates the lakes with elevated boardwalks, a new wooded picnic grove, and access points for fishing and paddling.

+ **THE WETLANDS**

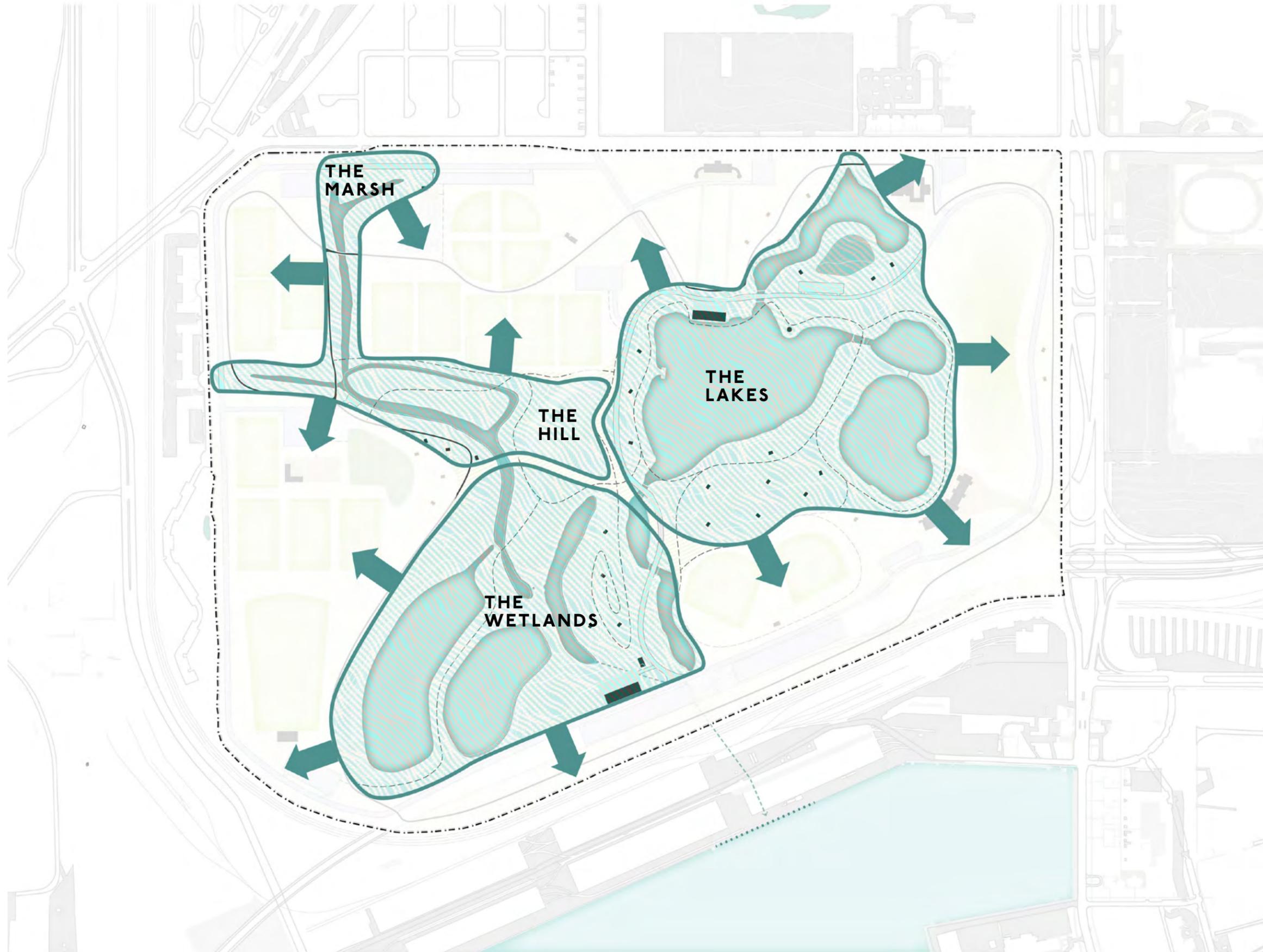
In partnership with the Philadelphia International Airport, a new wetland system will be constructed on 45 acres in the southwest border of the site. The new wetlands will provide important wildlife habitat and deliver on the number one priority of the community – access to trails and nature.

+ **THE MARSH**

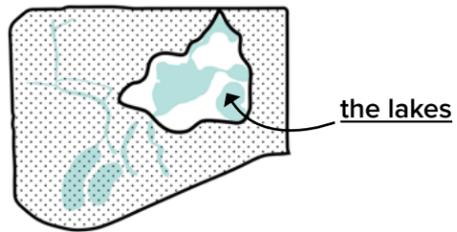
Shedbrook Creek will be expanded, restored, and the riparian buffer significantly increased. It will become a tree-shaded corridor connecting areas of active recreation and play on the western half of the park. The creek will also offer a public access point, inviting Philadelphians to explore this little-known waterway by kayak or canoe for the first time in the park's history.

+ **THE HILL**

Using soil excavated from the Wetlands and the Marsh, the Hill will rise 36 feet above FDR Park, giving visitors stunning views of the park, the Center City skyline, and the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers. The Hill will change with the seasons, offering sledding in the winter, panoramas of autumn color, and meadow wildflowers in the spring and summer – plus exhilarating climbs and an extra-long slide year-round.



*The Lakes* will form the heart of the *Ecological Core* providing space for habitat and recreation.



**EDGEWOOD LAKE**

The restoration of Edgewood Lake will provide an immersive natural experience for fishing, picnicking, and walking.

For many, the experience at FDR Park starts with a trip to the water’s edge – usually at Edgewood Lake – the largest water body in the park. Improving the water quality within the park is of primary importance in order to activate the lake, improve habitat, and manage stormwater. By respecting the fact that Edgewood Lake currently floods and will continue to do so in the future, the master plan recommends moving or redesigning some of the amenities adjacent to the lake so that the user experience will not be compromised. The dilapidated asphalt paths that currently encircle the lake will be replaced by a system of wood boardwalks raised off the ground so that flood waters may be able to overspill their banks and flow underneath. The experience of walking on the boardwalks will provide auditory and visual clues for users to let them know that they are walking through a sensitive area that is subject to changing durations of wetness and dryness. In the southwest corner of the lake, the path will swing out over the water to provide new, never-before-seen vantage point of the lake and Boathouse, as well as a full elevation view of one of the park’s historic Olmsted stone bridges.

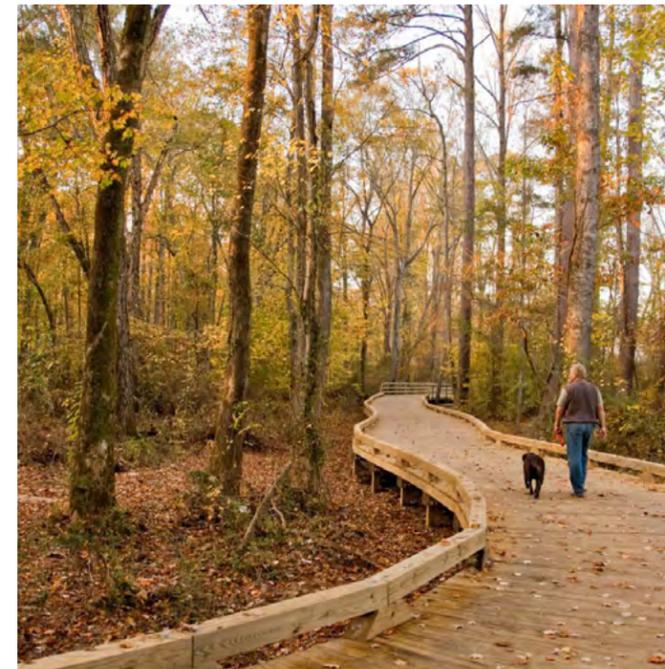
Restoration recommendations will be critical to maximize the potential of natural areas around the lake to provide high-quality habitat along the Atlantic Coastal Plain. Invasive species removal



Top: A new day dawns over Philadelphia and a revitalized FDR Park (artist rendering).

Middle: Fishing piers will line Meadow Lake, allowing greater access for recreational fishers and youth programs.

Right: Boardwalk trails will allow areas adjacent to the lakes to flood without impeding access (Pond Co).



is an ongoing effort that will require constant vigilance. Replanting along Edgewood Lake with native trees such as sweetgums and black cherries will help increase shade, decrease the establishment of invasive plant materials, and distinguish areas of the park’s identity for users moving through the park. Planting and select dredging in Edgewood Lake to remove polluted siltation will benefit overall water quality and habitat quality of the park for rare species and breeding birds that are rare or absent from other areas of Philadelphia. All efforts will be made to protect the two endangered plant species – the Many Flowered Mud Plantain and the Walter’s Barnyard Grass – as well as endangered animal species like the Northern Red-Bellied Turtle that call Edgewood Lake (and Hollander Creek) home. Interpretive signage, similar to that at the Heinz National Wildlife Refuge, will tell the story of the rare and endangered species that are found in the park.

All the restoration and circulation recommendations will help to provide an immersive nature experience which was a primary community request. Part of this immersive experience is balanced with the desire to activate Edgewood Lake. Branching off the

perimeter boardwalk trail will be two fishing piers (one on the west side and one on the east side of the lake) where fishermen of all ages can enjoy quiet time out on the lake. Experiencing Edgewood Lake on the water will be possible by renting paddleboats at the Boathouse for a leisurely glide along the surface. A new water jet fountain located at the centerline of the Boathouse and Gateway Plaza Entrance, will mark the center of the lake and the center of the park and serve as a point of orientation. Edgewood Lake can also be home to site-specific public art projects, either in the water or along its banks, that will attract new visitors as well as provide new attractions for frequent park users.

**Boathouse and Olmsted Overlook**

**The Boathouse and Olmsted Overlook will be restored, providing spaces for informal gatherings, events, and scenic viewing.**

Punctuating the lake experience is the Boathouse and Olmsted Overlook. The historic Boathouse and Olmsted Overlook structures are the defining architectural elements that frame Edgewood Lake and will continue to serve as the entranceway to the Lake experience for future generations of visitors. Views from each are directed across Edgewood Lake such that many visitors forget that they are still in Philadelphia. These historic structures are the most photogenic and will continue to be highlighted in social media platforms.

Both structures are in need of historic restoration efforts to repair the roofs, remove graffiti, improve the lighting and electrical systems, repair masonry, tiles and gutters, and paint selected ceiling surfaces. Both the Boathouse and the Overlook will remain eligible to be rented for events and activities as a way of



generating revenue in the park. A paddling concession will run out of the Boathouse offering park users a chance to experience Edgewood Lake firsthand. Given the persistent flood risks in the park, it is not recommended to adaptively re-use the lower portion of the Boathouse for anything other than non-perishable storage (i.e., paddleboats or kayaks). The Boathouse and the Swedish Museum will anchor the new Boathouse Lawn, which acts as a smaller event lawn in a more formal setting than the Great Lawn. Interpretive signage at the Boathouse and Olmsted Overlook will display historic images of these significant structures and illustrate the importance of these cultural resources to the park and city.

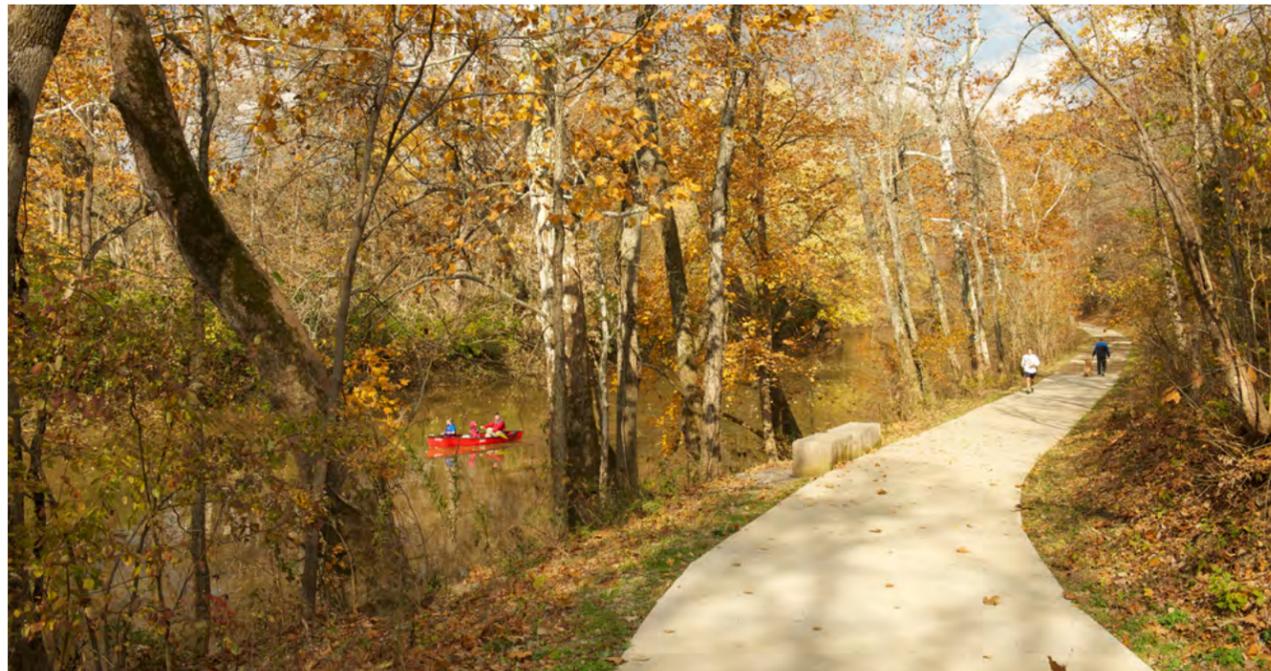
**Pattison Lagoon**

**The restoration of Pattison Lagoon will provide additional opportunities for stormwater management and serve as the backdrop for picnicking and playing at the new Pattison Playground.**

Current park users coming to Pattison Lagoon rarely appreciate the strategic location and function of this lagoon in the larger park experience. Pattison Lagoon is home to two of the largest sources of stormwater that come into the park from outside the park boundaries. Urban stormwater runoff coming from the neighborhoods north of Pattison Avenue directly discharges into the lagoon unfiltered, depositing high levels of nutrient concentrations and sediments that threaten the overall water quality in Pattison Lagoon, Edgewood Lake, Meadow Lake, and Hollander Creek. To the east of the Lagoon, a small bioswale filters stormwater runoff that is piped into the park from Broad Street and then discharged into the Lagoon.

Future park users coming to Pattison Lagoon from the Welcome Center, along the Franklin 5K, or from the Pattison Playground will experience a restored lagoon with a wetland forebay in the north end to provide pre-treatment filtration before the stormwater pollutants can reach the lagoon and lake system. On the east side they will experience an enhanced rain garden that can manage larger volumes of stormwater, reduce and filter runoff, and support the natural habitat and aesthetics of the park. Additional riparian reforestation along the lagoon’s edges will improve water quality and habitat while providing shade for users along the Franklin 5K, which wraps around the north and west sides of the Lagoon. Pattison Lagoon’s natural beauty will also form the backdrop for events at the Welcome Center and frame Pattison Playground.

Like Edgewood Lake, Pattison Lagoon will need select dredging to remove polluted sediments, which will benefit the aquatic organisms with increased volume, cooler waters, and reductions in algal-blooming colonies. Interpretive signage will describe the important benefits that stormwater management provides to the overall environmental health of the park in terms of storage and habitat enhancements.



*Above: The historic Boathouse is one of the most iconic structures in the park. Historic restoration – repairing the roof, masonry, tiles, paint, etc. – will ensure it will continue to be used for special events, gatherings, and as a place of respite for park users (Glow in the Park, FPC).*

*Left: The Franklin 5k will weave through the park, providing views of the park’s program elements and water bodies (Floyd’s Fork - KY, WRT).*



**Picnic + Play**

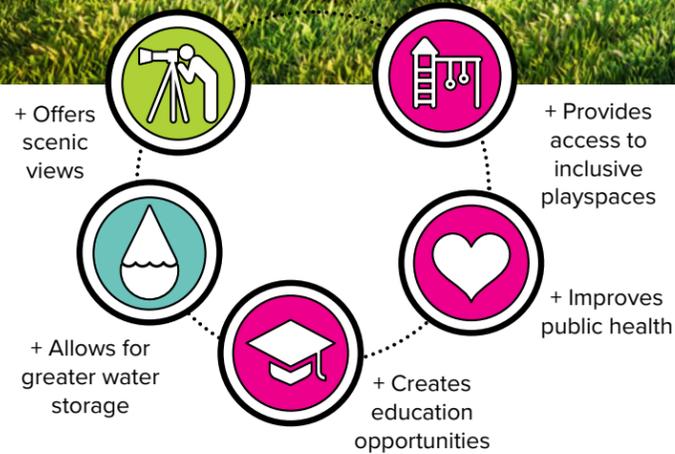
The new Pattison Playground and picnic area will provide a vibrant multi-generational play and gathering space for park users.

The restored Pattison Lagoon will serve as a natural backdrop for a 1.5-acre iconic signature playground that will attract families from across the street and the country. The current playground located north of North Meadow Lake is subject to constant flooding and lacks a full range of accessible play. In order to let the Meadow Lakes continue to flood, the playground will be relocated north of the park road, where it will be elevated using fill from the Wetland and the Marsh excavation projects to keep it high and dry. The signature playground will be one of the largest all-inclusive playgrounds in the country for children and adults of all ages and ranges of physical abilities. The playground will be nestled amongst the existing canopy trees and supplemented with a grove of black cherries that will provide much needed shade. Scattered throughout and along the southern perimeter of the playground will be picnic tables and picnic pavilions for parents, grandparents, or guardians to sit, relax, and watch children play. The nearby Welcome Center will support the playground with restrooms and food and beverage concessions. Larger picnic pavilions will be able to be rented for group gatherings such as birthday parties or family reunions. The existing parking lot north of Edgewood Lake will be moved north of the park road, out of the flood waters, to serve the signature playground and picnic pavilions.

**Meadow Lake**

The restored Meadow Lake will provide a secluded, rich habitat for plant and animal species and continue to be a destination for birders and nature lovers.

Meadow Lake was envisioned by the Olmsted Brothers as one lake, but modifications to the lake over the past 100 years have split it into the North and South Meadow Lakes. Today, natural processes are reuniting these two lakes due to constant stormwater and groundwater flooding. Future park visitors walking around Meadow Lake on boardwalk trails will be able to observe this unification process continue without the help of any large-scale human-driven modifications. Since the restoration and naturalization project of South Meadow Lake in the early 2000s, Meadow Lake has become one of the richest habitats within the park, supporting aquatic species and serving as an important breeding, migratory, and wintering area for land and water birds. These functions will be improved by the select removal of phragmites in favor of native cattails, enhancing the riparian reforestation, and improving the water quality within the lake. Meadow Lake will continue to be an important location for nature lovers, birders, and photographers to catch a glimpse of some rare wildlife located only in the Delaware Estuary or remnants of the Atlantic Coastal Plain.



**+** The Pattison Playground will provide an iconic and inclusive playspace for all ages and abilities. The space borders Pattison Lagoon and will include a series of picnic tables and pavilions for added visitor comfort.

Future park users will notice several floating islands, moving slowly over the water, which will be used to improve the water quality and enhance the habitat of Meadow Lake. These floating islands will help reduce algae by cycling phosphorous and nitrogen and reduce the number of suspended solids in the water with bio-char bottoms that literally scrub the water as it floats. Planted with native wetland plants and grasses, floating islands will also become home to macroinvertebrates, frogs, turtles, bees, butterflies, and birds. Since the islands will move and float, park users visiting the lake will experience a different spatial configuration with each visit – no two visits will be the same. Interpretive signage along the perimeter boardwalks will highlight the benefits of the floating islands as well as the diversity of flora and fauna in the lake.

The current elevation of the spillway concrete dam between Edgewood Lake and North Meadow Lake is higher than desirable. This means that the potential for North Meadow Lake and South Meadow Lake to serve as a reserve for flood water storage does not actually come into use until Edgewood Lake and Hollander Creek have risen to over a foot above the top of Hollander Creek Culvert. Recommendations include converting the concrete dam spillway to a lower natural weir such that Meadow Lake can serve as a flood storage reserve to prevent other low-lying areas of the park to flood.

**Picnic Woods**

**The Picnic Woods will create a new picnic experience on the banks of Edgewood Lake connected by natural, elevated boardwalks.**

Sandwiched between Edgewood Lake, Meadow Lake, and the Richie Ashburn Fields, the Picnic Woods will offer park users a unique carry-in, carry-out picnic facility unlike any other in the city. Currently, this area is subject to stormwater and groundwater flooding. The existing parking lot and baseball / multipurpose fields will be relocated to the western portion of the park as part of the enhanced system of athletic fields. By allowing this area to flood, and reforesting it with native sweetgum trees, the newly created woods will introduce a new type of picnic facility. Raised on a wooden boardwalk, as part of the circulation system around Edgewood Lake, wooden decks will support picnic tables and picnic pavilions with views of activities on the lake and the ballfields as well as the quiet serenity of the woods. Interpretive signage will tell the important story of the need to let the lakes overflow and how the appropriate types of trees located in this riparian zone enhance the habitat for a variety of riparian species. The picnic tables and pavilions will remain an important community resource for the park.

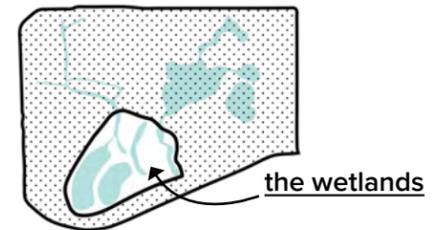


*Picnic pavilions tucked into the Picnic Woods' riparian forest will provide stunning views of Edgewood Lake and access to the park's Boardwalk Trails (artist rendering).*





*The Wetlands* will create a new immersive nature experience with select hiking trails and educational opportunities.



**THE WETLANDS**

The creation of a new system of tidal and non-tidal wetlands in the southwest corner of the park, marks the single greatest addition to the park’s water bodies since the original lakes and lagoons were constructed from the remains of Hollander Creek.

Not only does the creation of the wetlands satisfy the community’s number one priority – having the ability to connect with nature through restored habitats, access to water and hiking / nature trails – but it is a crucial piece of infrastructure that will allow the park to balance cut (excavation) and fill (mound) so that natural areas of the park can be allowed to flood while high-use, active programming areas may remain high and dry. This type of win-win scenario extends to the public-private relationships that are critical to implementing large-scale public open space projects. These wetlands will be preserved in perpetuity as a wetland mitigation bank to compensate for anticipated impacts at the Philadelphia International Airport.

For current park users, this 45-acre site has been a relatively derelict strip of land, devoid of public programming with limited habitat potential due to the dominance of invasive non-native species. Historically, this site was a natural backwater retention reservoir, which provided considerable emergency storage for the park. However, this area has been filled in over the years with debris and construction material and the park has lost its potential flood storage area. The creation of the wetland system will entail the removal of approximately 350,000 cubic yards of earth that will be kept on site

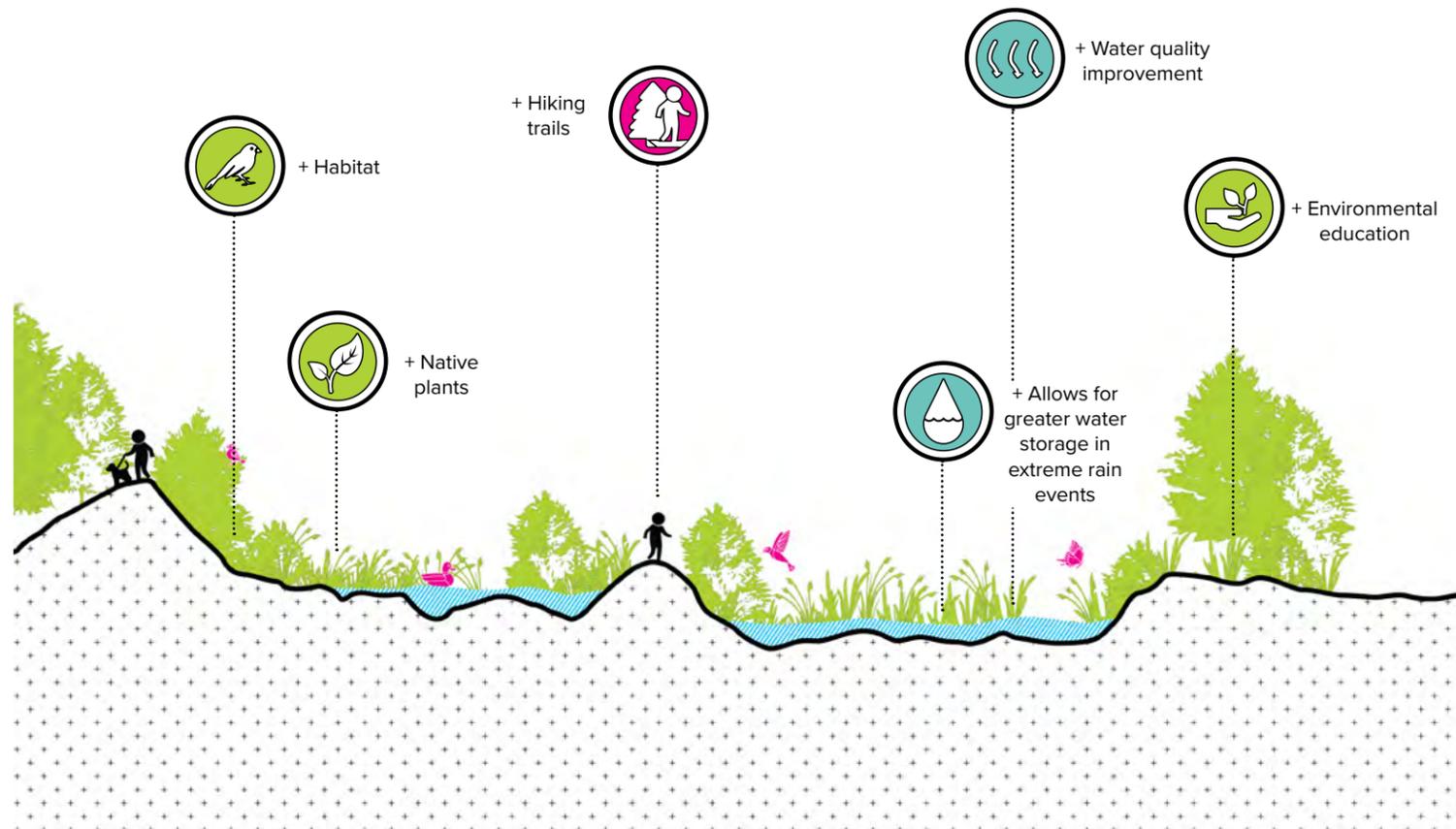


**+** *The Wetlands will afford visitors an immersive nature experience replete with interpretive signage, nature trails, and environmental education (artist rendering).*

and reused as fill to elevate athletic fields, playgrounds, and the Hill. The park has a long history of recontouring the land and water's edge using excavated material and fill to raise surrounding land elevations for human use.

One of the greatest impacts the wetlands will have on the park experience will be the ability to drain the park faster after a rain event due to the fact that the tide gate and culvert that drain the park will be improved for the tidal and non-tidal wetlands to function correctly. This will allow more of the park to be available to more park users for larger periods of time. The tide gate will be moved from the Navy Basin into the park under the park road by Hollander Creek so that it can be maintained by the park's operations staff. The new wetlands will need a sluice gate for additional flow control that is independent from the tide gate. The twin arch culvert will be repaired, clogged debris will be removed, and a new grate will be installed at the mouth of the Navy Basin to prevent river debris from washing into the park. The non-tidal wetland is only connected to Shedbrook Creek by a high-flow inlet with flow control for stormwater support. The tidal wetland is only connected to Shedbrook Creek via a high-hanging valley channel that drops into the tidal wetland for stormwater support.

The enhanced habitat potential in and around the wetlands will be a major draw for park users looking for new nature experiences in the city. Wetland features will be surrounded by native transitions and upland habitats. Areas directly adjacent to the wetlands to the north and east will be enhanced by invasive species removal and replanting with native species as well as other habitat enhancement features such as vernal pools and turtle-basking areas. The new constructed wetlands will help improve water quality by intercepting and trapping stormwater runoff and storing pollutants via natural soil-vegetation processes.



Separating the two wetlands is a raised berm containing an accessible nature trail offering park users unprecedented views of the Philadelphia skyline. The wetland area has excellent accessibility to the new nature trail system that winds its way between the wetlands, up to Shedbrook Creek, over to Hollander Creek, and up to Edgewood Lake as part of the expanded *Ecological Core*. The Franklin 5K will wrap around the western and southern sides of the wetlands connecting this natural area with the more active recreation programming in the adjacent *Urban Edge*. Access to the wetlands will also be possible via parking lots adjacent to the golf driving range and underneath I-95. The new natural trail system in and around the wetlands will provide an opportunity for environmental education signage about the new tidal and non-tidal habitats.

In a small bluff situated in between the Half-Moon Lagoon and Hollander Creek, park users will take a nature trail up into the Treehouse Woods, some of the highest quality woods in the park. Here, nature enthusiasts will experience a treetop canopy walk on a raised treehouse structure that is situated above the bluff looking towards the Half-Moon Lagoon. Picnic tables will be scattered throughout the Treehouse Woods along the nature trails providing park users with another type of nature picnic experience.

Perched at the base of the Treehouse Woods along the park road is the new Pavilion. Park users can experience the popular South-East Asian Markets on the weekends or Farmer's Markets during the week in this open-air structure. Restrooms and concealed trash corrals will support the activities for both large- and small-scale events. The Pavilion will provide another revenue-generating facility in the park to help offset park maintenance and operations and support community entrepreneurs.

Located just south of the Treehouse Woods, is the new maintenance building and maintenance yard. A dedicated FDR Park Maintenance Staff will work out of this newly constructed, sustainably-designed park maintenance facility. This location is centrally positioned in the park with easy access through the park via the park road. Despite being centrally located, it is nestled against I-95 and relatively out of sight from general park users.

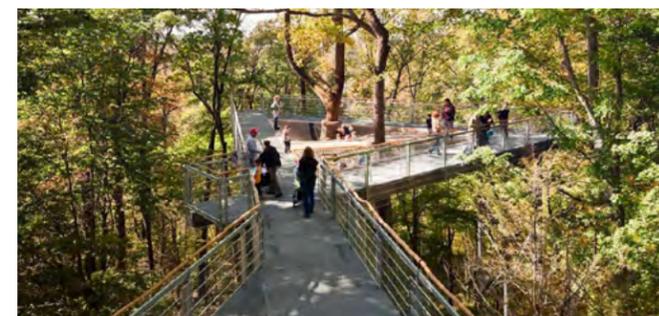
## WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE // THE WETLANDS



© Berger Partnership

### Seattle, WA MAGNUSON PARK

*Magnuson Park is a 350-acre open space on the banks of Lake Washington. The park includes active playing fields, a dog park, passive recreation spaces, and a series of constructed wetlands. The wetlands take the form of a set of mounds and ponds that channel water and improve the drainage of inundated areas. The wetlands provide natural filtration of stormwater runoff and reduce pollution in Lake Washington.*

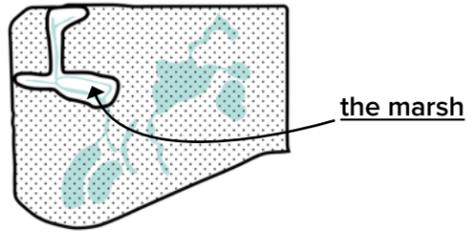


*Top: The many benefits of the Wetlands include space for habitat, native planting, and access to nature-based recreation.*

*Middle: The Pavilion will provide a dedicated space for the market on the weekend, farmer's markets, and gatherings (Desmone Architects).*

*Left: The Treehouse Woods will include a treetop canopy walk that nestles within the forest (Morris Arboretum).*

*The Marsh* will provide a key habitat and recreation corridor along Shedbrook Creek.

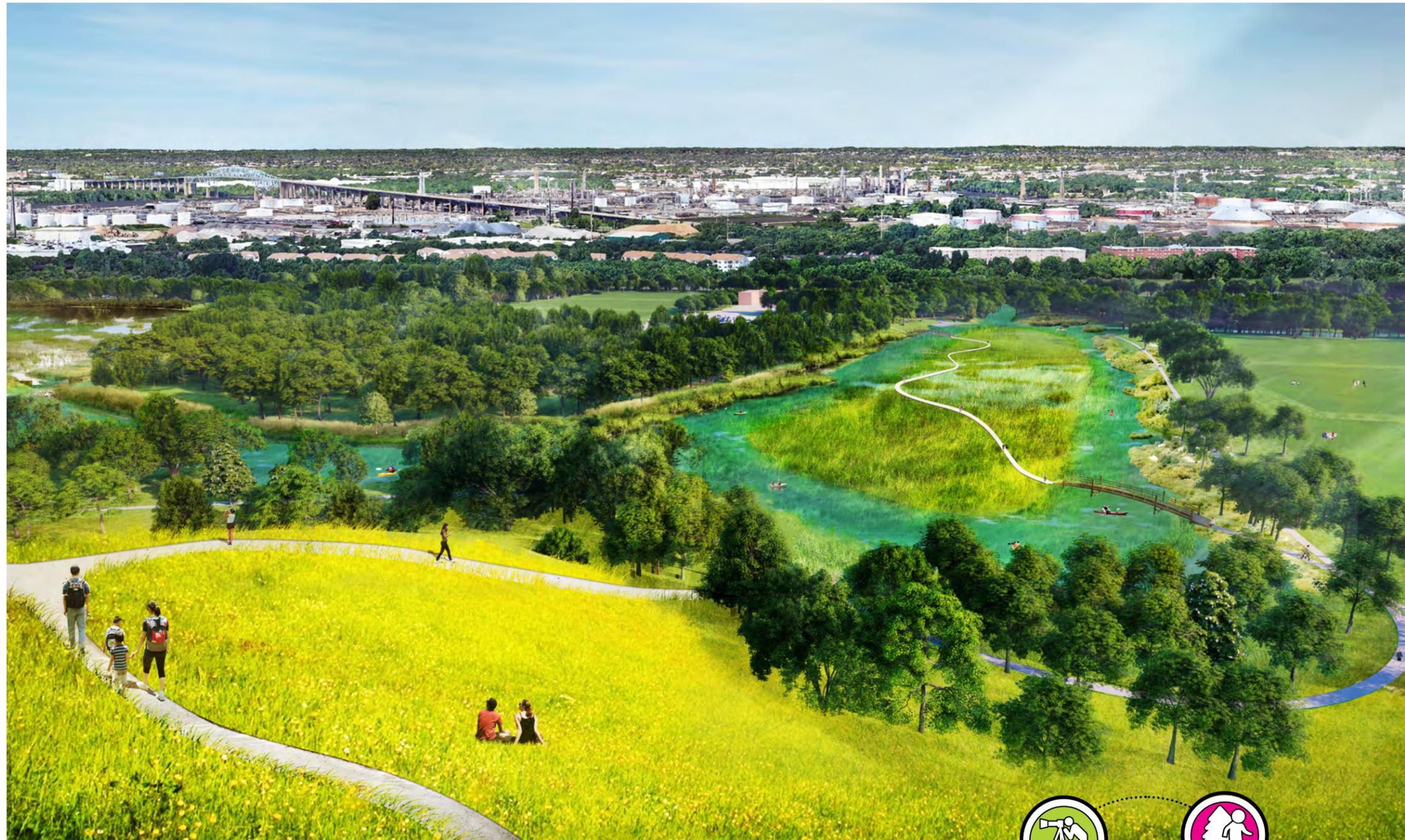


**THE SEDGE MEADOW & SHEDBROOK CREEK**

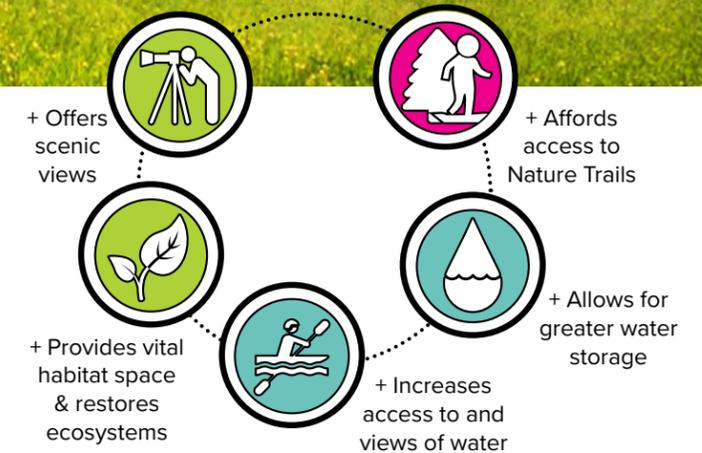
An expanded Shedbrook Creek and new Sedge Meadow will provide park users with new ways to engage with water in the park and a new eco-type to explore.

For too long, Shedbrook Creek has been the lesser known of the two creeks that drain FDR Park since it was only visible to users of the FDR Park Golf Course. The time has come for Shedbrook Creek to assume its rightful place as a key waterway within the *Ecological Core* of the park. Shedbrook Creek has a long history of being modified and its tributaries filled in. With the era of the golf course coming to an end, the entire western portion of the park can be reimagined with a restored Shedbrook Creek as its showpiece.

Prior to the urban development of South Philadelphia and the creation of FDR Park, the park site was a freshwater tide marsh. Left to its own devices, the park would revert back into a marsh. Though this is not practical, the park can reclaim some of this eco-type through the creation of a sedge meadow in the heart of Shedbrook Creek. Sedge meadows are sedge-dominated wetland communities where wet prairie grass and saturated soils dominate. Sedge meadows are characterized by their dense groups of tussock-forming sedges, which often grade into shallowly flooded marsh edges. The creation of the sedge meadow will remove over 100,000 cubic yards of earth over a



Atop the Hill, visitors will enjoy stunning views of the Sedge Meadow, the Fields, and the city beyond (artist rendering).



four-acre area while considerably expanding the floodplain and increasing flood storage. Additional widening and deepening of Shedbrook Creek from its northern limits near Pattison Avenue to the southern limits by the new wetlands, will add additional stormwater capacity in the park. The fill from both excavations will be used to raise the nearby athletic fields as well as the elevation of The Hill. Restoration efforts along Shedbrook Creek will include 2,000 linear feet of stream bank restoration and a 75-foot-wide riparian reforestation on both sides of the creek. These improvements to Shedbrook Creek will add to the diversity of plant species not found anywhere else in the park, but that are native to the Atlantic Coastal Plain.

Opening Shedbrook Creek for public access for the first time ever will have multiple benefits for users of the park while offering a different type of water experience in the park than being out on Edgewood Lake. Located near the parking lot and concession building in the Fields will be a canoe and kayak drop-off location where park users can rent or bring their own non-motorized watercraft to the park and paddle around the restored Shedbrook Creek, through parts of the Sedge Meadow (depending on water levels) and under the Franklin 5K bridge that spans the creek. Nature trails will weave through the Sedge Meadow, the riparian buffer connecting natural areas with playgrounds and active athletic areas, and the Franklin 5K and trailheads with picnic areas. A raised boardwalk trail will offer park users a secluded spot for nature photography, birding, or simply a place for families and visitors to take a break and immerse themselves in nature to see a whole new aspect of the park.



**The Hill**

Raising 36 feet above the park, the Hill will provide users with a new and exciting nature hiking experience with stunning views of the park and Center City.

The current typical surface elevations of the water bodies in the park are below the mean high-tide level of the Navy Basin – meaning that most of the park lies below sea level. The topographic grade difference throughout FDR Park is only about 12-feet – meaning that the park is relatively flat. The Boathouse and Olmsted Overlook are two of the only areas in the current park from which users can get a sense of perspective.

Utilizing the excavated soil from the Wetlands and the Sedge Meadow, the Hill will rise 36 feet out of the floodplain and over the treetops to offer visitors never before seen views of the park, South Philadelphia, and the skyline. Situated between the Sedge Meadow on the west, Edgewood Lake and the Great Lawn on the east, the Wetlands to the south and the Fields to the North, the Hill is ideally located to view the park from one spot. The Hill is sure to become one of the most Instagrammable locations in all of Philadelphia.

An accessible nature trail connected to picnic areas, parking lots, and the Sedge Meadow will lead visitors on an invigorating climb up to the top of the Hill. For the adventurous and young at heart, a quick trip down the Hill will be had by taking the extra-long slide that extends the theme of play to all parts of the park. In the winter, the Hill will provide one of the few places to go sledding close to home. In the spring and summer, the Hill will be blanketed with wildflower meadows that attract pollinators and nature photographers alike. Visitors to the Hill in autumn will have the opportunity to take in the full range of fall colors in the park as well as the Schuylkill and Delaware waterways.



Top Right: A walk along the Franklin 5K will cross through the Fields, connecting with nature trails that weave through the Sedge Meadow (artist rendering).

Above: Boardwalk trails, like those pictured above, will weave through the Sedge Meadow (Nature Bridges).

Right: The Sedge Meadow will provide a new eco-type for the park, supporting a variety of native plant and animal species (Barn Island WMA, Stonington, CT).



New York, NY  
**GOVERNOR'S ISLAND**

*“The Hills” are a series of sculpted landforms that provide unforgettable views of Lower Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty. They offer lush rolling landscapes, grassy overlooks, exhilarating iconic slides, unprecedented views, and public art installations.*

**WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE // THE HILL**



# The Urban Edge

With a connected and contiguous *Ecological Core* to hold and store stormwater and provide habitat, the *Urban Edge* can be raised out of the floodplain in key areas, allowing for investments that transform the perimeter of FDR Park. In the *Urban Edge*, athletic fields, basketball and tennis courts, and playgrounds are tied together by a 5K multi-use trail and frequent spots to picnic, purchase refreshments, and play.

+ **THE GATEWAY PLAZA**

The Gateway Plaza will create a powerful presence for the park with a new pedestrian plaza on the corner of Broad Street and Pattison Avenue. The historic Guardhouse will act as a Welcome Center for the park, providing a central hub for concessions, rentals, and information about the park.

+ **THE GREAT LAWN**

Returning to the original Olmsted Plan, the master plan creates an inclusive, passive space that any user can utilize at will for picnics, celebrations, or lawn games.

+ **THE BOATHOUSE LAWN**

Framed by the historic Boathouse and American Swedish Historical Museum, the Boathouse Lawn will be renewed with tranquil gathering space and opportunities to appreciate the park's lakes, natural features, and gardens. The Lawn can become a formal event space for celebrations, gatherings, public art displays, and seasonal exhibits.

+ **THE FIELDS**

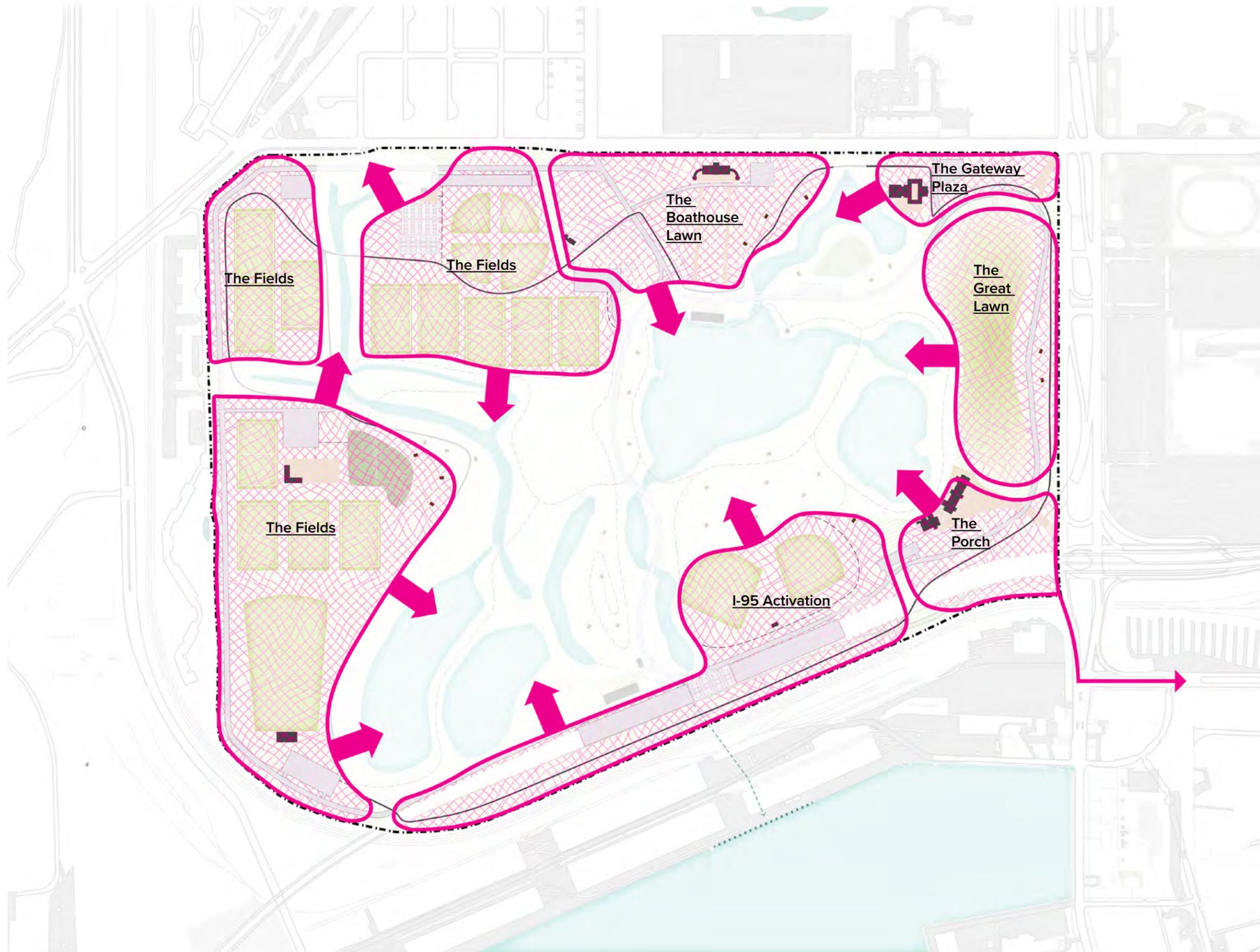
Excavated soil from the Wetlands will be used to create three clusters of athletic fields, all elevated out of the floodplain, and equipped with lighting and synthetic field surfaces to maximize playtime and reduce maintenance needs. Concessions, trails, and a second signature play space will ensure that multiple generations of park users can enjoy the spaces simultaneously.

+ **I-95 ACTIVATION**

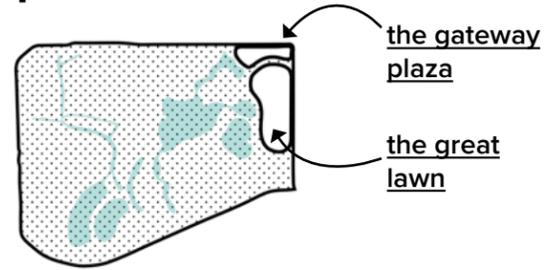
The I-95 corridor will be transformed into an asset for the park with the addition of basketball courts, rain gardens, formal parking, and the Franklin 5K. The skatepark and Richie Ashburn Fields will remain as vital recreation amenities.

+ **THE PORCH**

Adaptive re-use of the historic Bathhouses for events and concessions will anchor the Great Lawn while providing views onto Meadow Lake. The Porch will also serve as the southern gateway to the park and a critical link to the burgeoning Navy Yard.



*The Gateway Plaza* will be an inviting, safe, and vibrant pedestrian entrance to the park.



**THE GATEWAY PLAZA**

**The Plaza**

The Plaza will serve as a welcoming entrance, or front door, for park users at the corner of Broad Street and Pattison Avenue.

Like people, parks often have one chance to make a first impression. For the future FDR Park, this starts by creating an inviting, welcoming pedestrian entrance at the main entry point to the park – the Gateway Plaza at Broad Street and Pattison Avenue. This intersection is a famous address in Philadelphia as it effectively acts as the civic gateway to South Philadelphia. The significance of this intersection and its relationship to the park was highlighted in the original Olmsted Brothers plan that extended the concept of League Island Park northwards, treating more than a half mile of Broad Street as a parkway linking to Marconi Plaza. The importance of this open space vision will be reclaimed to welcome a new generation of FDR Park visitors.

Stepping into the Gateway Plaza visitors will be immediately drawn into the park by a welcoming view through the plaza to the sweeping green expanse of the Great Lawn, a curated view of Meadow Lake, and a hint of Edgewood Lake in the background. The hardscaped plaza will act as a civic stage, programmed formally and occupied informally by park users. Seat walls and benches will frame the edges of the plaza with generous spaces to relax. New signage and wayfinding will help orient the



*Stepping into the Gateway Plaza from the Broad Street Station visitors will be immediately drawn into the park by a welcoming view through the plaza to the sweeping green expanse of the Great Lawn and a curated view of Meadow Lake (artist rendering).*



visitor with “You Are Here Maps” and directions to the Welcome Center. Interpretive displays will connect park users to the site’s rich history. Where the plaza meets the Franklin 5K, an Indego Bike Share station will allow users to rent a bike to go through the park, bike over to the Navy Yard, or head westwards to the Schuylkill River Trail. Framing the plaza on both sides will be green infrastructure rain gardens that filter the stormwater runoff from Broad Street and Pattison Avenue. These rain gardens will contain extensive native plantings with seasonal color and interest.

**Welcome Center**

**The Welcome Center will repurpose a historic stable and Guardhouse to provide much-needed visitor amenities at the northern edge of the park.**

Adjacent to the Gateway Plaza along Pattison Avenue is the historic Guardhouse that will be adaptively transformed into an inviting Welcome Center. The Welcome Center will act as the hub for all park activities. Visitors arriving to the park will be able to receive information about upcoming events, sign up for park permits, and find out how they can volunteer. They will also be able to use the Welcome Center as a place to purchase food and drink as well as renting picnic baskets, blankets, and games to take out into the park. The Welcome Center will contain one of five public restrooms to be found throughout the park. The courtyard between the Guardhouse and the Stables is transformed into an outdoor event space or temporary beer garden, and the Stables will be transformed into an exhibition space with rotating galleries. The floors above will be restored into the Park Manager’s office and administrative workspaces with a small community room for neighborhood or park meetings.

As part of the welcoming park experience, one of the two vehicular park entrances off Pattison Avenue will enter the park at the Welcome Center, complete with a 40-car parking lot and stormwater management rain gardens. To the south side of the Welcome Center leading to the Pattison Playground will be the Games Plaza where park users can play outdoor chess, cornhole, ping-pong, or other outdoor games while enjoying the views into the Pattison Lagoon or the Pattison Playground. The Welcome Centers will act as a trailhead for the Franklin 5K that wraps in front of the Games Plaza from the Gateway Plaza and along the north side of the Welcome Center to the north end of Pattison Lagoon.

**Great Lawn**

**The 15-acre Great Lawn on the east side of Meadow Lake provides an equitable, passive open space where park users will be encouraged to choose their own recreation adventure.**

The Great Lawn harkens back to the great open spaces initially proposed as part of the original Olmsted Brothers vision for FDR Park. The vision is reminiscent of the other iconic lawns in other Olmsted parks, such as the Meadow Lawn, Great Lawn,



“What you see in this plan is a reflection of the requests of the community.”

– Councilman Kenyatta Johnson



Top: The Welcome Center will become a central hub of activity for the park (Contigo Patio, Austin, TX).

and Sheep’s Meadow Lawn in Central Park and the Long Meadow in Prospect Park. To make room for the Great Lawn, the tennis courts and softball fields will be moved to the western part of the park in combination with other mutually beneficial active recreation programming. The park road will also be adjusted to accommodate the needed program space for large and small events. The opening of this space will create an expansive vista linking the Lakes to the Gateway Plaza as part of the main entrance sequence into the park.

The Great Lawn will be the largest open space in South Philadelphia, able to accommodate up to 50,000 people – a democratic space where all will be welcome to throw down a picnic blanket on a sunny day, fly a kite, toss a Frisbee or sunbathe. During certain select times of the year, the Great Lawn will serve larger gatherings for sports team celebrations, music concerts, or civic events.

The Great Lawn is bookended by support facilities that help activate the space. To the north, the Welcome Center will provide visitor amenity services such as food and drink concession and game equipment rentals that can be used for passive and light active pastime activities. To the south, the Great Lawn will be primed with the needed utility infrastructure and event program support located within the Porch to accommodate celebrations and events in the corner of the park furthest from the neighborhoods. Coming in from the south around The Porch, the Franklin 5K wraps around the eastern perimeter of the park to the Gateway Plaza. The Great Lawn can act as the terminus and staging area of various 5K races that can now be held in the park. To the east of the Franklin 5k, along Broad Street, native plantings, wildflowers and seating will transform the sidewalk into a Garden Walk for those walking from the NRG subway station to the Navy Yard.

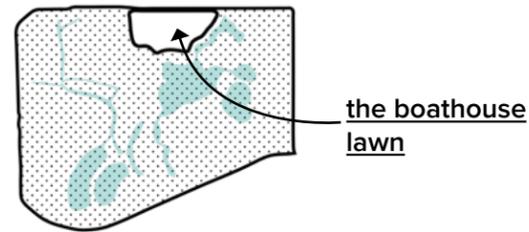
WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE // **GREAT LAWN**

New York, NY  
**CENTRAL PARK**

*Central Park’s Great Lawn is arguably the most famous lawn in the world. At 55 acres, it occupies the center of Central Park. Although not originally part of the Olmsted and Vaux plan, the Great Lawn opened in 1937 as a retreat when the existing city reservoir was decommissioned. Since then, it has become the front yard for residents and host to some of the most memorable outdoor concerts in the country. The Great Lawn and the park are run by the Central Park Conservancy, a leader in the rebirth of urban parks, public green spaces, and quality-of-life movements.*



*The Boathouse Lawn will create a formal lawn that frames the park's most iconic structures.*



**BOATHOUSE LAWN**

The Boathouse Lawn will serve as a formal lawn, connecting and utilizing the space between the American Swedish Historical Museum and the Boathouse for passive recreation and events.

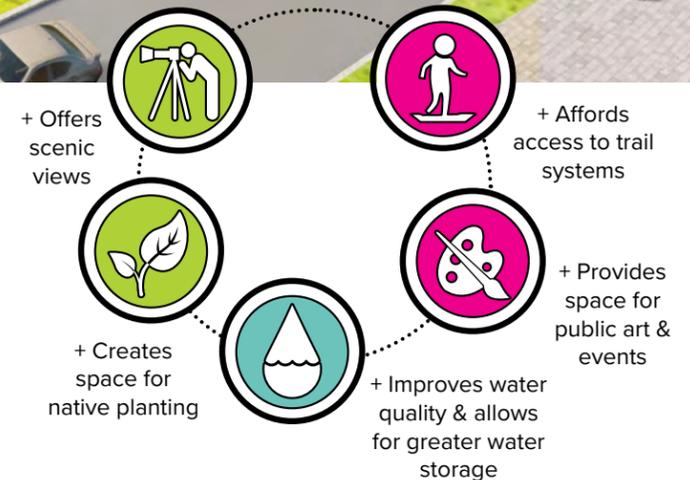
Ever since the American Swedish Historical Museum was built in 1926 for the Sesquicentennial, the space between it and the Boathouse has developed largely in an ad-hoc manner. The proximity and dialogue between these two iconic park structures informs the creation of formal lawn. Framed by parallel paths of decomposed granite and allées of willow oak, the Boathouse Lawn will become a place where park users can experience rotating public art displays or partake in picnic lunches in a lush park setting.

The hardscaped plaza in front of the Boathouse will terminate the decomposed granite paths and work with the Boathouse stairs to form a stage or platform for events on the lawn or activities occurring in the Boathouse. The Boathouse Plaza will also connect to the Franklin 5K as it weaves along the west side of Pattison Lagoon by the picnic pavilions, around the Boathouse Lawn, and then parallels the Entrance Driveway before heading westward through the Entrance Garden to the Fields and Shedbrook Creek.

The Boathouse will form the focal point of the gateway at 20th Street and Pattison Avenue. Moving along the Entrance



*The Boathouse Lawn will provide a vibrant and lush setting for picnics, strolls, and events framing the iconic Boathouse and American Swedish Historical Museum (artist rendering).*





© Adam Woodruff, LLC

Drive from 20th Street – either by biking, walking, or driving – visitors will be drawn past the Entrance Gardens to a curated view of Edgewood Lake where the presence of water and the visual of the fountain jet will be part of the entrance sequence. The Entrance Gardens will double as rain gardens, treating offsite stormwater from Pattison Avenue and potentially points northward in the Pattison Park neighborhood. Native plantings with year-long interest will frame Entrance Drive with the American Swedish Historical Museum on one side and the historic Bellaire Manor on the other. Built in 1735, the Bellaire Manor has become an isolated enclave in the park, but

as the oldest structure in the park – and one of the oldest in South Philadelphia – the house can be showcased along the entranceway as part of the celebration of cultural resources in the park. The Bellaire Manor will continue to have caretakers and will also be open to the public for historical tours.

Parking lots that currently occupy key real estate along the entrance drive or between the Boathouse and American Swedish Historical Museum will be relocated to remove parking from the center of pedestrian activities and to better serve the park’s programs. A new

## WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE // NEW VISITOR AMENITIES

The revamped FDR Park experience includes new visitor amenities, including:



**+ BENCHES & FURNITURE**



**+ RESTROOMS & DRINKING FOUNTAINS**



**+ WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE**



**+ LIGHTING & SAFETY**



**+ WIFI & CONNECTIVITY**



**+ CONCESSIONS & FOOD / DRINK**

## WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE // TYPES OF EVENTS

The Boathouse Lawn & Great Lawn will be programmed for a variety of uses such as:



**+ Temporary LIMITED-TIME ART EXHIBITS**

- + Sculpture Displays
- + Environmental Art
- + Digital Light Displays
- + Lantern Festivals
- + Art Fairs
- + Architectural Exhibitions



**+ Temporary SPECIAL EVENTS**

- + Weddings
- + Botanical Displays
- + Movie Nights
- + Kite Tournaments
- + Fashion Displays
- + Lawn Game Tournaments



**+ Semi-permanent SEASONAL EXHIBITS**

- + Winter Wonderland
- + May Day Celebrations
- + Farmer’s Markets
- + Easter Egg Rolls
- + Concert Series
- + Hay Bale Maze

parking lot to the east of the American Swedish Historical Museum will have access off Pattison Avenue and connect to the Entrance Driveway in front of the museum. The parking lot will be gated at night from the rest of the park so that it can be used by visitors to the museum who are attending events that extend past normal park hours. Additional parking to support the Boathouse Lawn will be found at the Pattison Playground and in the larger parking lot by the Fields – just south of Bellaire Manor. The entrance driveway will meet the park road with a triangular traffic island evoking the original Olmsted Brothers plan. The entrance driveway and the section of park road from the driveway to the Welcome Center will be a two-way Park Road that will allow visitors who enter the park at 20<sup>th</sup> Street the ability to get to the Welcome Center without having to drive all the way around the park. Upon entering the park at 20<sup>th</sup> Street, visitors will be able to turn right to take the one-way park road to the western part of the park to go to the Fields, the Wetlands, or the Sedge Meadow.



Left: The Boathouse Lawn will provide a lush setting for picnicking and lounging.



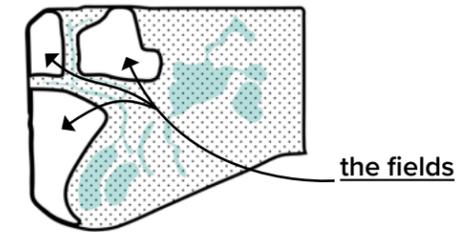


Above: New basketball courts will provide park users with a new recreation experience (Buttonwood Park, New Bedford, MA).

Right: Synthetic turf multipurpose fields provide a more resilient playing surface for soccer and football (New Canaan Country School).



*The Fields* will form a system of multipurpose recreation fields and courts nestled within a forest of trees and nature paths.



### THE FIELDS

The Fields are three sites that integrate field sports, basketball, and tennis into the overall park experience.

The Field's three sites – the Pattison Fields, the Penrose Fields, and the West Fields – will reclaim the often-flooded green fairways of the 18-hole FDR Golf Course. Keeping the excavated soils from the Wetlands on site will allow the Fields to be elevated out of the floodplain. The 12 multipurpose fields, nestled in a forest of trees and natural spaces, will be used to support youth development leagues and adult recreation leagues, as well as to attract regional and national recreation tournaments. The Fields will provide much needed recreation field space for the city and much needed revenue to offset the operations and management of the park. The multipurpose fields will support soccer, football, and lacrosse activities, while new baseball and softball fields will support local little leagues and school teams. The basketball and tennis courts will allow youth development activities as well as informal pick-up games. The golf driving range will continue to support the First Tee Program and a public golf concession. The 12 multipurpose fields will have synthetic turf surfaces with stormwater management storage underneath to store and filter stormwater before slowly releasing it into Shedbrook Creek. Synthetic turf fields reduce the need for mowing, which lowers carbon dioxide emissions, reduces the needs for fertilizers that are the current cause of much of the algal blooms in the park, and reduces need for pesticides and herbicides. Synthetic turf



Left: New baseball fields will increase the availability of playing fields and improve equity of access (New England Baseball Complex).

surfaces also allow for extended play that natural surface grasses would not allow. Lighting for the Fields will also extend play into early evening hours. Not only does the plan provide for more multipurpose fields, but it integrates new fields that do not require irrigation or regeneration.

Within The Fields, the park road will create a one-way loop with parking along one side with parking lots distributed among the concentrations of activity. The tree-lined park road will hug the perimeter of the park with a minimum 50-foot planted buffer so that the three groups of fields will feel as if they are nested clearings in a woodland setting.

Throughout the Fields, multiple visitor amenities will be located to improve the visitor experience especially for those who come to the park to watch family and friends on the fields or courts. These amenities will include concessions, playgrounds, family picnic tables and pavilions, restrooms, and educational nature trails connecting these active recreation areas with natural resources in the *Ecological Core*.

**The Pattison Fields**

Turning onto the western park road past the Bellaire Manor, visitors entering the Pattison Fields will first come upon the new baseball and softball quadplex with synthetic turf and infields designed to accommodate multiple age groups of ballplayers. These lighted fields will extend playability times and provide greater resilience to storm events, draining faster than natural grass fields. Approaching from the Franklin 5K and the Entrance Driveway, visitors will pass through the Entrance Garden into a grove of oak trees, and enter the Pattison Fields from behind Bellaire Manor between the quadplex and the five multi-sport fields. To the west of the quadplex will be 10 tennis courts and four basketball courts. Tree-lined walkways will link these courts to the quadplex, the multipurpose fields, the Franklin 5K, and the two parking lots serving these fields – one parallel to the Park Road north of the quadplex and one by the Central Park Road south of Bellaire Manor. At the west end of the north parking lot by the tennis and basketball courts, is a trailhead building with public restrooms, water fountains, bike parking, signage and park information. There are two family picnic areas in the Pattison Fields – one by the trailhead and tennis / basketball courts, and the second by the quadplex and the easternmost multipurpose field. Both will be easily accessible to the parking lots and to the Franklin 5K. Nature trails will lead park users from the fields, the courts, and the picnic areas over to the Hill and across boardwalk bridges to the Sedge Meadow.

**The Penrose Fields**

Since the FDR Golf Course was added to the park in the 1930s, no public access was available to the western part of the park. This will now change with the inclusion of a pedestrian gateway that welcomes park visitors to this part of the park for the first time. A small, hardscaped plaza with signage and wayfinding will greet visitors from the sidewalk near the Pattison Avenue and Penrose Avenue intersections. The pedestrian gateway connects to the



Franklin 5K, which connects visitors to the rest of the park or through to the Navy Yard. From this location in the park, visitors can travel north and west of the park to Packer Park and Sienna Place neighborhoods, the Gateway Apartments immediately adjacent to the west of the park, and future connections to the Schuylkill River and Platt Bridge Trails.

The Penrose Fields contain three multipurpose fields with tree lined trails linking these fields to a new parking lot, the Franklin 5K, and the nature trails that explore Shedbrook Creek. The parking lot will be



*Top: The Shedbrook Creek Playground will include interactive, nature-based play for children of all ages and abilities (Governors Island, InHabitat).*

*Right: Youth development through golf will continue to be a key part of the new FDR Park. First Tee will continue to operate out of the park (Indian Trails Golf - First Tee).*



designed to flood, if necessary, for extra stormwater storage in the park. The Franklin 5K will cross Shedbrook Creek from the Pattison Fields and follow the extended riparian buffer to another bridge crossing the western Shedbrook Creek branch before entering the West Fields. Another Franklin 5K spur will wrap around the three fields and connect back to the pedestrian gateway.

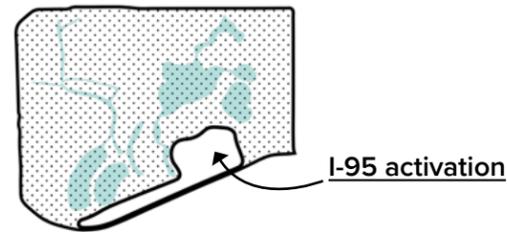
**The West Fields**

The West Fields will act as the central hub for the western half of the park due to the presence of the Fieldhouse and the signature Shedbrook Playground. The Fieldhouse will have concessions selling food and drink for all park users and visitors who may be there to watch the athletic events. A tree-covered terrace will overlook the four multipurpose fields and the Shedbrook Playground. The Fieldhouse will also contain two locker rooms for teams to use, administrative and office space for managers of the Fields, storage for field maintenance materials, water fountains, and public restrooms. Shedbrook Playground is the second signature playground envisioned for the park. At over three acres, the Shedbrook Playground will be an inclusive playground for all generations of users with plenty of shaded seating for parents and guardians to watch their children. Nature play elements will continue the playground experience into the woods by the bend in the creek.

In addition to on-street parking along the park road, two parking lots will serve the West Field. The parking lot in the north will serve the Fieldhouse, Shedbrook Creek Playground, the multipurpose fields, and the Franklin 5K. This parking lot will provide access to the canoe and kayak drop-in where park users can use their own non-motorized watercraft to access Shedbrook Creek for the first-time in the park’s history. The south parking lot will serve the golf driving range, the Franklin 5K, and the Wetlands. Golf will remain in the park in the form of a public driving range instead of a full 18-hole golf course. The driving range will be home to the First Tee of Philadelphia, which is a youth development organization that introduces the game of golf and its inherent values to young people. The driving range will also offer a concession opportunity serving food and drinks while generating revenue that can be used to offset the park’s operations and maintenance.

The Franklin 5K will sweep through the West Fields from the north to the south. In the north, the multi-use trail will interface with the canoe and kayak drop-in location near the Fieldhouse parking lot, and in the south, the trail will connect to the parking lot for the golf driving range before crossing the park road by I-95. Trailheads in both locations will have signage and wayfinding, seating, water fountains, and bike parking. Tree-lined paths will connect the multipurpose fields, the Fieldhouse, the Shedbrook Playground, the driving range, the nature trails, the park road, and the Franklin 5K. The nature trails will lead park users north across bridges over Shedbrook Creek to the Sedge Meadow and south the nature trail network around the Wetlands.

# I-95 Activation will shape a node of activity centered on the FDR Skatepark.



## I-95 ACTIVATION

Activation of the space below and adjacent to I-95 will build on the existing energy and success of the FDR Skatepark and fields by creating a node of activity with basketball, gardens, and multi-use trail connections.

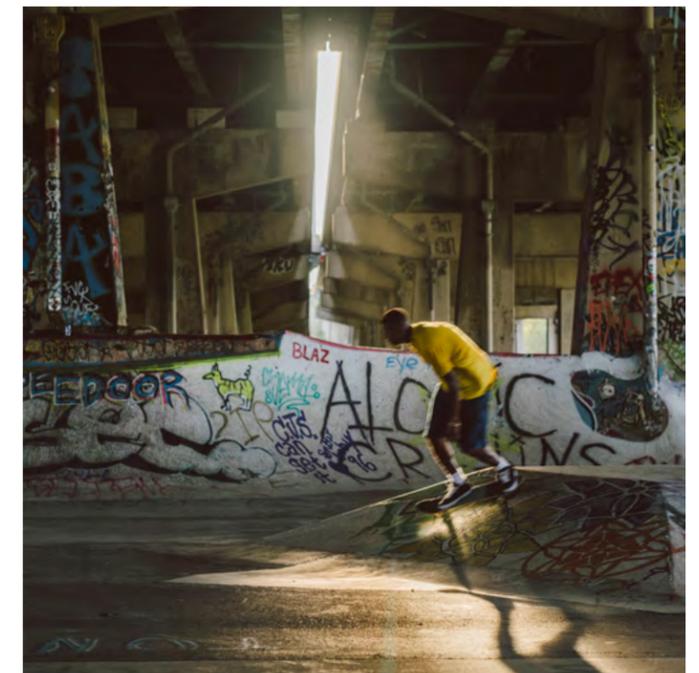
The presence of I-95 has weighed heavily on the park since its construction in the 1960s, yet it provides opportunities to turn this area into an asset for the park. One of the greatest challenges of having I-95 run through the southern part of the park has been the influx of stormwater that enters the park untreated. It is this source of stormwater that is the cause of many of the potholes along the park road and erosion under the overpass and by Hollander Creek. To solve this issue, the overgrown and underutilized sliver of park south of I-95 and north of the railroad tracks will be transformed into a series of rain gardens that store and filter stormwater. The Franklin 5K will run through this linear system of rain gardens after crossing the park road and going under the overpass by the Wetlands, and then going under the overpass again and paralleling the park road by the Porch. The combination of formalized and programmed spaces under the overpass with the rain gardens and Franklin 5K will transform this area into an activated space that is a part of, not apart from, the rest of the park.

This area will become a unique and innovative public space for gatherings and events. Due to the PennDOT easement under I-95, there are challenges to transform the environment, however there



are opportunities to formalize and activate the space in ways that are mutually beneficial to the rest of the park. In addition to the world-famous FDR Skatepark, four basketball courts with lighting will be added. The informal parking that happens under the underpass will be formalized for daily use or park events. In addition to lighting, the columns under the overpass could be activated with murals by local and national artists. PennDOT is currently under way with planning efforts to update the I-95 overpass and intersection with Broad Street. Reconstruction efforts related to this project are 10 to 15 years in the future.

The Richie Ashburn Fields will remain where they are. Maintenance storage for these fields will move from the Bathhouses to the new Park Maintenance Facility on the other side of Hollander Creek. The current restroom that is located between the two fields will be opened for public use during all open park hours. Tree-lined trails link the fields to the parking lots by I-95 and the Porch, as well as the Picnic Woods and Meadow Lake.



Left: The Franklin 5K will weave through a series of lush rain gardens adjacent to I-95 (artist rendering).

Above: The FDR Skatepark will continue to be an important component of the park.

## WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE // UNDER I-95

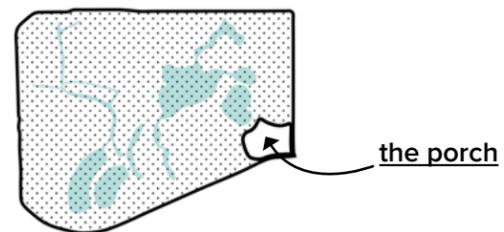
### Toronto, ON, Canada THE BENTWAY

The Bentway is a public trail and corridor space under the Gardiner Expressway in Toronto, Canada that opened to the public in 2018. This unique outdoor space consists of a 1+ mile multi-use trail and 55 “rooms” – or civic areas that host activities such as farmers markets, exhibition halls, performance theaters, gardens, and a skate trail. This creative project, which is maintained, operated, and programmed by the Bentway Conservancy is a testament to the transformation of industrial highway infrastructure into new urban landscapes.



© Public Work

*The Porch* will become a flexible mixed-use space that establishes a new southern gateway to the Park – a hub for community events and an important connection to the Navy Yard.



**THE PORCH**

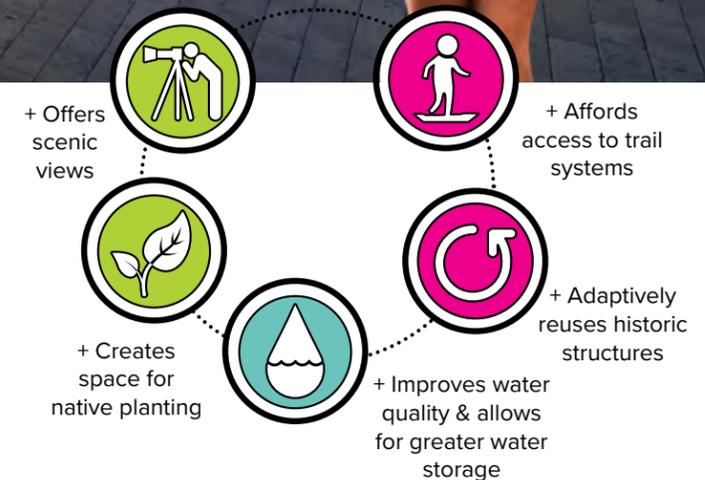
**Bathhouses**

The historic Bathhouses will be restored and repurposed into a community-centered event and gathering space.

Ever since the Bathhouses were converted from swimming pool locker and shower rooms to Philadelphia Parks and Recreation’s maintenance and special trades facilities, these historic buildings have been off limits to park visitors. These buildings anchor the southern pedestrian gateway into the park from South Broad Street and the Navy Yard Trail. Park users arriving at the Bathhouses will experience a radically transformed pair of buildings adaptively reused for concession opportunities that support the entire park. Revenue generated by these concessions will help support the park’s maintenance and operations. The smaller of the two, one-story beige brick buildings to the west will become a restaurant overlooking Meadow Lake. The larger bathhouse building to the east will utilize the large interior space to become an event venue that may be rented out for gatherings, community meetings, and performances. The Bathhouses will contain a set of public restrooms, the fifth set of public restrooms in the park.



*The Bathhouses and Great Lawn will frame the Porch, creating a gateway to the Navy Yard and a hub for events, while offering lake views (artist rendering).*





⊕ Above: Vibrant and lush entrance gardens will double as rain gardens providing year-long beauty and stormwater management (Judith Marcus).



Right: The elevated wooden terrace of the Bathhouses will be open to the public and available for outdoor dining and events (Loeb Boathouse, Sideways NYC).

Terraces and tree-filled courtyards will frame both sides of the Bathhouses, and effectively act as porches for the southern pedestrian gateway to FDR Park. The Porch will allow enough space for park users to comfortably pause and relax before entering the larger park or even the Bathhouses themselves. Rain gardens in front of the courtyard will provide year-round horticultural beauty and stormwater management. The elevated wooden terrace in the back of the Bathhouses will be open to the public as well as outdoor dining for the restaurant concession and event space concessions. A bulkhead along the southern edge of Meadow Lake will give park users a secluded viewing platform at the elevated terrace to observe the waterfowl and other wildlife in the *Ecological Core*.

**Navy Yard Connection**

**A new multi-use trail will connect the park to the Navy Yard.**

The Navy Yard complex is rapidly transforming into a live-work neighborhood with open space needs that FDR Park can offer in terms of passive and active recreation opportunities and nature experiences not found in other parts of South Philadelphia. The multi-use trail connection linking the Navy Yard to the Porch at FDR Park faces several challenges for park users in that it must cross Broad Street and the new I-95 on/off ramps currently being planned by PennDOT. Starting at the Bathhouses and crossing through the rain gardens, the trail will cross the park road and intersect with the Franklin 5K before ascending the slope to the Garden Walk on the west side of Broad Street. Utilizing painted crosswalks and pedestrian counters, the trail will cross the I-95 ramps and continue south over the railroad tracks to Crescent Park. This trail will be an important link to future trails along the Schuylkill River and the Delaware River Trail systems with FDR Park at the center of this connection.

**WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE // ADAPTIVE REUSE**



© DRWC

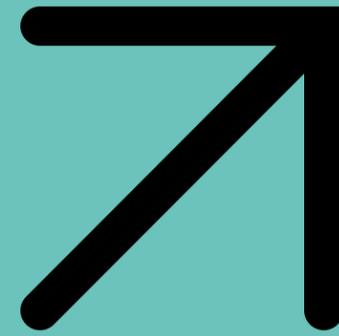
Philadelphia, PA  
**CHERRY STREET PIER**

*The Cherry Street Pier is a 65,000-square-foot warehouse and former shipping pier. After decades of vacancy, the adaptive reuse of the Pier preserved much of its historic features. Opened in the fall of 2018, it is now a mixed-use public space on the Delaware River waterfront. The space functions as a creative incubator, marketplace, performance venue, and gathering space.*



⊕ Left: The Porch will provide a new connection to the Navy Yard through a safe and accessible multi-use trail (The BeltLine).

# 05

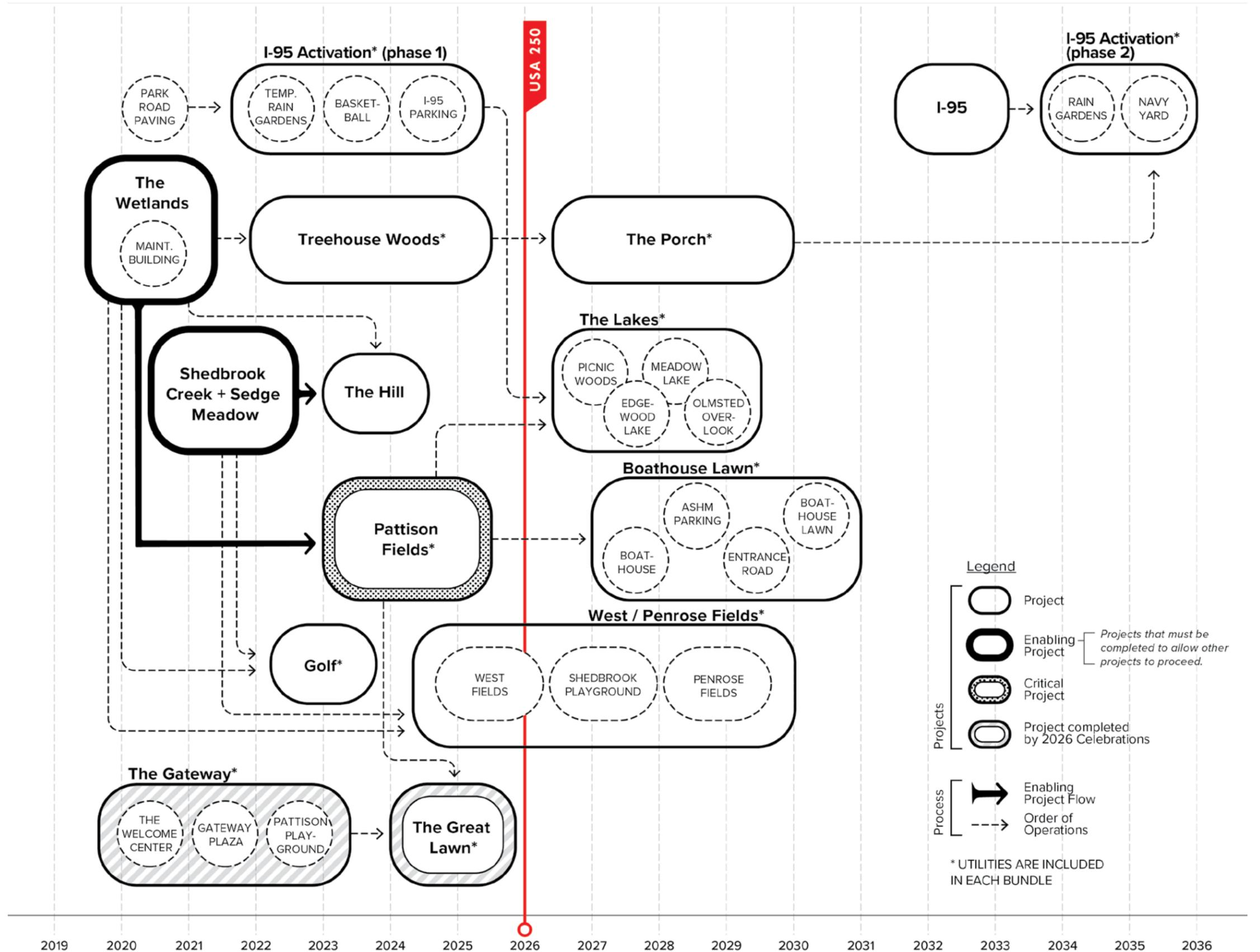


## HOW WE GET THERE

The master plan for FDR Park is ambitious, but it is achievable and necessary. In cities around the country, where parks are viewed as critical pieces of civic infrastructure, communities are making transformative investments in their public spaces. New models of operations and management are emerging. Implementation of this plan will require a diverse and dedicated mix of public and private funds to see this vision fully realized.

# Implementing the Vision

The implementation of the FDR Park Master Plan requires a flexible framework that can accommodate shifts in funding and priorities. In an ideal world, the implementation would occur all at once. The reality is that a calibrated orchestration of critical steps will be necessary since some parts of the park will need to be completed before other areas may begin construction. Each set of bundled projects will have at least one catalyst project that can attract private or philanthropic funding sources in order to make sure that the private and public funding will go hand in hand throughout the full implementation of the park. Opportunities to have major concessions implemented as part of bundled projects in earlier phases will help drive revenue to balance the operations and maintenance. It is the intent of the master plan that the park remains open during all construction-related activities. It is also the intent that no field or facility that needs to be demolished is removed before a new field or facility is built – that way the current activities in the park will always remain open to the public. The master plan will take many years to be fully implemented.



⊕  
Left: Implementation Flow Diagram. Based on targeted timing and movement of fill, certain projects must be completed before others. Projects are bundled to ensure that each grouping has at least one "flagship" project to support fundraising.

### GOALS OF PHASING

- 1 **Stimulate revenue generation to support park operations and maintenance.**
- 2 **Maintain community connectivity and replace amenities and programs before taking them offline.**
- 3 **Leverage momentum around 2026 Celebrations (America turns 250).**

### ENABLING PROJECTS

The master plan defines enabling projects as those early projects that must come first in the sequence of park development before the next set of projects can happen. The Wetlands and Shedbrook Creek expansion and restoration projects and the Sedge Meadow creation represent the first two bundles of projects that will enable the rest of the park implementation to follow. They are an example of fill creation projects because these projects will create over 500,000 cubic yards of fill that will be needed to raise land programmed for active recreation out of the floodplain. This fill creation is necessary for the Pattison Fields, the Penrose Fields, and the West Fields as well as for the golf concession and the Hill. The Pattison Fields project is an example of an enabling project known as a program element replacement project. In this case, the new tennis courts and baseball/softball fields will need to be constructed in the Pattison Fields so that they are fully operational and open to the community before the land containing the old courts and fields can be repurposed to make way for the Great Lawn.

### PARK UTILITIES

One of the key challenges with the early phase of projects is the upgrading of the park's utilities. Many of the utilities were initially constructed as part of the Sesquicentennial and have vastly exceeded their lifespans. The master plan calls for whole replacement and modernization of all park utilities including water, sewer, electricity, tele/data/fiber, and green stormwater infrastructure. Each bundle of projects that is improved will need to include their portion of the utility costs as a part of their construction. This will start with the Gateway Plaza projects at

the connections along Pattison Avenue and Broad Street and will continue into the rest of the park. The repaving of the park road is a critical first step in gaining trust within the community. This project will assure the community that their needs were heard (park road repairs were at the forefront of the community's immediate issues) and that the master plan implementation is moving forward.

### PROJECTS COMPLETED BY 2026 CELEBRATIONS

In 2026, America will celebrate its 250th birthday and many of these national celebrations will occur in FDR Park, just as the park hosted the Sesquicentennial events 100 years ago. In order for the park to host these events, a number of bundled projects will need to be completed in time for the celebrations in 2026. The Gateway Plaza projects – including the Gateway Plaza, the Welcome Center, and the Pattison Playground – will serve as the pedestrian entrance to the park and will serve as a critical first impression for visitors attending the celebrations. Significant civic events such as this are rare, and the master plan implementation should capitalize on the timing. In conjunction with the Gateway Plaza projects, the 15-acre Great Lawn can become the centerpiece of the events related to this celebration.

### WHAT'S NEXT? // AMERICA TURNS 250

Philadelphia, PA  
**PHILADELPHIA 250 (2026)**

*Philadelphia 250 (Semiquincentennial) is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to convene citizens and leaders from across the country to celebrate the 250th birthday of America. The celebration will be anchored in Philadelphia, building on the city's role as host to the First and Second Continental Congresses, the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution.*

*(Learn more at: Philadelphia250.us)*



### FLASHBACK! // THE 1926 SESQUICENTENNIAL

*As we look forward to the Philadelphia250 celebrations, let's take a step back in time and remember the 1926 Sesquicentennial at FDR Park.*



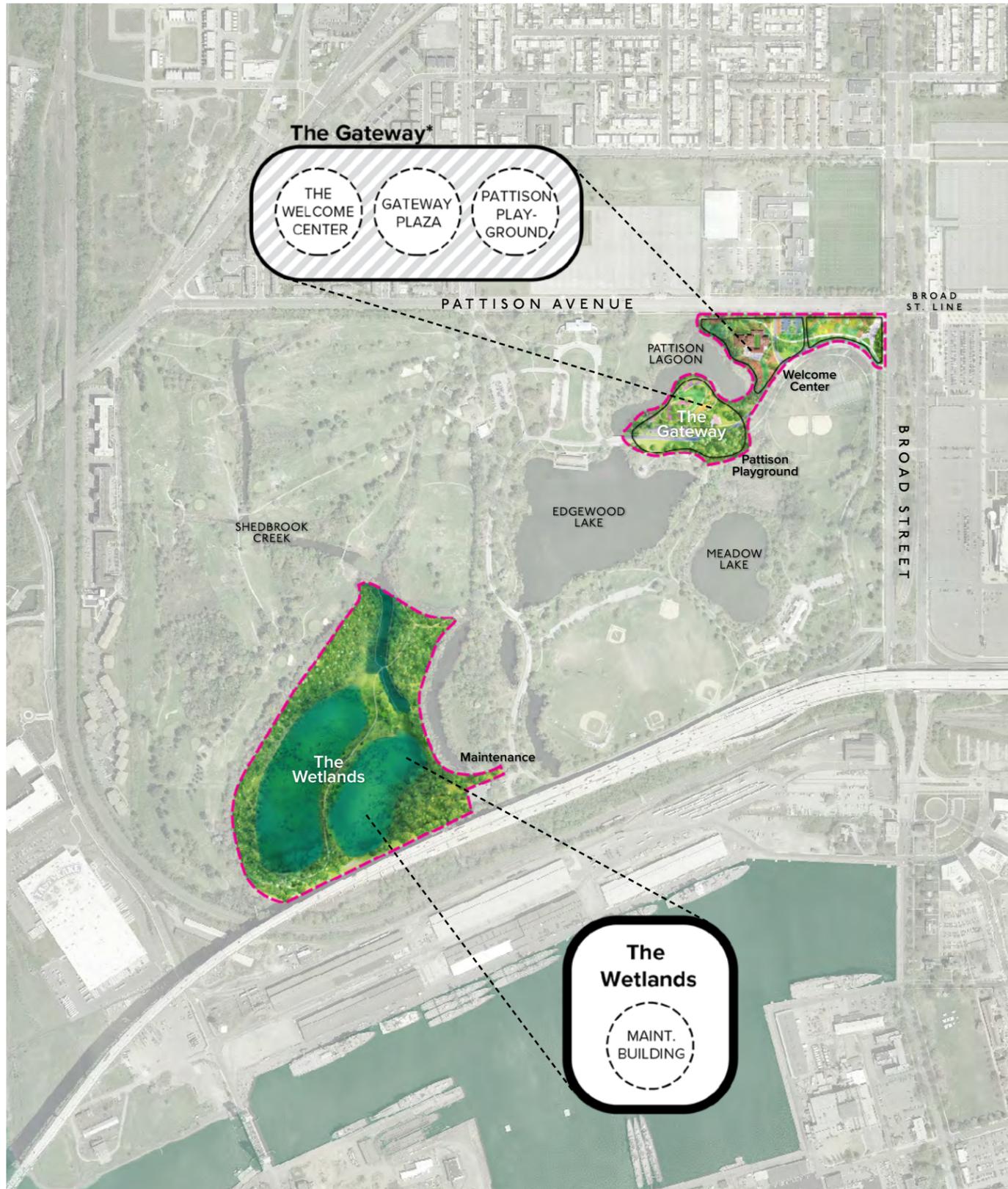
**+ CELEBRATION PREPARATION**



**+ VENDOR BOOTHS LINE THE MAJOR PATHS**



**+ LUSH GARDENS AND PATHWAYS**



\* Utilities included

**2023 snapshot**



\* Utilities included

**2026 snapshot**



\* Utilities included

2030 snapshot



\* Utilities included

2035 snapshot



# Implementation Considerations

## DEVELOP PARKWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS

A key step along the path to implementation involves translating the goals of the master plan into parkwide design standards that will create a cohesive FDR Park identity and brand. When applicable, these standards should align with existing Philadelphia Parks and Recreation standards. At a minimum, the parkwide design standards should include:

### Site Furnishings

Site furnishings – benches, tables, chairs, waste and recycling receptacles, bike racks, bollards, planters, and sunshades – form the backbone of the park’s identity and impact how park users interact with park spaces. Furnishings should improve the function and enhance the aesthetics of the park, combining form and function. Parkwide Design Standards should include both elements that are unique to FDR Park and those that are standard across Philadelphia’s park system, highlighting areas where furnishings may be custom or tailored to a specific place-based goal.

### Lighting

Lighting in parks is essential and can improve access and feelings of safety for users. Design standards should include options for area lighting, wall- and surface-mount lighting, pendant or hanging lighting, and path lighting (bollards and wayfinding). To reduce light pollution and the impact on neighbors and animal species that call the park home, all proposed lighting should be Dark Sky Compliant (see Sustainable Design Targets for more information).

### Material Palette

Parkwide Design Standards should include material palettes – one for softscapes (planting, etc.) and one for hardscapes (paving, etc.). Softscape (planting) materials should include plants that contribute to the site’s overall sustainability, specifically plants that are native or water and heat tolerant. Specialized plants for green stormwater management Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be highlighted. Suggested hardscape materials should align with Sustainable Design Targets (see following section) in an effort to reduce required maintenance and overall lifecycle costs.

### Signage and Wayfinding

Signage and wayfinding (e.g., identity signs, trail markers, orientation points, donor recognition, etc.) are key graphic elements that not only orient and direct visitors, but also convey and enhance the visual identity of the park. Similar to site furnishings, the standards for signage and wayfinding should identify signage and markings that are standard across Philadelphia’s park system and those that are unique or custom to FDR Park, highlighting areas where each typology is appropriate. In general, identity and wayfinding signage should not include neon elements or lighting that may impede park operations or negatively impact surrounding residents or wildlife. Sizes of signs should be determined based on desired visibility range and tailored to desired audience. For example, some signs should be visible while driving along the park road while others should only be visible to those walking along paths.

### Architectural Standards

Architectural standards will be required for both existing and proposed park structures. Adaptive reuse guidelines and standards should be developed to ensure that historic assets are preserved and rehabilitation of structures is done in a manner that is consistent with the overall vision for the park. New park structures – market and picnic pavilions, concession buildings, and maintenance buildings – should adhere to Sustainable Design Targets (see following section), be consistent with the overall look and feel of the park, and address flooding and environmental challenges the park faces. Parking and pavement should be kept at a minimum to meet stormwater and environmental goals. All lighting, signage and wayfinding, and other outward facing elements should adhere to Parkwide Design Standards.

### Ecological Design Considerations

Given the park’s ecological significance for the city and the region, Parkwide Design Standards should include additional ecological design considerations that should be evaluated during implementation projects. At a minimum, this section should include design considerations to improve bird and animal habitats, reduction of invasive materials, forest management, and lake management. There are multiple existing resources to guide the development of these guidelines. The American Bird Conservancy (abcbirds.org) has developed a “Bird-Friendly Building Design” guide that provides detailed information and solutions for glass collision issues. WIRES (NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service Inc.), Australia’s largest wildlife rescue organization, provides guidelines and solutions for bird and wildlife-friendly fencing and golf netting. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the US Department of Agriculture, and other environmental organizations provide multiple guides and best practices for the management of invasive plants and the management of forest and lake habitats.

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN TARGETS

FDR Park implementation projects should meet or exceed current sustainable site and building design goals where possible. To ensure that FDR Park is resilient in the face of a changing climate and economy, it will be necessary to utilize multiple tools, including best practices and cutting-edge technology, to achieve our resiliency goals. Potential measuring and tracking tools and technologies are listed and described below. However, a detailed review and assessment of contemporary sustainable design targets should be completed during the design phase of each project.

### Philadelphia Sustainability Plans and Standards

The City of Philadelphia has developed and is implementing a number of sustainability plans and standards that should be employed in the implementation of the FDR Park Master Plan including:

- + **Greenworks: A Vision for a Sustainable Philadelphia, 2016** | This plan, originally completed by the Office of Sustainability in 2009, was refreshed and a new vision document was released in 2016, setting a clear framework for the future and introducing online tools to help track progress.
- + **Growing Stronger: Toward a Climate-Ready Philadelphia, 2015** | This report by the Office of Sustainability and ICF International provides a frank assessment of the risk climate change presents for the city and solutions to mitigate these impacts.
- + **Green City, Clean Waters, 2011** | The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD)’s plan to increase green stormwater infrastructure in an effort to reduce the amount of polluted overflow discharging into creeks, streams, and rivers by 85% by 2035.

### Dark Sky Compliant

Park lighting should balance the needs of all park users by providing safe and accessible lighting for visitors that does not negatively impact the habitat of animal species or contribute to light pollution. The dark sky movement is aimed at protecting the night sky by reducing light pollution by using more responsible outdoor lighting. The non-profit group International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) was founded in 1988 and works with designers, planners, and policy makers to provide smarter lighting choices. IDA’s “Fixture Seal of Approval Program” tests and certifies outdoor lighting fixtures as “Dark Sky Friendly.” These fixtures reduce skyglow, minimize blue light, and are fully shielded.



⊕ Above: Existing condition of the historic Guardhouse.

Right: Current riparian planting conditions adjacent to Meadow Lake.

### Building Sustainability Targets

Multiple building sustainability rating systems exist to guide development of both new and existing structures. In an effort to exceed green building standards, one or more of the guidelines below should be used to develop proposed designs for park structures:

- + **LEED:** The US Green Building Council administers this rating system for sustainable buildings and communities. There are LEED rating systems for every type of building phase, size, and type, including adaptive reuse. Relevant categories of certification include:
  - **BD+C:** Building Design and Construction (new construction, core and shell)
  - **ID+C:** Interior Design and Construction (commercial interiors)
  - **O+M:** Building Operations and Maintenance (existing buildings)
  - **LEED Zero:** available for all LEED projects certified under BD+C or O+M rating systems working to achieve net-zero goals in carbon and/or resources.

Implementing the FDR Park Master plan will follow the Philadelphia Rebuild requirements for sustainability. Park building projects with over 10,000 square feet of renovation or new construction shall meet at a minimum the LEED™ Silver rating (See The Philadelphia Code, Section 17-111). Refer to Specification Sections 013329 Sustainable Design Reporting and 018113 Sustainable Design.



### Low-Impact Landscapes

Low-impact development is the concept of designing and building to minimally affect the ecology of a site. When landscapes such as those proposed by the master plan for FDR Park, are designed in harmony with the natural setting, disruptions to water resources, habitats, indigenous species and soils are eliminated or minimized. This is critical for FDR Park where important habitat areas need to be protected, where water quality and quantity issues have been prevalent, and where finite resources will be needed to keep up with an increased demand for high-quality recreation facilities and programming. Low-impact landscapes also refer to landscapes where reduced maintenance requirements are part of the original design in an effort to reduce labor and expenditures. Low-impact development can be considered at both a site and more regional scale. Below are some ways these principles can be applied to FDR Park:

- + **Energy Conservation** – proposed improvements should be designed in a way to minimize energy needs. Standards such as LEED and Passive House provide benchmarks and guidelines for designing buildings and sites to utilize natural solar and hydrologic conditions efficiently.
- + **Reduced Auto Dependence** – designing sites that prioritize pedestrian circulation and walkability and connections to non-vehicular transportation reduce the impacts of automobiles. Benefits of reduced auto-dependence include improved air quality, healthier and more active residents and visitors, and a safer and more welcoming environment for a range of users.

- + **Materiality** – using materials that are sustainably sourced reduces the overall environmental impact of construction and supports the local/regional economy. Local materials and products are generally better equipped to handle unique climates and can enhance authenticity and sense of place.
- + **Landscaping** – similar to materials, using native plant species for landscaping reduces the environmental impact and maintenance requirements.
- + **Irrigation** – All efforts should be made to reduce or eliminate the need for supplemental water from irrigation. Appropriate planning and design, selection of native plant materials acclimated to the Philadelphia climate, soil improvements, and sustainable maintenance practices will reduce water demand in the park, reduce potential maintenance issues due to irrigation, and will make for a more resilient landscape.
- + **Chemical Applications** – All efforts should be made to avoid the use of herbicides and pesticides in FDR Park because of the sensitive ecological habitats, potential harm to wildlife, and risks to water quality.

Existing guidelines and benchmarking programs for low-impact landscapes include:

- + **SITES:** The Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI) administers this rating system for sustainable landscapes both with or without buildings. Similar to LEED, SITES provides a series of guidelines for development projects and a scorecard used to determine if a site is eligible for certification. The goals of the SITES program are: creating regenerative systems and fostering resiliency; ensuring

## WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE // SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS



### Frick Park, Pittsburgh, PA FRICK ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

*The Frick Environmental Center is a welcome facility, education hub, and gateway to Frick Park that is a certified Living Building and has achieved Leadership in Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum. The center is a living, learning tool that promotes resource stewardship while being completely net zero thanks to energy produced on-site through solar panels and geothermal wells. All materials are responsibly sourced, all rain water is reused, and wastewater is responsibly treated on-site.*

future resource supply and mitigating climate change; transforming the market through design, development, and maintenance practices; and enhancing human well-being and strengthening community.

- + **Climate Positive Design – The Pathfinder:** Climate Positive Design is an initiative developed by CMG Landscape Architecture with the assistance of numerous organizations including the Landscape Architecture Foundation and the American Society of Landscape Architects. The organization has set an ambitious goal for landscape architecture projects to be climate positive by the year 2030, meaning that new projects will go beyond carbon neutral and actively work to remove more carbon from the atmosphere than they emit. The application – Pathfinder – and the Climate Positive Design Toolkit provides resources to help designers facilitate this change. Pathfinder is an interactive application where designers input details of their individual projects (i.e., types of materials, plants, etc.) and receive a realistic assessment of the time it would take their project to become climate positive, offering design suggestions to enhance its performance.

## CIVIC FRAMEWORK

Reimagining the Civic Commons is a three-year, national initiative that seeks to foster engagement, equity, environmental sustainability, and economic development by revitalizing and connecting public places such as parks, plazas, trails and libraries. In Philadelphia, five newly reimagined civic assets are located in neighborhoods outside of Center City and include a riverfront bike and pedestrian trail, a renovated public library and park space, an elevated park, a nature center/outdoor youth education center, and new active and passive recreation improvements for West Fairmount Park. The public, non-profit, and private sector organizations working together in Philadelphia as the Civic Commons Collective are fostering a collaborative environment among the city’s community network, while repurposing and repositioning pieces of the city’s existing urban infrastructure as new civic amenities.

Though FDR Park is not directly related to the “civic commons collective” of five model projects in Philadelphia as part of the Reimagining the Civic Commons, the civic framework that was set up to guide and measure the results of the civic commons collective may be applicable to the implementation projects that come out of the master plan in order to measure its civic impact. The value of this civic framework is to use a data-driven approach that offers a new method for determining the multi-faceted value of reinvesting in civic assets. It will provide evidence of the societal benefits of a connected set of public places. A

measurement system is designed to analyze the impacts of these investments on the sites and in surrounding communities and to track progress toward four main goals:

- + **Civic Engagement:** We will build a sense of community that brings people of all backgrounds back into public life as stewards and advocates shaping their city’s future.
- + **Socioeconomic Mixing:** We will create places where everyone belongs and that generate opportunities for shared experience among people of all incomes and backgrounds.
- + **Environmental Sustainability:** We will increase access to nature and create environmentally friendly places easily reached by walking, biking or transit.
- + **Value Creation:** We will encourage additional investments in neighborhoods to foster local businesses and change the perception of safety while maintaining neighborhood affordability.

With the data that are gathered, Reimagining the Civic Commons aims to:

- + Learn how a healthy civic commons supports more resilient, less fragmented cities and neighborhoods.
- + Demonstrate how investments in connected sets of civic assets impact engagement, equity, environmental sustainability, and economic development.
- + Build the rationale for further investment in revitalized and connected public places.

The data collection process will take Reimagining the Civic Commons into the public places they are reimagining and the neighborhoods nearby to understand how visitors are interacting with each place—and how the place is supporting a more engaged, equitable, sustainable, and economically vibrant community. This process will also use publicly available data and in-depth analyses to evaluate the changes over time.

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

As described throughout the master plan, FDR Park is a critical piece of cultural, historic, and ecological infrastructure. As such, there are multiple regulatory frameworks and permit processes that will need to be considered along the path to implementation. The section below describes when/if certain regulatory reviews or permits are triggered. This should be used as a roadmap to implementation. A detailed review of necessary regulatory milestones and permitting should be completed during the design phase as regulations and requirements are subject to change.

### Flood and Water Management

Given the park’s current flooding and water issues, floodplain and stormwater management will be crucial throughout the implementation of the master plan. The park is within the floodplain and falls within a Special Flood Hazard Area requiring more permitting and coordination with the city and FEMA.

- + **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):** When reshaping or altering the floodplain within the park by cutting and filling certain areas, a Letter of Map Revision (LOMAR) must be submitted to FEMA. This serves as a basis for modification to an effective Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and/or Flood Boundary and Floodway Map (FBFM). This document records any physical features that modify the existing floodway, base flood elevations, or special flood hazard area. Depending on the extent of modifications and coordination with FEMA, a CLOMAR (Conditional Letter of Map Revision) may be required. This does not modify any existing maps, but rather gives FEMA an opportunity to comment on and review proposed modifications.



*Below: Flooded conditions on the western half of the park (FDR Golf Course).*





+ **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):** NEPA requirements cover a broad spectrum of environmental protections. Depending on the source of funding for certain projects, NEPA review may be necessary. Whenever federal dollars or proposed federal improvements are proposed for a certain site, NEPA review is required.

+ **Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) & US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE):** Any project that may impact wetlands or other significant water bodies (i.e., streams) requires a series of permits from DEP and USACE. If funded by federal dollars, these permits would be obtained following NEPA review. These permits may include:

- **Wetland Delineation:** A survey of potentially impacted land must be completed before schematic design to determine if any wetlands are present. If wetlands are present and may be impacted, a separate permit must be obtained from the USACE and DEP that details the potential impacts (i.e., filling, flooding, regrading, etc.) and mitigation activities.
- **Nationwide Permit 27 (NWP 27):** NWP 27 is a permit administered by the USACE. It is required when restoring, enhancing, or establishing wetlands, streams, and other open waters. This permit covers activities that seek to increase the function of these ecosystem services. This permit should be considered for projects within the *Ecological Core* (e.g., Shedbrook Creek, Sedge Meadow, Edgewood and Meadow lakes).
- **Pennsylvania State Programmatic General Permit (PASPGP):** This permit, administered by the USACE,



Above: One of the park's historic stone bridges.

authorizes the discharge of dredged or fill materials and/or the placement of structures, including those that are temporary or permanent. This permit covers any impact that affects one-acre or less of US waters (including wetlands and streams).

- **Section 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC):** DEP provides this certification as a preliminary step for other federal permits, including the Section 404 permit. It certifies that any discharges into US water from a proposed project are in compliance with Pennsylvania water quality requirements and other applicable federal or state laws and regulations.
- **National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program:** The DEP, under direction by the EPA, regulates water pollution from stormwater discharge into US waters. This permit may be required during the design and implementation of stormwater management BMPs. Chapters 102 and 105 under the NPDES may be required to ensure that BMPs operate at a level consistent with regulations.

+ **City of Philadelphia** – All building permit submissions to the City will require floodplain documents since the entire park falls within a floodplain. Close coordination with the City's Department of Licenses and Inspections (L+I) and the City's Floodplain Manager will also be required.

### Historic and Cultural Resource Management

FDR Park is within a Philadelphia Historic District with contributing structures including the Guardhouse, Bathhouses, Boathouse, Olmsted Overlook, and the original stone bridges.

- + **National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), Section 106:** Section 106 requires consideration of impacts to historic properties of projects that are funded or carried out by federal entities. Similar to NEPA review, Section 106 is only triggered if federal funding is utilized for a project.
- + **Philadelphia Historic Resources:** Projects that impact contributing structures or alter the park property are required to undergo a review by the Philadelphia Historical Commission and the Philadelphia Arts Commission.

### Other Review and Permitting

Depending on the phase and area of influence for a particular implementation project, it may be necessary to seek one or more of the following approvals or permits:

- + **Building Permits:** Building permits for each implementation project will be submitted to the City for approval. Additional floodplain documentation will be required for each permit (see previous section).
- + **PWD Stormwater Review and Permitting:** PWD should be engaged throughout implementation to discuss partnership opportunities to reduce the impact of pollutants and stormwater on the existing system.

- + **Streets Department:** Improvements to or alteration of the park road will require coordination with and approval from the City's Streets Department.
- + **PennDOT Review and Approval:** Coordination with PennDOT during the renovation of I-95 will be required to assure that construction does not negatively impact park operations and to explore partnerships for implementing the Franklin 5k Trail, parking, basketball courts, and stormwater mitigation adjacent to and under I-95.
- + **Impact Reviews:** Additional studies for traffic, noise, and lighting may be required throughout implementation to assess and mitigate any potential impacts on surrounding areas.

## CASE STUDY // HISTORIC OLMSTED PARKS

### New York City, Buffalo & Boston CENTRAL PARK, SOUTH PARK, AND FRANKLIN PARK

Similar to FDR Park, many Olmsted Parks are over 100 years old and in need of updates to meet the needs of contemporary users. Central Park unveiled plans to invest \$150M in a renovation project that includes a new pool, ice rink, and landscape restoration. South Park (Buffalo) launched the Arboretum Restoration Project, which restores Olmsted's original vision, as part of a celebration of 150 years of Olmsted in Buffalo. Franklin Park (Boston) launched a new master plan effort and \$28M investment in 2019.



+ Central Park, New York City, NY



+ Franklin Park, Boston, MA



+ South Park, Buffalo, NY

# How We Are Paying For It

Parks require two types of funding. Capital funds enable the design, engineering, and construction of improvements to the park. Operational funding covers ongoing maintenance and programming of the park, ensuring it meets community expectations for a relevant, clean, and safe experience.

Nationally, government funding for parks has declined and communities have looked increasingly towards new models of earned revenue, philanthropy, and sponsorship to cover the gap. Today, Philadelphia ranks 77th out of the 100 largest US cities in spending on parks per resident. Implementing the vision for FDR Park will require \$255M in capital funding and is estimated to take \$1.2M to operate and maintain each year. In order to generate and sustain this level of resources, the City of Philadelphia will need to identify and engage partners to develop new models of governance that both attract investment and connect with residents who rely on the park.

## CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE

“Construction Costs” (shown in the table to the right) were developed from the master plan and are a rough order of magnitude. They include just the estimated cost of building the project as conceptually shown in 2020. There may be uncertainties such as environmental mitigation or unanticipated challenge requirements from regulators. Likewise, there may be unanticipated savings that arise as the project scope is more carefully defined. The construction costs represent an order of magnitude that will continue to be shaped as funding and project scopes demand. Each year, these costs are expected to escalate with inflation.

“Total Project Cost” captures the additional costs of developing a project outside of construction. This includes design, engineering and permitting fees. It captures project management costs and legal costs as the governance of the project and its contracts are negotiated. It also includes an estimate of the costs to fundraise money from corporate and philanthropic sources.

## CAPITAL FUNDING

Capital costs for large urban parks vary widely depending on the quality of design, required infrastructure, and amenities. FDR Park’s capital costs will be higher than average due to its location in the floodplain, historic listing, and the intensity of built program proposed for the site.

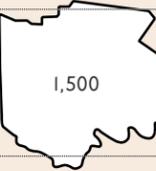
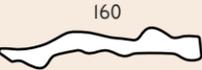
Securing the capital for this project will likely take at least a decade. It will require maximizing and leveraging planned public investment. Happily, this work has already begun. The City of Philadelphia has shown a strong public commitment to investing in public spaces, including FDR Park. The Mayor’s budget includes \$50M in capital funds for FDR Park over five years. The Philadelphia International Airport has announced its commitment to the design and construction of a 45-acre wetland. This estimated \$25M project will provide important wildlife habitat and deliver on a community priority of a nature trail, while improving the function of the park’s Tide Gate. As PennDOT begins rebuilding I-95, the project should consider how that work can improve stormwater management onsite, connections to the Navy Yard, and the park experience under the highway. Likewise, partnership with PWD around the execution of the Green City, Clean Waters plan will provide opportunities to enhance the landscape while providing water quality and stormwater storage along Pattison Avenue.

These public investments are important signals to foundations, corporations, and individuals that FDR Park is a strategic priority of the city. In order to secure the balance of capital funding, the City of Philadelphia should consider the formation of a public-private partnership with nonprofit entities like the Fairmount Park Conservancy that are able to leverage the strong City commitment with private sources.

## COST ESTIMATE

	ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST	TOTAL PROJECT COST
<b>THE WETLANDS</b>	<b>\$20,000,000*</b>	<b>\$26,000,000*</b>
<b>SHEDBROOK CREEK RESTORATION</b>	<b>\$6,417,000</b>	<b>\$8,342,100</b>
<b>SEDGE MEADOW</b>	<b>\$4,279,000</b>	<b>\$5,562,700</b>
<b>THE HILL</b>	<b>\$1,100,000</b>	<b>\$1,430,000</b>
the Ecological Core	<b>EDGEWOOD LAKE</b>	<b>\$7,371,000</b>
	<b>MEADOW LAKE</b>	<b>\$2,109,000</b>
	<b>PATTISON LAGOON</b>	<b>\$1,939,000</b>
	<b>PICNIC WOODS</b>	<b>\$2,593,000</b>
	<b>PATTISON PLAYGROUND</b>	<b>\$9,584,000</b>
	<b>TREEHOUSE WOODS/PAVILION</b>	<b>\$9,078,000</b>
<b>FRANKLIN 5K</b>	<b>\$5,028,000</b>	<b>\$6,536,400</b>
<b>GATEWAY/WELCOME CENTER</b>	<b>\$9,923,000</b>	<b>\$12,899,900</b>
<b>GREAT LAWN</b>	<b>\$2,306,000</b>	<b>\$2,997,800</b>
<b>THE PORCH</b>	<b>\$16,196,000</b>	<b>\$21,054,800</b>
<b>I-95 ACTIVATION</b>	<b>\$4,079,000</b>	<b>\$5,302,700</b>
the Urban Edge	<b>THE BOATHOUSE LAWN</b>	<b>\$10,649,000</b>
	<b>SHEDBROOK PLAYGROUND</b>	<b>\$6,915,000</b>
	<b>THE FIELDS</b>	<b>\$76,065,000</b>
	<b>PARK ROAD/PARKING</b>	<b>\$9,456,000</b>
<b>UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<b>\$11,830,000</b>	<b>\$15,379,000</b>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$196,917,000</b>	<b>\$255,992,100</b>

HOW FDR PARK COMPARES:

	LOCATION	SIZE (ACRES)	CAPITAL COST (2019 \$)	CAPITAL COST/ACRE	ANNUAL OPERATIONAL COST (2019 \$)	OPERATIONAL COST/ACRE	DATE
<b>SIGNATURE PARK</b>							
Millennium Park / Maggie Daley Park*	Chicago, IL	 52	\$350,000,000	\$6,796,117	\$15,460,166*	\$247,115	2004 / 2014
Klyde Warren Park	Dallas, TX	 5	\$130,000,000	\$25,000,000	\$3,500,000	\$673,077	2012
Brooklyn Bridge Park	Brooklyn, NY	 85	\$74,000,000***	\$870,588	\$15,800,000	\$185,882	2010
Memorial Park**	Houston, TX	 1,500	\$200,000,000	\$133,333	\$4,200,000	\$2,800	2018
Gathering Place	Tulsa, OK	 64	\$465,000,000	\$7,265,625	\$1,010,101**	\$15,783	2018
Historic Fourth Ward Park	Atlanta, GA	 17	\$27,080,000	\$5,416,000	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE	2010
Railyard Park	Birmingham, AL	 19	\$22,000,000	\$1,157,895	\$200,000	\$10,526	2010
Governor's Island	New York, NY	 55	\$278,000,000	\$5,054,545	\$42,000,369	\$763,643	2016
Buffalo Bayou	Houston, TX	 160	\$58,000,000	\$362,500	\$2,000,000	\$12,500	2006
FDR Park***	Philadelphia, PA	 350	\$255,000,000	\$732,759	\$1,250,000	\$3,592	2019-2036

Note: Capital Costs and Operational Costs are based on available information and may not represent the actual cost.

\* Does not include parking garage costs  
 \*\* Includes deck / structure over the highway  
 \*\*\* The Master Plan is currently being implemented, so capital costs are only estimated

+ Only includes operations cost for Millennium Park (2009)  
 ++ Kaiser Foundation 99-year endowment funding  
 +++ May include real estate costs

OPERATIONAL FUNDING

Throughout the master planning process, the community very clearly prioritized a clean, safe, and well-cared for park. In order for FDR Park to deliver on its promises of social, economic, and environmental benefits for residents, the site will require a higher level of service than it currently experiences. FDR Park is a 348-acre site with a complex portfolio of amenities that require much more than the “trash, mow, and blow” practices commonly found in municipal parks. The athletic fields, wetlands, historic building, and horticultural plantings will all require specialized care.

Achieving the level of service across an expanded scope of offerings will require new sources and new partnerships for maintenance and operations. The operational budget assumes that FDR Park’s governance and programming has been carefully designed to breakeven through earned revenue and sponsorship, freeing up public dollars to support other park assets in the City of Philadelphia. A sustainable operating strategy requires that targets for an endowment are integrated into the initial capital campaign and sponsorship strategy. In addition, supplementing the park’s revenue to cover unexpected costs or capital replacement with an endowment should be used to support the programs that may not generate revenue but provide benefits to the community and to sustain the natural resources for generations to come.

The operational funding is closely connected to the design of the governance model and partnerships the City is able to formalize as the park capital program is implemented.

“What excites me about this master plan is that it is an opportunity to bring people from around the world and around the country to Philadelphia.”

– Mayor Jim Kenney

WHAT’S NEXT? // GET INVOLVED!



The Friends of FDR Park is a non-profit volunteer-run organization that works to support and steward the park. To support their efforts or become a Friend, visit: [fdrparkphilly.org](http://fdrparkphilly.org)



Parks cannot thrive without an active community. Plan a clean up, attend an event, and encourage your friends to use the park with love. Learn more at [myphillypark.org](http://myphillypark.org) and [phila.gov/parksandrec](http://phila.gov/parksandrec)



Do you believe projects like this one create positive change in our city? Fairmount Park Conservancy brings parks to life, and we need your help! Support FPC’s important work in Philly’s parks by making a donation at [myphillypark.org](http://myphillypark.org).

## OPERATIONAL BUDGET

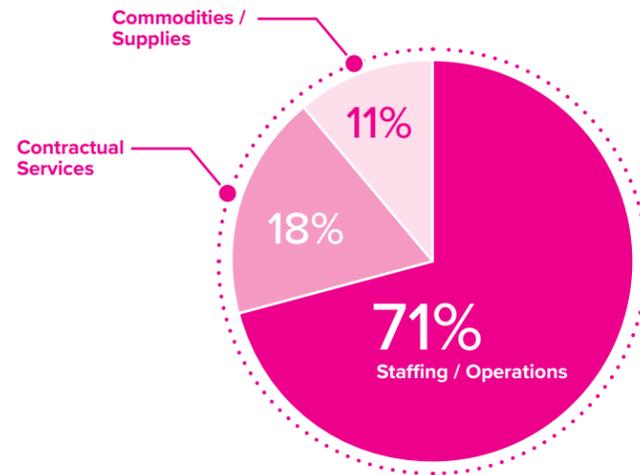
The operational budget is driven by the level of service provided as well as the specific features developed for the park. The stated goal of this operating budget was to minimize the amount of tax subsidy required to operate FDR Park. This would allow the Department of Parks and Recreation to allocate funds towards neighborhood parks in underserved communities that may not have the ability to create revenue or attract philanthropic investment. That said, it is difficult for any public park to “break even” from just earned revenue, volunteer service, and philanthropy.

With this challenge in mind, the operational budget planning for FDR Park uses a conservative approach to estimating reasonable and normal expenses and a moderate approach to projecting revenue. Since recovering all the operating expenses through revenues generated by the park is not a “norm,” they should be considered goals. The initial budget provides a baseline against which park planners and operators must measure and design their efforts.

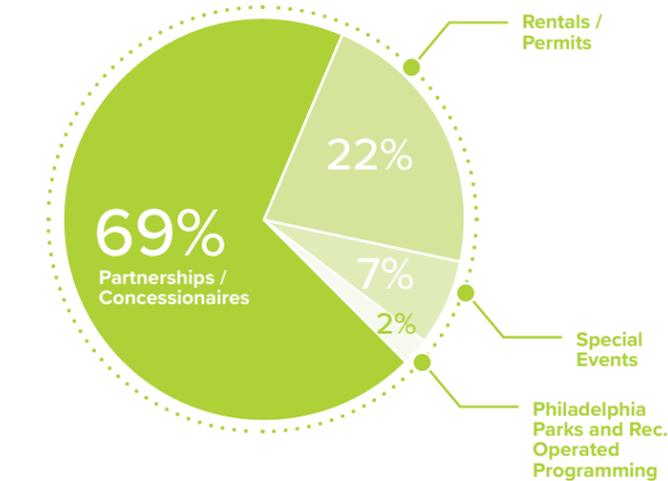
The operating expenses were determined by the types of features onsite and the number of labor hours required to maintain those elements and landscapes in good condition. It considers the number of dedicated city staff as well as the balance between public access and private events. The operating expenses assume that partners who stand to benefit from operating in the park also contribute to its ongoing maintenance and operations. For example, concessionaires with a lease on the Porch would have reasonable maintenance provisions integrated into their contract. The quality of the park’s ongoing operations as well as the level of public access will be determined by the terms and conditions of the City’s agreements with the range of partners who will be working together to meet their own interests while also programming, operating and maintaining parts of FDR Park.

The conceptual operating budget for FDR Park has been designed to be a break-even budget – meaning that the cost recovery through revenue sources can match the operations and maintenance expenses. This plan assumes that there are several sources of revenue built into the final vision for the site. These include concessions at the Fieldhouse, the Welcome Center, and the Porch make up 69% of the site’s revenue. A robust rental program for bikes, boats, and picnic sites will cover 22%. Finally, on-site programming and special events make up the remaining 9% of revenues for the site. While the frequency of events or the rates charged can be increased, it is recommended that the operational budgets are supplemented with an overall endowment to ensure the park remains accessible and well-maintained.

### COST SPLIT



### REVENUE SPLIT



## 10-YEAR PRO-FORMA

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9	YEAR 10	% INC.
<b>EXPENSES</b>											
Staffing	\$891,635	\$918,384	\$945,935	\$974,313	\$1,003,543	\$1,033,649	\$1,064,659	\$1,096,598	\$1,129,496	\$1,163,381	3%
Contractual Services	\$227,549	\$232,100	\$236,742	\$241,477	\$246,306	\$251,232	\$256,257	\$261,382	\$266,610	\$271,942	2%
Commodities	\$141,900	\$146,157	\$150,542	\$155,058	\$159,710	\$164,501	\$169,436	\$174,519	\$179,755	\$185,147	3%
Wetlands Maintenance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$20,400	\$20,808	\$21,224	\$21,649	\$22,082	2%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$1,261,084</b>	<b>\$1,296,641</b>	<b>\$1,333,219</b>	<b>\$1,370,848</b>	<b>\$1,429,559</b>	<b>\$1,469,783</b>	<b>\$1,511,160</b>	<b>\$1,553,724</b>	<b>\$1,597,510</b>	<b>\$1,642,552</b>	
<b>REVENUES*</b>											
Partnerships/ Concessionaires	\$880,500	\$835,720	\$869,149	\$903,915	\$940,071	\$977,674	\$1,016,781	\$1,057,452	\$1,099,751	\$1,143,741	4%
Rentals/Permits	\$278,256	\$289,386	\$300,962	\$313,000	\$325,520	\$338,541	\$352,083	\$366,166	\$380,813	\$396,045	4%
Special Events	\$32,000	\$33,280	\$34,611	\$35,996	\$37,435	\$38,933	\$40,490	\$42,110	\$43,794	\$45,546	4%
PPR Operated Programs	\$87,000	\$90,480	\$94,099	\$97,863	\$101,778	\$105,849	\$110,083	\$114,486	\$119,066	\$123,828	4%
<b>TOTAL REVENUE:</b>	<b>\$1,277,756</b>	<b>\$1,248,866</b>	<b>\$1,298,821</b>	<b>\$1,350,774</b>	<b>\$1,404,805</b>	<b>\$1,460,997</b>	<b>\$1,519,437</b>	<b>\$1,580,214</b>	<b>\$1,643,423</b>	<b>\$1,709,160</b>	
<b>NET:</b>	<b>\$16,672</b>	<b>-\$47,775</b>	<b>-\$34,398</b>	<b>-\$20,075</b>	<b>-\$24,754</b>	<b>-\$8,786</b>	<b>\$8,277</b>	<b>\$26,490</b>	<b>\$45,913</b>	<b>\$66,607</b>	
<b>COST RECOVERY:</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>102%</b>	<b>103%</b>	<b>104%</b>	

Notes:

- Based on 2019 Figures
- Wetland maintenance is included starting in Year 5
- Park Manager \$80,000 salary provided by a grant is included as an expense only starting in Year 2

\* List of Potential Revenue Sources include:

Partnerships / Concessions

- Golf
- The Welcome Center + Café
- Fieldhouse
- Porch
- Standard Parking

Rentals / Permits

- Picnic Areas (Tables / Pavilions)
- Picnic Packs (e.g., badminton, Frisbees, horseshoes)
- Field / Court Permits
- Bike Rentals
- Paddle Boat Rentals

Special Events

- Festivals (estimated at least 2 festivals per year on Great Lawn)

On-Site Programming

- Miscellaneous Programming (estimated 5 recreation / fitness / nature programs per year)

# Sustainable Park Operations

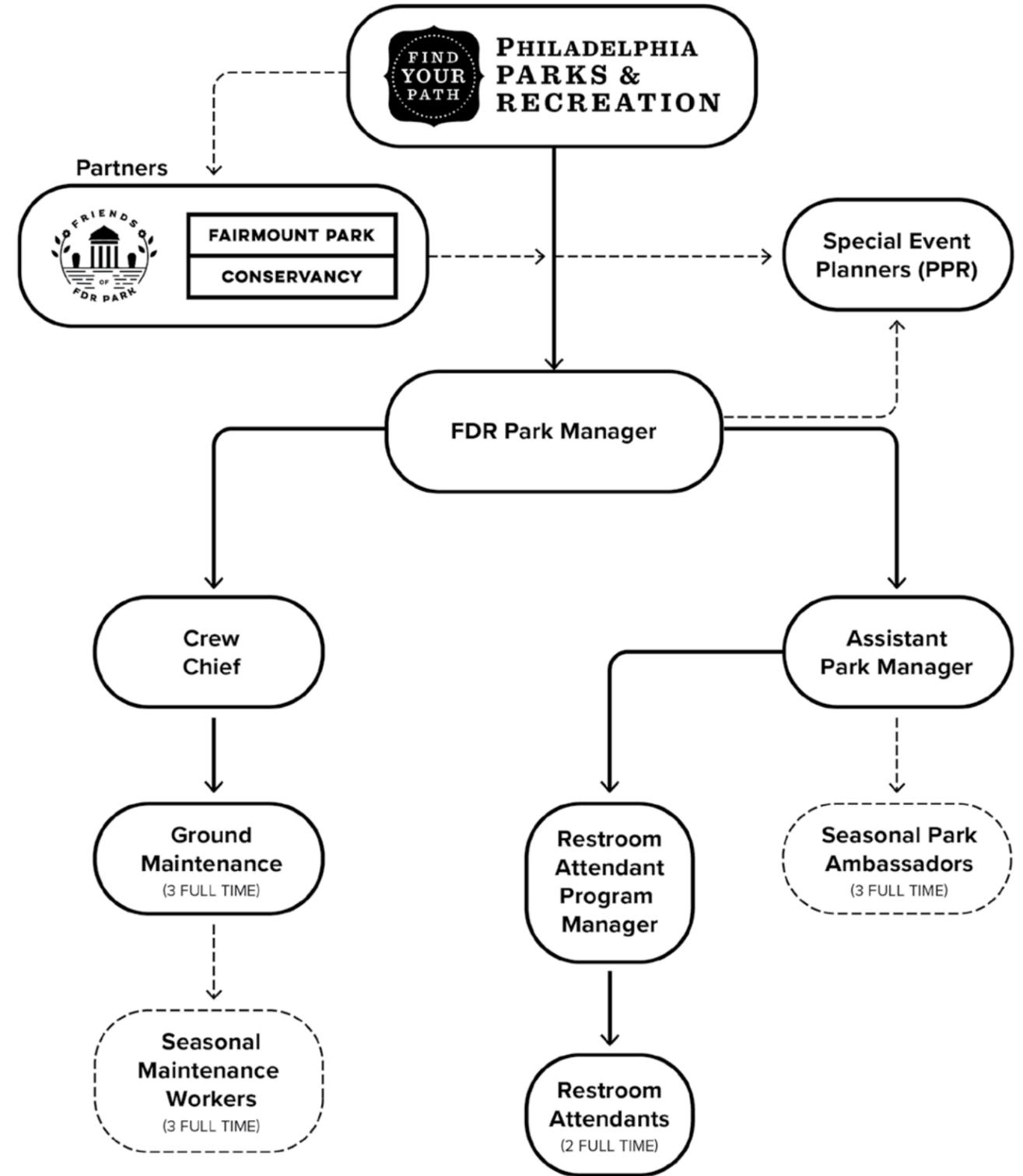
## GOVERNANCE

All 348 acres of FDR Park are owned by the City of Philadelphia and operated by the Department of Parks and Recreation. Yet even in its present unimproved state, the park is already subject to many layers of formal and informal governance. For example, PennDOT controls a right-of-way of way for I-95 while the land itself is maintained by the City. The Phillies Urban Youth Academy has a formal lease with the City on the Richie Ashburn Fields, while the Taney Youth Baseball Club has informal stewardship of the northern fields. The American Swedish Historical Museum has a lease for its site yet shares access to the parking with the public.

As the master plan develops, a formal governance strategy that articulates an equitable and sustainable matrix of responsibility across all parties will need to be articulated. The governance of individual elements within the park may be different from the overall governance of the entire park. To effectively deliver on both the physical transformation and the community aspirations, a broad coalition of all governing entities with clearly defined roles and responsibilities will be critical to an effective overall governance strategy.

In order for Parks and Recreation to effectively operate and maintain FDR Park and the investments, it will require a dedicated FDR Park staff and management. Staff for the park will be primarily funded by the revenue generated from park concessions and events held at FDR Park. This represents a shift in how Parks and Recreation operates by dedicating staff to a large park, thereby freeing district staff to serve in other needed areas of the city. Leading this dedicated park staff will be a new FDR Park Manager. In all, six new, full-time employees and six seasonal employees will be required to operate and maintain the future FDR Park. This proposed staffing model provides the basis of the operating costs. Various park elements that add to the overall park experience like the multipurpose fields, the Phillies Fields, or even the concession venues, will likely have outside operators with their own staff. The park manager will be the hub of all operations and programs occurring within FDR Park.

Supplementing the dedicated park staff will be police support and private security for special events up to six times a year and up to 10 major sporting events per year. Daily park security will be provided by the City of Philadelphia Police Department and the Parks and Recreation Rangers.



## WHAT'S NEXT? // SAMPLE GOVERNANCE MATRIX

FUNCTION <i>categories that help organize the tasks associated with each program element / project</i>	PROGRAM ELEMENT / PROJECT <i>fill in each project associated with the master plan</i>			
	PLAYGROUND	INFRASTRUCTURE	THE WETLAND	FRANKLIN 5K
ORDINARY MAINTENANCE				
CAPITAL / EXTRAORDINARY MAINT.				
SECURITY				
EARNED INCOME				
PROGRAMMING				
MANAGEMENT & MARKETING				
PRIVATE/CORP FUNDRAISING				
ADVOCACY				
CONSTRUCTION				
PROJECT PLANNING & DESIGN MANAGEMENT				

*Fairmount Parks Conservancy*

**ENTITIES**  
*the organization or institution responsible for performing each function*

Functions



toward a  
*resilient*  
future.

# The time to act is now.

The time to act is now. FDR Park is underwater, natural resources are being lost, and cultural resources are not being maintained. Climate change is becoming a climate crisis and will only exasperate the challenges and issues at FDR Park unless they are addressed immediately. The opportunities for substantive change are in place. City residents demand new outdoor spaces to connect with nature and improve their physical and mental well-being. Critical habitat along the Atlantic Coastal Plain needs preservation and restoration or could risk becoming lost. The surrounding context of the park is changing with new needs for open space and recreation programming that will impact all of South Philadelphia.

Park users and stakeholders have spoken, and their ideas and aspirations have been incorporated into a community-driven plan. Users' needs have been matched with environmental, social, and economic opportunities to balance nature, water, and activities in combinations that are mutually beneficial for each. The vision created by the Olmsted Brothers has been reclaimed for a modern audience by working within the original framework and design intent. Nature-based solutions have been leveraged to restore the function of the park, creating a resilient ecosystem for the city by operating as a vibrant coastal plain habitat for local flora and fauna and by acting as a sponge to support stormwater functions. The master plan vision builds on FDR Park's resiliency by designing a signature open space asset that meets the needs of its diverse users and adds substantial value to the community of users and to the impact of the larger identity of the city. Parks are powerful places that shape the identity of a city and provide meaningful experiences for communities: FDR Park is no exception.

This audacious vision relies on an understanding of FDR Park as an artificial landscape, where topography, water, and nature are designed to create the City of Philadelphia's centerpiece of resilience, community, and celebration. The plan inspires a new relationship between the city and nature for the benefit of both as FDR Park will become a unique model for Philadelphia and the region. The park is a testament to the resilience of urban open space and the community's needs for a healthy environment. The FDR Park Master Plan offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine a historic park to serve future generations of Philadelphians. This plan leverages the power of parks to provide access to recreational opportunities, spur local economies, and protect Philadelphia from climate change. The FDR Park Master Plan is ambitious but achievable if civic leaders and private philanthropists can answer the call to help the park live up to its potential as a critical piece of civic, public health, and ecological infrastructure for the 21st-century.



**“The plan represents the promise of forward-thinking reinvestment in our public spaces to help manage the effects of climate change, all while providing high-quality recreation opportunities and the chance for people from all across the city to spend time in nature.”**

– Janet Haas, MD, Chair, William Penn Foundation



FDR PA  
AN OLMSTED PARK